

Central NH Regional Planning Commission

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Warner River Nomination Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 31, 2016

Warner Town Hall, 5 East Main St, Warner NH 03278

7:00 P.M.

Minutes:

Attendees	
Chris Connors, Trout Unlimited	George Embley, Town of Webster, Trout Unlimited
Sue Hemingway, Town of Warner	Peter Ladd, Town of Warner
Scott MacLean, Town of Bradford	Nancy Martin, Town of Warner
Ben Nugent, NH Fish & Game	Michael Simon, Town of Warner

Members of the Public: Dr. Diane Richter, Fred Arnold, Bill Balsam, Natalie Wells, Brick Moltz, Laura Russell, Thomas Dunne, all from the Town of Warner

Commission Staff: None in Attendance

Nancy Martin called the meeting to order at 7:05. Committee members introduced themselves to the audience. A list of audience members with contact information is attached. Nancy apologized for being unprepared by the absence of Sam Durfee, CNHRPC, resulting in the lack of meeting agendas and meeting minutes. Members of the audience (including two riverfront landowners) commented throughout the meeting that until tonight they had been unaware of the project and/or had not been contacted about meetings, and were concerned about the impact of the project on their ability to do what they want with their riverfront property.

Review of Minutes from last Meeting

Without copies of the previous meeting minutes to hand out to committee members, the committee postponed review of the 5/18 and 6/20 minutes until the next meeting on Sept. 21.

Comments on Draft

Tracie Sales, (NH Dep't of Environmental Services) has commented on the draft RMPP application submitted to her by our committee and CNHRPC for the purposes of identifying areas in the application that are incomplete or can be strengthened. Her comments on the application have been catalogued by Sam and will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Nomination Website & Outreach Materials

Chris Connors presented an overview of the Warner River Nomination website. Chris suggested to the audience that accessing the website is easiest by googling “warner river nomination.” She commented that it appears that so far many people have accessed the website. Chris took notes on suggested website improvements and resources that may still be added to the site. She will add:

- Link to the video Sue Hemingway and Peter Ladd shared of a hydro-electric project in Settle, North Yorkshire;
- RSA’s pertaining to the RMPP program, especially for the classifications;
- Links to documents explaining Riparian rites, Instream Flow & NH Comprehensive Surface Water Management.

Master Presentation

Committee members agreed that they have not seen the draft “Master Presentation” for Boards of Selectmen and public meetings in each of the five towns. We expect that Sam will provide the master presentation to committee members for comment in advance of the Sept. 21 meeting. At that time, we will develop the schedule of “roadshow presentations” for Select Boards and for Public Informational Sessions.

Review of Classification Map

Chris presented new maps illustrating the proposed Designated Corridor in the context of the full watershed and the currently proposed Warner River classifications that is recolored and reworded. Both maps now match the colors and styles of other designated river maps.

Audience comments included:

- Are river classifications too limiting, removing flexibility to make changes in light of climate change?
- Could five towns set up their own de facto river management and protective local advisory committee and avoid involvement by the State?
- Should nomination be voted on at Town Meetings? Opinions included:
 - Every resident should have the chance to vote on this issue due to the impact on riverfront properties.
 - This evening’s discussion is evidence that this issue is too complex to bring before Town Meetings for a vote.

Other Business

The discussion turned to dams in the river. Reps from the Energy Committee asked, “Who is going to research all the breached, ruined, and potential dams in the river?” There is dam in Sutton and one on Morse Loop not shown on the map. It was suggested that Sam may have more information on this after posing the question to Tracie Sales. Other nominated rivers must have encountered similar questions. How did they handle it? A comment was made by the Energy Committee rep that raising the question with the DES Dam Bureau had not produced any answers in the past.

In-flow stream and flowage rites were discussed. Topographical maps may reveal more information about flowage rates. Again, information from RMPP applications by already designated rivers could provide answers to questions about in-stream flows.

Public Comment

While the committee had been lenient about allowing questions during the course of the meeting, we opened up the floor to additional questions and comments. A suggestion was made to place meeting notices in the Kearsarge Shopper where a larger audience would see them. Perhaps the Shopper would accept meeting notices as a public service without having to pay for them. There is interest to increase the Blog section on the website so the public will be informed when changes are made.

Next Meeting Date

The next Warner River Nomination Committee meeting is scheduled for September 21stth, 2016 at 7:00 P.M., in the Warner Town Hall. Everyone was invited to attend.