

Central NH Regional Planning Commission

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Warner River Nomination Committee Meeting

Wednesday, January 20, 2015

Warner Town Hall, 5 East Main St, Warner NH 03278

7:00 P.M.

Minutes:

Review Minutes of the December 16th Meeting

The meeting began by addressing the implications that designating the Warner River would have on future dam development along the river. Peter Ladd, a local land and dam owner, conservationist and member of the Warner Energy Committee voiced his concerns over the potential designation of the Warner River. He stressed the important role hydro power will play in the future as the world turns away from its reliance on fossil fuels. The Warner River is an asset to the community and designating the river may have unintended consequences in the future by limiting the potential for hydro power.

Chris Connors of Trout Unlimited added that the Warner River watershed is one of the most threatened in the country due to the present biodiversity and potential for development. Mrs. Connors explained that there is a survey of NH dams currently underway and she plans to reach out to project lead Paul Kirshen for more information.

The need became apparent to explore possible ways to designate the river while allowing for future dam development. Changing the classification of the stretch of river containing the dams from Rural-Community to Community was discussed as one possible option.

River Abutter Addresses

The majority of names and addresses for riparian landowners were returned. Sam Durfee of CNHRPC will begin the process of putting together the mailers.

A date for a public meeting was discussed and the committee settled on March 16th. The nomination committee is required by law (RSA 483:6, I) to hold at least one public meeting before submitting the nomination to DES. The question of advanced public notice of the meeting was brought up. The committee estimated that two weeks of prior notice is required and this has been confirmed. Given the date of the public meeting falls after town meetings, committee members were asked to inform their respective towns at town meetings of the river nomination project and future public meeting.

HB 1589 – Testimony

Chris Connors had shared an email earlier in the week with the committee regarding a bill going before the House Resources, Recreations, and Development Committee on Tuesday, January 26, at 1:00 pm. She gave a brief synopsis of the bill which would modify existing law by requiring boaters to clean off the outside of boats and trails and to drain the water out of their vessels when moving between waterbodies. Mrs. Connors asked committee members who also sit on their respective town's conservation commissions to put together a letter of support. Given the short notice, it is unlikely that any of the conservation commissions would be able to do so.

Looking Ahead

Sam Durfee informed the committee that the draft of the nomination is nearing completion. The primary chapter that needs to be completed is the Cultural and Historic Resources chapter. Rebecca from the Warner Historical Society is currently putting together a series of document and other resources that will provide the information needed to finish the chapter.

Other areas of the document that needed to be bolstered include the water quality, recreation opportunities, public access points, scenic resources, village districts, and riparian interests/flowage rights sections as well as some other general questions. Members of the committee were able to provide information to fill some of these requests. In other cases they provided direction on where to find the information or offered to find out and send along their findings.

Next Meeting Date

The next Warner River Nomination Committee meeting was scheduled for February 17th, 2016 at 7:00 P.M., in the Warner Town Hall.