

Mount Ascutney River Subcommittee April 17, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Subcommittee Members Present: Cordie Merritt, Hartland; Gil Whittmore, Weathersfield; Thomas Hernon, Rockingham; Margaret Perry, Rockingham; and Kelly Stettner, Springfield

Pending Members Present: Barbara Rhoad, Windsor

CRJC Staff: Victoria Davis, UVLSRPC

Others: John Broker-Campbell, Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission; Bob Harcke, CRJC Commissioner; and Bernie Folta of Claremont

Absent Members: Steve Halleran, Plainfield; Ted Moynihan, Plainfield; Michael Meeks, Cornish; Judy Howland, Hartland; and Kurt Staudter, Springfield

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm at the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission in Ascutney, VT. As there was not a quorum of representatives from six towns, there was no vote on the previous meeting's minutes.

Rules of Procedure: There was discussion about the Subcommittee Rules of Procedure regarding a quorum and the minimum number required to vote. Vickie Davis reported that the CRJC Commissioners are considering development of common Rules of Procedure for all subcommittees. The rules for each subcommittee are slightly different, the quorum is difficult to achieve, and there may even be some portions of the rules which do not provide appropriate protocol.

New Member Recruitment: Vickie Davis reported that there are a few new members and potential members to be nominated: Judy Howland from Hartland, Barbara Rhoad from Windsor, and Kelly Stettner from Springfield. Bernie Folta reported that he had spoken with the Claremont City Council about the need for representation for Claremont. There are no members from Claremont as yet. There are also no members for Charlestown. There is only one member from each of the towns of Cornish, Windsor, and Weathersfield. Membership efforts will continue, including using media advertising to get the word out that members are needed. There were suggestions about contacting other relevant organizations and specific people who might be interested.

Report from CRJC Commissioner Meeting and Strategic Plan: Vickie Davis passed out the new CRJC strategic plan draft. It is a two-page document in draft form. Subcommittee members are encouraged to make comments on this draft to Vickie before May 15th.

The Commissioners would also like Subcommittee members to reach out to town officials to incorporate river considerations into town ordinances and regulations. This would include making them aware of the river management plans which are available on-line at www.CRJC.org.

Bob Harkne responded to a question about the past importance of subcommittees for the CRJC Commission. He stated that the focus of CRJC is on the subcommittees as this is where activity is occurring. Since funding has substantially dwindled, it is important to have working subcommittees to validate future grant project applications. He also gave a brief history of CRJC for the new members.

Goals of Mount Ascutney River Subcommittee: Vickie Davis read a draft of “local river subcommittee roles” and “next steps to be taken for strategic planning” from the CRJC, and then asked for input from the attending members about their hopes and expectations for the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee will continue discussions of goals at upcoming meetings.

- Prioritize problems with the rivers including why people should be concerned
- Emphasize resolution of past concerns such as overdevelopment along the river and dumping of raw sewage into the river
- Consider differing and potentially conflicting ideas of river management (natural evolving channelization versus bank stabilization for example)
- Get back to where the Subcommittee was when it was extremely productive
- Share knowledge of local stretch of river including Hurricane Irene damage
- Emphasize importance of buffer zones to protect the river from landfills, gravel pits...
- Erosion control
- Clean-up after Hurricane Irene emphasis to capture attention since this is what is on people’s minds right now
- Develop common ground among river interest groups
- Assure public access to decision-making

Other Business: Vickie Davis reported that Laurie Callahan, a consultant for the NH Rivers Council would like the Subcommittee to participate in an invasive aquatic plants workshop. There is Eurasian milfoil present on the Connecticut River in the Lyme/Orford area, East Wilder and Charlestown. The Subcommittee is interested and would like more information. Vickie Davis or Rachel Ruppel of the UVLSRPC will contact Laurie to schedule a workshop on a Saturday. Kelly Stettner suggested Hoyt’s Landing across from Fort #4.

The Subcommittee reported various upcoming events:

Wise on Weeds (terrestrial), May 3, 2012 at Springfield Library at 6:30 pm

Herricks Cove Wildlife Festival, May 6th from 10 am to 4 pm

Living with Vermont’s Rivers Conference, May 16th at Montpelier, 8:00 – 4:30 pm

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 16th at 7:00 pm at a location to be determined.

Respectfully Submitted by

Victoria Davis, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission, as CRJC staff