

EXETER RIVER STUDY COMMITTEE MINUTES

July 7, 2011

1. Convene Meeting:

Chairman Lionel Ingram, Don Clement-Selectmen Rep., Rod Bourdon, Paul Vlasich-Town Engineer, Mimi Becker, Ginny Raub, Roger Wakeman-PEA Rep., Kristen Murphy-Planning Department and Pete Richardson were all in attendance. Deb Loiselle was absent. Lionel convened the meeting at 9:03 a.m.

2. Approve minutes of 5/26/11:

There was a motion made to amend the minutes of the May 26, 2011 by adding, “ Deb Loiselle was absent”.

3. Status of the Feasibility Study – Paul Vlasich:

Paul Vlasich stated the contract has been awarded to VHB (Vanasse Hagen Brustlin) for the Dam Removal Feasibility Study. They had a pre kick off meeting a few weeks ago and there was discussion for an official kick off meeting this coming Thursday, July 14, 2011. Things are still happening, there is quite a bit of reference material to go over. Paul stated VHB will be reviewing all the past information and reports. VHB is also ready to mobilize surveyors to survey around the dam area and start the modeling effort with Weston and Sampson. Today they will be supplying a draft QAPP (Quality Assurance Project Plan) on how they perform some of their testing. They are soon to start some of their culture resource information gathering. Paul went on to say there’s one outstanding item the Town would like to provide them before the meeting on the July 14, 201, that would be a breakdown by funding source for each task listed in the RFP (Request for Proposal).

Don Clement asked what kind of model. Paul stated it will be the HEC-RAS, what happens to the river during a dam out scenario. There is some information on that from previous hydraulic studies but they will fine tune it a little bit more. Also, part of that will be sediment deposition type analysis. Don stated, so it will be a model of the dam removed. Paul replied yes.

Mimi Becker wanted to clarify that the HEC-RAS was a model with and without the dam, not just without. Paul replied yes, correct.

Mimi Becker stated that as Paul mentioned, next Thursday the group will be meeting in the Wheelwright Room and they will be taking a good look at the roles the different people who are going to be contributing to the study from the consultant. Also, what the role of the committee and Town will be as they move forward particularly with the public, the opportunities for public input and communications. They will be reviewing the project scope for all the parameters that are included in the contract, the whole range of issues that have been included in the study. The group will be making decisions on how the communications protocol will be framed and operative. They will be reviewing what the project schedule will be and will begin preparation for the first public meeting which will be in September 2011.

Lionel Ingram asked if there was any progress on funding for the \$16,290.00. Mimi Becker replied not yet.

4. The Town Master Plan and the River committee (Kristen Murphy):

Kristen Murphy passed out copies of the Exeter Master Plan Recommendations Chapters 1-9 (MP). Kristen went on to say that Ginny Raub and herself have looked at the MP and review what sort of places it would be appropriate for the Exeter River Study Committee (ERSC) to be involved. Kristen stated they first went through the Charter of the Exeter River Study Committee. The Charter was pretty broad in nature. The ERSC is charged with providing advice to the Board of Selectmen for all matters relating to the management of the Exeter River, its tributaries and watershed including but not limiting to flood control, public and private water supplies, land use, environmental habitat, water use, recreation, public safety and water quality. Looking at the Chapters of the

MP there is a large spectrum that the ERSC could get involved, specifically Chapters 1, 4, 6, 7, & 8. Kristen stated it would be appropriate for ERSC to have input in those chapters. Kristen informed the committee that it has been some years since the chapters have been updated and there should be yearly rolling updates. It's a continuous process updating the MP, almost consistently working on new chapters as well. 2002 was the oldest updates and here is currently no money in the budget for current revision but the process in concept is to have a subcommittee that helps prepare the changes for the chapters. Who and how many has to be decided from the ERSC that will have input for the reviewing and suggested changes.

Kristen stated they sat down and went through every recommendation that came out of each chapter of the MP and made note on the existing recommendation changes where the ERSC could have a current role or a future role in implementing the recommendations. Kristen suggested the first step would be looking at the existing recommendations, where the ERSC could have a role and secondly in updates making sure the chapters do address all of the concerns of the Exeter River and its watershed and all of the issues surrounding that.

