

## **Ammonoosuc River Local Advisory Committee Meeting Approved Minutes Haverhill, Bath, Landaff, Lisbon, Littleton, Bethlehem, and Carroll**

Wednesday, August 5, 2009

Members in Attendance: Rick Walling (Bath), Charlie Ryan, Connie McDade (Littleton), Marilyn Johnson (Bethlehem), Joan Karpf, Leslie Bergum (Carroll)

Associate Member in Attendance: Bill Harris (Haverhill)

Potential New Member Candidate in Attendance: Jessica Willis (Littleton)

Absent: Michael King (Haverhill), Dennis Solinsky (Bath), Steve Jesseman, Jonathan Reid (Lisbon), Torrey McMillan (Bethlehem)

Guests: Tara Bamford, Planning Director for North Country Council

Rebecca Brown, Executive Director of Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust (ACT)

### **Review and Approval of July Minutes**

Chairman Charlie Ryan opened the meeting at 4:35 p.m. at the North Country Council. Rick made the motion to accept the July minutes; Joan seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

### **Presentation by Rebecca Brown, Executive Director of ACT**

1. Rebecca told the members ACT was founded 9 years ago, when conservation tools were needed to preserve local land slated for development. There was not a land trust in existence in the North Country at the time for smaller sized parcels so a group of local people got together to collectively purchase the important parcel. The Society for Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF), the largest and oldest land protection organization in NH, came into being at the time The White Mountain National Forest was established (Weeks Act), however SPNHF offered easements only for larger tracts of land.
2. Historical perspective was provided about easements. Land trusts go back to the time of King Henry VIII in England to ensure ownership of land, when men served in the military.
3. Rebecca said setting up an easement is complicated and costly. The term limit of an easement is unlimited into perpetuity.
4. The easement must be recorded in deed title and plat. It precedes mortgage in title search.
5. Public benefits may include public access, open space, and scenic value. ACT took the easement on Lowes commercial property that needed a conservation organization to look after long-term public access and management of the wet meadows and flood plain forest.
6. Joan asked about the fee determination for a land trust to steward land. Assessment includes paper trail, video, grey areas (i.e. number of abutters on boundary), monitor time, and travel. Annual costs are anticipated for monitoring into perpetuity. Staff time to write and publish the annual report is factored into the fee determination. A lump sum is derived at that will produce interest (\$1,400 presently considered an adequate sum to cover these costs), saving the principal for unforeseen future costs that may come up, i.e. legal.
7. Leslie brought up importance of tributaries and other hot spots, speaking to the need to evaluate the watershed as a system. Rebecca said good point; areas that deserve special attention include tributary waterways, flood plains, farmland, storm water drainage, cut areas, and trails on a property. Stewardship of easement in buffer area along tributaries includes protection of water quality (restoration, if needed), proper agricultural practices, flood plain management with consideration of need for ordinances, and conserving wildlife habitat. ACT has mainly been oriented toward taking easements on riparian and agricultural parcels with special interest in land tracts that have social and cultural base to benefit people.
8. Rebecca talked about deed restrictions. Charlie said that Planning Boards cannot enforce deed restrictions that they did not put in unless it is in the town's interest to do so.

9. The DES Mitigation Program for properties 1 acre or less in size was discussed. First option is mitigation for impact to wetlands. Second option is compensating for loss of wetland by paying cash into in lieu fee program. Fee comes back to watershed area for projects.
10. Rebecca talked about ACT's role in Dr. John Fields Fluvial Geomorphology Study Results, which is being presented to the river corridor towns on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. She will be in attendance. She discussed the 15-Mile Falls Enhancement Fund for Mitigation and Restoration. Rebecca and Tara talked about the Town Board Meetings with Dr. Field in October-November. The Boards (BOS, PB, CC), who deal with planning efforts, will receive baseline information. A suggestion was made get input from riparian landowners. May wish to consider incorporating issues important to them into the corridor management plan.
11. ACT is currently working on a project on Johns River that flows into the Connecticut River. Rebecca was thanked for her presentation.

