

CRJC Headwaters Subcommittee

Thursday, January 26, 2012

Colebrook Town Hall

Draft Minutes

Present:

Ed Mellet, Chair, Northumberland
Tom Caron, Canaan
Marty Lomasney, Bloomfield
Kevin McKinnon, Colebrook
Gary Paquette, Stratford
Bill Schomburg, Columbia
Bob Ball, CRJC
Mary Sloat, CRJC
Brendan Whittaker, CRJC
Tara Bamford, North Country Council
Jan McClure, The Nature Conservancy

The meeting was called to order by Ed Mellett at 7 PM and introductions made.

1. Update from The Nature Conservancy – Jan McClure, Land Protection Specialist for The Nature Conservancy reported on TNC's work on the Potter Farm at the mouth of the Upper Ammonoosuc. The Upper Connecticut River is a TNC conservation focus area, especially the farmland/floodplain forest edge and restoration of floodplain forest. With an M & E fund grant and ARM funds, TNC has been trying various methods of floodplain forest restoration on different plots on the Potter Farm. This has been in coordination with farm activities and has included plantings (incl. silver maples, black willow, and elm) and invasive controls (incl. knotweed, honeysuckle, and buckthorn).

Ms. McClure also reported on TNC's Staying Connected Initiative looking at wildlife movement/travel corridors in the northern Appalachians from Cape Breton and the Gaspé to the Adirondacks and southern Green Mtns. TNC is looking at the needs of various species and impediments between large conserved blocks of habitat. The Connecticut River was noted as an important travel corridor for some species.

2. Housekeeping – Review of minutes of June 1, 2011 and October 5, 2011 and election of officers were tabled due to lack of a quorum.

The membership list was reviewed and everyone who has not been coming has been contacted. With the exception of Charles Patterson from Lemington who didn't respond, everyone contacted sounded interested in staying on for now. The suggestion of Rachel Ruppel, CRJC staff, of having three year terms and keeping better track was noted as having benefits for both recruiting new members and for giving those who no longer have time or interest an opportunity to be done. Tara was asked to double check on whether appointments

should now be made per the bylaws or in accord with new process being discussed and to work with the chair to get a letter out to towns without two active members.

3. Permit Reviews

CRJC received a notice that the Town of Pittsburg will be applying for a wetlands permit for the construction of new wells, pump house, water tank and new connection to the existing water main to serve the village area. No concerns were expressed at this time.

An email was also received by CRJC from a wetland scientist working for Vtrans to stabilize an active slide along the embankment that Rte 102 is perched on top of in Maidstone. The work will need a permit from both states. Members stated a preference for viewing the site individually rather than scheduling a formal site visit. There was discussion about whether it would be possible to relocate the road using the old railroad bed and that this might preclude having to do this work over and over. Tara was asked to write VTrans with this suggestion/question from the Subcommittee.

4. Updates from CRJC and CR Byway

Commissioners present reported on activities of the CRJC. Tara handed out an excerpt from the draft minutes of the 1/17/12 CRJC meeting where Subcommittee roles and strategic planning were discussed. In addition to the four roles listed – permit review, education and outreach, plan implementation, and documenting progress – a fifth role was discussed – advocacy for the river as issues arise.

It was agreed that updating the scorecard should be a future agenda item.

Grant seeking for invasives control and addressing erosion by Groveton cemetery were noted as two high priorities for CRJC grant seeking/workplan.

The idea of meeting with other CRJC subcommittees was discussed and members felt they would get more out of the statewide meeting being planned by DES.

5. Other Business

Tara reported that the DES gathering of local river subcommittees is being postponed from 1/28/12 to a later date.

Other items discussed included:

- progress on the Canaan Community Forest on the west side of Rte 253 along the river and its potential for river access

- completion of riprap by the Colebrook industrial park

- status of byway visitor centers

- Transcanada's inundation map update and early warning systems

6. Next meeting

April 24th or 26th were discussed as possible dates for the next meeting. Tara will email members absent to see if they have a preference.