Kristen stated the MP is on the Towns website for anyone to review. Kristen feels the Exeter River is pretty well addressed in the MP. The ERSC will review the paperwork Kristen passed out and come back at a later meeting and give their input and recommendations along with how the ERSC can implement them. Lionel suggested taking the task as a 3-part. 1- Look at the items that are highlighted; 2- What is missing, what holes are there; 3- Go to the Sylvia von Aulock, Planning Department, and recommend Chapter 8 be re-written or possibly using a new Chapter 8 as a place to help the Town bring new ideas.

Lionel Ingram asked if Kristen thought the ERSC should add its own chapter to the MP. Kristen replied no she doesn't see the advantage at this point since so much of the river is already embedded in the MP.

Paul Vlasich asked if there is a recommendation in the MP for improvements to the dam due to the NH DES, Dam Bureau, Letter of Deficiency. Kristen and Ginny Raub both replied yes. You will find reference in the Exeter Master Plan Recommendations Chapter 4 #10; The Town should study impacts in management and operations of the dams regarding land and water uses, flood control, water quality, environmental habitat, public safety and recreation."

5. Status of the River Reconnaissance – Roger Wakeman:

Roger Wakeman updated the committee that PEA is finalizing the changes of their team. They are down to two finalists on the position and will be finalizing the interviews today. The plan is to start getting more involved by the August/September time frame and get the ball rolling in the fall.

Mimi Becker asked if they will be coordinating the process with ERLAC or PREP on the parameters that they will be looking at. Roger replied that is where they need to define the scope and get a little more coordination on the process; Phyllis Duffy has offered to help. Mimi said to reach out to her as well whenever he is ready.

6. The Information Providing Role of the River Committee– Lionel Ingram:

Lionel Ingram spoke about how the ERSC could learn a lot from other people and other organizations pertaining to the river and what is going on through other committees. Lionel suggested that on a regular basis have people that are recommended through members of the ERSC come and talk to the ERSC for information purposes on a variety of issues. Another option could be have ERSC create an active list of things to be done and invite people to come and speak on those ideas. Lionel brought up Rod Bourdons idea of getting information out to the public. Lionel said other than people who may watch the rerun of the ERSC meeting and occasionally showing up they need more avenues to get information out. There needs to be more exposure possibly utilizing the ENL .

Mimi Becker mentioned two venues; the Town website and the Exeter Newsletter (ENL). Mimi stated the Town's website is not easy to access to get information it's usually "buried" and not easy to find. Mimi stated the

navigation map is not user friendly. Don Clement concurred with Mimi about the website. Lionel stated it is not meant to be a complaint on the Town; the Town has a lot to do. But maybe a separate website that deals with river issues only might be an option. Don also stated we could do better about putting information on Channel 22, we could put programs on it Don added. We could also do better on informing the public if we were to utilize the newspapers Mimi stated. We should be putting items of interest in the ENL.

Lionel Ingram suggested that the committee come up with a list/calendar per say on bringing other people/committees to come and speak at the ERSC. Lionel also told the committee they could email him with suggestions. Lionel stated that maybe these speakers could come every other meeting of the ERSC.

Don Clement suggested having someone do a press release every couple of months in the local newspapers. Mimi mentioned that if we had a clear protocol for press releases that would be fine. The press release would have to be "cleared" up the chain of the committee before release. That would also give us a good opportunity to provide advance information to recruit people to participate in public meetings whatever category they may be.

Lionel Ingram asked the committee to email him suggestions on speakers at least two weeks prior to the next ERSC meeting. Lionel will contact someone from the list to speak.

7. Other Business:

Pete Richardson asked Kristen Murphy to update the committee on what the Conservation Commission has been doing in regards to a natural resource inventory. Kristen stated the Town has a contract with Neatline Associates. They are doing a map assessment of significant natural resources in Town and developing co-occurrence maps. The subcommittee has worked with the contractor to develop a list of what features should go in to the different maps. Mimi Becker asked Kristen if there was a timeline on the project. Kristen stated by the end of the year, hopefully November.

8. Public Comment:

None

9. Adjourn the Meeting:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m. The next meeting was set for Thursday, August 18, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. in the Nowak Room of the Town Office.

Respectfully Submitted,

Grace Rogers
Public Works Office Manager