### **Announcements**

1. Rick reported the Protected River Signs are now available. Laura Weit made it known that signs can be placed at locations other than on a bridge, including "any municipal road or DOT ROW with the exception of interstate highways, divided portions of the NH Turnpike system or divided limited access highways. Signs have also been placed at town boat launches and rail trails, so as long as the proper approvals have been received."
2. Rick inquired how much time should be allowed for Town Board Meetings with Dr. Field. Tara suggested 1 hour of meeting time with added time for travel factored in, if multiple town meetings held on the same day.
3. Rick said that he would not be able to be present at the September LAC meeting.
4. Rick inquired what to include when he introduces Dr. Field on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Tara suggested he get input from Adair Mulligan. Connie will facilitate Rick getting feedback from Adair. Discussion followed, regarding proper professional title to use for Dr. Field. Decision was that it is optional to use Dr. John Field or John Field, PhD.
5. Tara asked Connie to set up rows of chairs in semi-circle facing the rug at the far end of the room of the Senior Center for the presentation on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Rick will bring a screen. Marilyn will take care of refreshments.
6. Rick announced paragon fingers have been put in the Ammonoosuc River above Woodsville to slow the speed of the water so sediment is dropped along the eroded area along the shoreline.
7. Rick provided Grafton County soil data info to members who requested it.
8. The DES proposal for adoption of Interim Amendments to Rules, Env-Wq1800, Rivers Management and Protection Program was briefly gone over. The existing rules established criteria for nominating rivers to be designated under RSA 483. Revisions are needed to implement statutory changes. Expected to be on agenda August 20<sup>th</sup>.
9. Connie said Leslie was present to represent ARLAC for Governor John Lynch's signing of the Upper Reach Designation in Dover on July 15th. Congratulations is in order and special thanks to members, Leslie, Joan, and Rick who put so much time and effort into the process.
10. Connie said Leslie received notice of farewell to Carl Paulsen at NH Rivers Council. ARLAC is appreciative of his supportive role in the designation of the Upper Reach.
11. Charlie reported that CSPA and AoT permit applications would be submitted directly to LACs from now on.

### **Treasurer's Report (none)**

## **Old Business**

1. Update on Riverwalk Project (Charlie said he had no further info to report at this time)
2. Connie said LAC members were invited to meet with Linda Hoffman, Visiting Artist at the Senior Ctr. on August 7 at 1p.m., regarding plan to create a community sculpture for the trail.

## **New Business**

*Due to time restraints, the following matters were run through briefly.*

### 1. Status of New Members

Connie handed out an updated membership list and provided an update on members. The nomination form for Bill Harris (Haverhill) has been sent to Laura Weit. Jessica Willis (Littleton) needs to complete nomination form given to her and turn it in to the Board of Selectmen. No reply received as yet from Landaff about replacement member. Leslie sent Selectman Erb the names of 2 potential new members for consideration. Connie said she was informed that Jonathan Reid no longer has contact with the town of Lisbon. Follow up in this regard with Town Manager Regan Pride is underway.

### 2. Incoming Permit Applications (1)

Charlie said the DES notified him that The Alteration of Terrain Application for McDonald's Commercial Development in Littleton did not have to be taken up by ARLAC because it is located beyond the 1/4-mile buffer zone, however we were still welcomed to comment. Charlie viewed the parcel with the Littleton PB. Connie walked the parcel on July 9th, e-mailing a description of her findings and Granit Maps to the members. Comment to the DES was not deemed necessary.

### 3. ARLAC Biennial Report 2007-2009

ARLAC's report for January 2008 to June 30<sup>th</sup> 2009 based on estimates was prepared and sent in to DES by Connie. A copy of the report was handed out to members. Jennifer Rowden, NHDES Watershed Planner of Lakes and Rivers Management and Protection, recommended that a few minutes of every future LAC meeting be taken to have members report on their time and expenses since the last meeting so there will be a record in the minutes to do the Biennial Report in 2011.

### 4. Dalton Drag Strip

Charlie read a letter from ARLAC at the DES Dalton Drag Strip Hearing on July 16<sup>th</sup>. Five LAC members attended the hearing. A copy of the letter was brought in to this meeting, however time ran out to pass it around. It will be made available at September meeting.

## **Adjournment**

Adjourned at 6:40 p.m

*Respectfully submitted by Connie McDade*

[Next Meeting Takes Place on Wednesday, September 2, 2009](#)