



WARNER RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

<https://www.wrlac.com/>

MINUTES

Wednesday, 6 December 2023

7:00 p.m.

Pillsbury Free Library, Warner, NH

2024 Meetings

February 28	August 28
April 24	October 23
June 26	December: TBD

Appointed WRLAC Representatives present in **bold** (term ends):

George Embley, Webster (07-08-2024)

Marlene Freyler, Bradford (08-16-2024)

Rebecca Herman, Bradford (10- -2026)

Mike Howley, Bradford (06-22-2024)

Ken Milender, Warner (11-26-2024)

Dan Morrissey, Hopkinton (02-09-2025)

Laura Russell, Warner (11-26-2024)

Peter Savickas, Sutton (08-19-2025)

Christopher Spannweitz, Warner (11-26-2024)

Meeting convened at 7:05 PM

New Business

1. Meeting minutes for October 25 were unanimously approved.
2. Treasurer's Report – No report.
 - a. Laura will check with Andy Catts, our website consultant, about the billing process for the website.
 - b. Chair Ken will hand over the financial reins to the new chair.

3. New permit applications – No new applications!
4. Other New Business
 - a. 60 Blaisdell Lake Road, Bradford
 - i. A complaint was lodged for possible violations of wetlands rules (potential filling of wetlands w/o the required permit(s)) at a residential property.
 - ii. DES's letter is dated 24 October (DES File 2023-02826).
 - iii. Bradford Conservation Commission is following up.
 - b. 85 Rte NH 103 (Morse Lane), Sutton
 - i. There have been concerns about the permitting process for a well and septic system. Pete was able to find a plan from the town clerk, and there has, indeed, been a permit issued.
 - c. Report on the Warner Conservation Commission public work session on 11/21/23 (Laura)
 - i. The WCC had a public work session to discuss questions about the impact of the proposed construction of the portion of the Concord Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (CLSRT) on local wildlife, particularly wood turtles. The WCC invited NH Fish & Game biologist Josh Megyesy to provide information about wood turtle history, habitat, and threats. Others present at the work meeting were David Carroll, turtle researcher, and Tim Blagden, [CLSRT](#) director.
 - ii. The main questions that were raised included the following:
 1. Specifically, where does the turtle habitat overlap the rail trail corridor? Throughout the proposed rail trail corridor within the Warner River floodplain and associated streams.
 2. Is the turtle population viable? Yes.
 3. What portion of the population might be affected by the development of a rail trail in or near turtle habitat? The entire population.
 4. Seasonality – winter months, no turtle movement; June is significant because it's nesting season; building trail and other ground disturbance must occur when turtles are not present.
 - iii. Click here for the summary of the meeting: [Warner Conservation Commission minutes November 21, 2023](#). No transcript or recording was available.
 - iv. For historical context, when the Dunkin Donuts was built in Warner, there were considerations made for protecting wildlife at that location.
 - d. Other New Business
 - i. Trout Unlimited: Ben Nugent has been invited to submit a grant proposal to fund improvements for two culverts in Ballard Brook and one for Hoyt Brook. Ben would like this Committee to provide a [letter of support](#) for this grant.
 1. Thanks to George for his input on the letter!
 - ii. Warner Village Water District: Testing for the project to address copper levels should be finished soon. The Committee also discussed the challenges of addressing other types of contaminants that can be present in water, such as PFAS.

