

Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee
October 30, 2012 at Pease Public Library
Plymouth, New Hampshire

Minutes

Members Present:

Max Stamp (Bristol); Dan Paradis (Bristol); Fred Gunter (Thornton); Barry Draper (New Hampton); John Kelly (Plymouth); Mike O'Donnell (Holderness); Carl Lehner (Holderness);

Also Present:

Dave Jeffers (LRPC); Dan Stack (Ashland nominee)

Call to Order:

Chairman Max Stamp called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

The members agreed that Jane Kellogg's name should replace that of Dave Jeffers in the listing of those having attended a recent seminar. Fred Gunter made a motion seconded by Barry Draper to approve the minutes of September 25, 2012 as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Draft Annual Report:

The first item on the agenda was to review the draft of the annual report to corridor towns which Max had prepared and sent out to PRLAC members. This document is usually included in the Town Reports, giving PRLAC an opportunity to increase public awareness about our goals and activities. The draft report was reviewed paragraph by paragraph and members offered a number of relatively minor corrections and additions as well as suggestions for formatting. They also agreed that the list of PRLAC membership at the end of the report should be retained. Max had hoped it might be possible to shorten the report, but committee members felt everything included in the draft is important. Max thanked everyone for their suggestions and said he and Dave Jeffers would work on the final version of the report.

Bristol Planning Board Discussion of Stormwater Management Approaches

Dan Paradis, Vice Chair of the Bristol Planning Board, was asked to report on the Board's recent consideration of possible approaches to address water quality issues. The Bristol Planning Board had asked Dan to research the topic and to report back to them. Dan in turn asked Max for suggestions, which fell into three categories: restoring the 2008 version of the CSPA (RSA 483-B) through local zoning; creating local alteration of terrain rules applicable to smaller projects than the state laws; and measures for controlling runoff.

With regard to restoring provisions of the of the former CSPA, the Bristol Planning Board felt that the current zoning ordinance still contains many protections through the existing Pemi Overlay regulations and decided to take a wait-and-see approach, with the hope that RSA 483-B might be restored to something closer to its 2008 version. As to alteration of terrain rules, the Board felt that the EPA's permit requirements covering all projects over 1 acre along with an existing zoning article requiring conformity with the DES Stormwater Manual during construction provides adequate protection for smaller projects if enforced.

Finding a way to address runoff after construction proved to be more complicated than might be expected. Several years ago the Board considered limits on impervious surfaces but never brought the proposal to a vote. While the simplicity of this approach is appealing, it does not take into account mitigation measures such as detention ponds or swales which reduce runoff, and therefore the "effective" impervious area. An approach which does take effective impervious area into account is offered as a model ordinance in the Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques handbook compiled by the DES along with other agencies. However, the model ordinance is lengthy and complex and would be virtually impossible to enforce with the resources available to a town like Bristol. Perhaps this is why a 2010 Stormwater Commission Management Report suggested action at the state level, either to establish a so-called "stormwater utility" or a statewide permit system to address this concern. In any case the Bristol Planning Board has decided to do some further study before proposing anything to the voters.

In the discussion that followed Dan's presentation, John Kelly questioned why government entities generally do not have to meet the same regulatory standards as private entities.

PRLAC Management Plan:

Review of Land Use Change:

Due to some software problems, new maps could not be produced in time for the meeting, so this item was passed over.

Review of Demographic Changes:

Dave passed out tables and graphs he had prepared showing population figures and projections for the Pemi Corridor towns and for the state. The local data were compiled and graphed for all of the corridor towns, the southern group and the northern group. The graph for the northern group showed considerably more growth in the last decade than the southern group, but when all of the corridor towns are considered the growth is close to linear. After some discussion involving how the student population at PSU should be counted, the group agreed that in the absence of US Census Bureau or Office of Energy & Planning projections, the linear best fit model shown on the graphs is the best available to us.

Review of 10/17 Meeting at LRPC:

Max explained that the subcommittee that met at LRPC had worked on streamlining the Present and Anticipated Problems section and that he hoped tonight to discuss how PRLAC should be addressing the problems. It was generally agreed that restoring the provisions of the 2008 CSPA should be our Number One objective. Some of the possible tactics discussed include an appeal to towns for local regulations similar to the former CSPA, working with other groups such as NH Lakes who are advocating for the same thing and working with local legislators after the election to initiate state action. When the idea of working initially with two towns came up, Dan Paradis suggested that we probably shouldn't get bogged down trying to spell out tactics in the management plan but rather put the emphasis on our objectives. Max and Dave will continue to refine this section of the management plan.

Other:

Fred Gunter reported on the proposed Thornton RV Park. He said there was a difference of opinion between Town Counsel and the developers in interpreting the zoning ordinances which would have to be resolved before the outcome could be known.

Adjournment:

Fred Gunter made a motion seconded by Barry Draper to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel A. Paradis
Secretary