



WANTASTIQUET REGION RIVER SUBCOMMITTEE Minutes - May 27, 2009

PRESENT: Gordon Schofield, Hinsdale; Richard Schmidt, Westmoreland; Peter Barrett, Westminster; Dan Marx, Dummerston; Hazel Hunter, Chesterfield; George Watkins, Bill Roberts, Bob Harcke, and Adair Mulligan, CRJC
ABSENT: representatives of Putney, Brattleboro, Walpole, Vernon
GUESTS: Marie Caduto, VT DEC; John Medieros, Westminster Planning & Development Commission; Marcia Galloway, Walpole Conservation Commission

1. Housekeeping - Walpole will send a new representative, Mary Lou Montgomery, to the next meeting. Minutes of the meeting of February 26 were approved on a motion by Bill, seconded by George. Minutes of the meeting of April 15 were approved on a motion by Bill, seconded by Dick. The subcommittee's Water Resources Plan will go to design and publication soon.
2. Permit issues - Plans are moving ahead again for a new Hinsdale - Brattleboro Bridge, with construction expected to begin sometime in 2012. CRJC has asked that NH DOT, which is coordinating the project, notify Gordon and Bill from Hinsdale and Monroe Whitaker from Brattleboro of any upcoming meetings. Bob Harcke reported that the bridge is now the Southwest Region Planning Commission's highest priority project. The existing historic bridges will remain for pedestrian and bicycle use. NH Fish & Game is currently designing an upgrade to Hinsdale's boat launch, although Gordon said that the town knows nothing about this, and has just received a grant to apply gravel to the parking area and put up a sign board. The site is affected by silt and water levels in the Vernon impoundment that limits the size of boats that can use the launch. The passage to the river is quite shallow with a shifting channel.
3. Middle Connecticut River Important Bird Area - Bill Roberts reported that the Hinsdale Historical Society will close on the Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale Farm, including its substantial riverfront property, on Friday, May 29.
4. The New Connecticut River Water Resources Management Plan for the Wantastiquet Region - Gordon introduced the members and the new plan, followed by a presentation by Adair Mulligan. Future presentations will take place in the fall. After the presentation, Marcia Galloway commented that NH DES permit applications have become so cumbersome, even for simple projects, that the process can force an applicant to hire a consultant or prompt a landowner to go ahead without seeking a permit. She said that Walpole is fortunate that much of its riverfront land is now conserved.