1. Continuing permit applications (Chair):
 - a. Breezy Hill Road AoT Application (Bradford). Application was revised and resubmitted to DES (10/12/2023). Applicant responded to DES's and our concerns by performing field testing that indicated the soils are too impermeable to allow for stormwater infiltration, which resulted in them revising their design to better treat and remove sediment in sedimentation basins before it would be released to the river. We might be done with the permitting aspects of this one!
 - b. 107 Toms Pond Lane. Request for Shoreland Permit to allow the homeowners to rebuild stairs, a patio, and repair an eroding slope (letter attached). DES has issued a request for more information (not because of us!).
2. Website update – Laura and Mike will be meeting with the rep from Wix on January 8 to get some pointers on how to improve the website.
3. Instream Flow project – No report
4. A discussion about logging and WRLAC's role, which also shed some light on a possible goal for this Committee
 - a. Should we be notified about intents to cut or land-clearing activities within the corridor? Yes, because this fits into our role as advisory and "educatory" about the Corridor. How can we understand the process, and then how can we be part of the process in a timely manner? It would be great if towns could add a checkbox to the NH state form indicating that WRLAC has been notified along with the other relevant entities. Different towns have different processes for permitting these activities. For state permits (DES or DoT), we do get notified about things like bridge repairs in the Corridor. For permits that don't involve the state, like site plan reviews at the town level, we rely on an informal network with members of other relevant town committees, such as the towns' conservation committees and planning boards. They are pretty good at keeping us in the loop. But we still don't have any kind of automatic notification process. Early in the life of WRLAC, Ken did approach each town to remind different committees that the LACs are supposed to be part of the process, and this should probably be done every few years to keep WRLAC visible to towns' boards. It was noted that to help us accomplish our work, the towns are statutorily required to provide some nominal monetary assistance.
 - b. As a selectboard member, Marlene could call the NH Municipal Association to get clarification about logging, intent to cut, clear cutting etc., and what triggers different permitting processes.
 - c. Ken has contacted Tracie Sales, too, but has not heard back from her yet.
 - d. Perhaps the most effective thing to do is to work with conservation commissions to make sure that select boards and planning boards are well-aware of the rules for things like intent to cut.
 - e. See below, as an example: Warner's posting for an Intent to Cut*. This kind of notice below appears on the town's website, and if a Warner resident is signed up for town emails, it appears there, too.
 - i. Secretary's note: Here is the link to the [Warner town website relevant to cutting trees](#), and here is the form a landowner must fill out: [Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber](#).
 - f. Perhaps a way to increase communication about town-issued permits would be for WRLAC members to be in touch with the relevant committees of their towns by

attending meetings or making a point to check in with various committee chairs or town employees.

- g. Would it behoove this committee to spend some time reviewing the bylaws as well as the RSA that sets up LACs?
5. Public Events – Increasing the committee’s visibility is the goal. Chris staffed the table at the Fall Foliage Festival; Laura staffed a table at the Warner Palooza. Is this the best use of our time? Perhaps we are more effective with outreach to individuals, as discussed above, as well as groups like Trout Unlimited and NH Fish & Game who have *always* been very helpful to us. Eventually, we’ll need to do some fundraising to help us with the outreach to the general public, like promoting the website. But the key seems to be to start with solidifying our town networks. And setting up stronger connections with lake associations is going to be important as the Instream Flow Project implements its plans.
6. Nominating Subcommittee Report – We introduce our slate of officers to begin their terms in December 2023! Many thanks for those volunteering to take WRLAC to the next level! The Committee thanked Chair Ken for his SIX years of energetic and devoted service with a plaque (provided as a gift from Marlene) and commendations from the entire committee. After the motions for nominations, a discussion followed about how the committee will get a vice chair. Then, the following slate was accepted by a unanimous vote.
- a. Chair - Dan Morrissey
 - b. Vice Chair -
 - c. Treasurer - Pete Savickas
 - d. Secretary - Laura Russell
7. New Chair Dan’s comments about possible areas of focus: get some funding(!) to do things like maintaining the website, getting expert analysis of data, mapping, lake studies, etc; increase utilization of the website, both with content and with outreach; increase and diversify representation from the towns; coordinate with groundwater protection folks; addressing road salting; improving the local reporting (perhaps through the Intertown Record, Warner’s library newsletter, or other local publications or news blast emails.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 PM

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, February 28, 2024

2024 Meetings

February 28	August 28
April 24	October 23
June 26	December 25?

* Sample of Warner’s Intent to Cut notice

Town of Warner - PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Intent To Cut

Tax Map 18, Lot 040-2

Acreage of Cut: 3.5
"Kearsarge Mountain Road"
For September 2021