

Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee

January 28, 2020 (7:00 PM)

Pease Public Library Plymouth, NH

Members present:

Bill Bolton (Plymouth), Russ Brummer (New Hampton), Barry Draper (New Hampton), , Mike O'Donnell (Plymouth), Kathleen DeWolfe (Ashland), Judy Faran (Bridgewater), Lisa Doner (Plymouth), Neil McIver (Plymouth), Myrtle Lewis (Thornton)

Guests: David Jeffers (LRPC), Jared Meyer (Transmission Arborist, Eversource), Connor Madison (GZA GeoEnvironmental, Environmental Scientist 1), Tracy Tarr (GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc., Associate Principal)

1. **Meeting called to order by B. Bolton at 7:01 PM.**
2. Connor Madison and Tracy Tarr from GZA GeoEnvironmental, representing EverSource, described a vegetation maintenance project which would cut and mow the right of ways of transmission line in towns represented by PRLAC members. It was explained that these projects have been repeated every 3 year for decades and serve to remove trees that could potentially fall on powerlines. As of November of 2019, NH DES requires LACs (including PRLAC) to sign a Utility Maintenance Activity Statutory Permit Notification (SPN) for each town and GZA was hoping to get those documents signed during our meeting. GZA provided maps of Priority Resource Areas within a ¼ mile of the Pemi. T. Tarr explained:
  - a. New Hampshire Heritage Bureau and NH Fish and Game are consulted to create maps
  - b. Priority Resource Areas – Applicants have to map:
    - i. Flood plains, peatlands, prime wetlands,
  - c. Jarod Meyer (Eversource) would advise and check in regularly with Brown (the cutting crew). Jarod would make sure that the crews follow the updated Best Management Practices (BMP).
    - i. He reported that the cutting will be done before leaf-out this year.
    - ii. Machinery would be used except on the steep banks of the Pemi (tall growing hard and soft wood would be hand cut). Try to leave non- complaint vegetation (vegetation that does not grow over 15 ft.)
    - iii. No herbicides would be used.
    - iv. Much of the work has been done in 2018. We may see people inspecting the poles in those area (on ATVs or using drones).
3. Many PRLAC members voiced concerns with the process and were not comfortable signing the document on such notice
  - a. B. Bolton is concerned with the erosion of the banks. If PRLAC is not involved with more of the process then we will not be able to see if the project is affecting the river banks
    - i. J. Meyer offered to visit the eroding banks sites that we were concern with.
  - b. B. Draper voiced concern of experiences in the recent past where crews went through vernal pools and wetlands.

- i. J. Meyer – reported that the maps are much improved. The foreman “polices” the work and Jared works with the foreman. They are working to improve how BMPs are carried out.
  - c. M. Stamp asked who was responsible for stabilizing eroding banks on the line. J. Meyer was willing to visit sites we are concerned with and give recommendations.
  - d. Town representatives can ask GZA to send copies of documents to the Conservation Commission of each town.
  - e. Discussed whether to sign the SNP with modification. T. Tarr will submit letter to B. Bolton with recommended modifications which B. Bolton will sign.
    - i. Requesting site reviews for listed areas of concern and ability to add additional sites that come up.
    - ii. A motion was made that PRLAC will conditionally sign the letter and SPN forms under the condition that site walk will be conducted by Eversource Arborist and PRLAC representative(s) to address concerns prior to mowing where feasible.  
m/s/approved J. Faran/N. McIver
  - f. PRLAC members recommended to GZA that next year they start this process sooner and send the information to committee members to review before the meeting.
4. Approval of minutes from our October 29, 2019 meeting.  
m/s/approved R. Brummer/B. Draper
5. B. Bolton reported on acquisition of properties along the Baker River in Plymouth (near the Baker/Pemi intersect). Maps of walking path and created wetlands were shared with the committee.
6. No new Permit (pre)applications.
7. B. Bolton reported that he and M. O’Donnell visited the discharge testing site of the new Plymouth wells. He received reports that the river level did not change due to the test.
8. D. Jeffers presented update on meeting with Jeff Hayes (LRPC) and Deb Loiselle of the NH DES regarding the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. PRLAC request for funding of our Corridor Management Plan was denied.
- a. Suggested that we explore possibly of Clean Water State Revolving Fund. Handouts for this program are found here [DWSRF Fact Sheet](#) and [CWSRF Planning Guidance](#)
    - i. Elements of the fund could cover assessment of culverts/stream crossings as well as update of watershed/corridor management plans
    - ii. Only a municipality can apply for it, not PRLAC or RPC
    - iii. Loan with principal forgiveness of up to \$75,000. Community needs authority to borrow at Town Meeting.
    - iv. Application would need to be started in spring, cycle for final loan approval in 2021.
    - v. For any project there needs to be a tangible water quality benefit to apply.
  - b. Discussion on updating the Pemi River Corridor Management Plan. We need to decide at what level PRLAC wants to revise the management plan. Do we want to update or upgrade the plan. If we decide the latter, we would need to apply for the money in order to hire a consultant to complete.

Motion to adjourn (9:21 PM)

m/s/approved M. O’Donnell/ R. Brummer