



## WARNER RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

### MINUTES

Wednesday, 22 March 2023

7:00 p.m.

In person: Pillsbury Free Library, Warner, NH

On Zoom

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

**George Embley**, Webster (07-08-2024)

Marlene Freyler, Bradford (08-16-2024)

Patti Furness, Bradford (07-33-2024)

**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) *On zoom*

**Christopher Spannweitz**, Warner (11-26-2024)

### Members of the Public

In person: Bill Hansen, Warner; David Carroll, Warner

On zoom: Jim Sherman, FCLSRT; Karen Coyne, Warner; "Bridgewater"

Meeting was convened at 7:03 PM

### New Business

1. September 2022 and November 2022 minutes were approved unanimously.
2. Treasurer's report: Laura reported for Patti who could not be there. The balance remains unchanged at \$2,360.00.
3. New permit application - The permit subcommittee has been reviewing a new house proposal on Willaby Colby Lane, Warner, Lot 33-19-1. While the proposal looks in line with town permits, the subcommittee's review of the Shoreland Permit raised several concerns about the design and

impact on the river, as the property is very close to the Warner River. In [a letter to DES](#) (with copies to Warner Conservation Commission and Warner Land Use Office), the subcommittee requested a number of permit conditions. In addition, WRLAC was made aware of concerns by two abutters.

- a. Related discussion: For the sake of quick turnaround time, the permit review subcommittee has typically only sent copies of letters to WRLAC reps in whose town the permit was being reviewed. During the discussion, acknowledging that sometimes the window for commenting on a permit is very narrow, it was requested that future permit letters be circulated to the entire WRLAC for review before sending the letter to the recipients. Chair agreed to this.
4. Bradford Transfer Station - Mike reported seeing what looked like several acres of cleared land on the east side of the Bradford Transfer Station property, across from the floodplain between Rtes 103 and 114. He has heard that the town is considering blasting. This would be for the extraction of sand and gravel.
  - a. Discussion: The question was raised about whether towns are subject to the same permitting requirements as private citizens. Probably not. Could WRLAC send a letter to the town requesting that the town be sure to employ best management practices so as to avoid/prevent erosion, contamination, etc? Chair will reach out to Marlene Freyler, Bradford Selectboard and WRLAC member, as well as Ann Eldridge, Bradford Conservation Commission, to find out more and to express this committee's concerns and hope that the town will provide stewardship in the form of BMPs.
5. Town Meeting reports - Chair submitted annual reports to all five towns.
6. Procedural questions discussion
  - a. This committee still needs a vice-chair.
  - b. Meeting frequency changes - At the November 2022 meeting, the Committee discussed the possibility of reducing the frequency of meetings to every other month. One committee member wondered if this change would be in violation of the [WRLAC Bylaws](#). The Chair read aloud the relevant section of the WRLAC Bylaws (Article 8 VIII: B): *Regular meetings of the Committee will be held on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 7pm to 9pm, or as agreed upon at a prior meeting.* In reviewing the meaning of this statement, the Committee determined that having meetings every other month, rather than monthly, does not necessitate a change in the bylaws.
7. Ongoing discussion - Jim Sherman, from The Friends of the Concord Lake Sunapee Rail Trail, reported that the FCLSRT has received a generous grant from a US Congressional earmark to develop the trail from the end of Waterloo St to the roundabout with a connections to the extension of the trail from Chemical Road (including bridges over the Warner River and Stevens Brook). This is in addition to a grant to wind the trail up, down, and around the I-89 interchange at Exit 8. There may be other potential grants from NFWF's "America the Beautiful" Program to repair damage to the wetlands caused by the Interstate Highway program. Mr. Sherman noted that the planning is ongoing and that the project will come back to Town Meeting for vote in 2024. Fiscally, the state wants the Town of Warner to manage the funds, but the FCLSRT will "do all the work."

- a. Discussion: David Carroll wanted WLAC to know why he opposes this project. He spoke about the need for protecting areas where humans should not be able to go in order to allow the wildlife and land to remain in as natural a state as possible in the face of increasing human and climate change impacts. The river is in good shape for now. What's hard is that we want to ride our bikes and walk our dogs there, too. Chris noted that Mr. Carroll's comments reminded him that humans' actions can have unintended consequences, such as opening the door to garbage, misuse, snowmobiles, ATVs, etc. Chair Ken noted that the role of the WRLAC is to walk that fine line between "nature and us." Mr. Carroll noted that he appreciated the work of WRLAC he is available to any to speak about this further. Mr. Sherman reminded the Committee that while bicycles and pets are allowed on the existing rail trail, the FLSRT does not allow snowmobiles (with an exception for a partnership with a local snowmobile club) or ATVs. The trail entrances are constructed to prohibit these vehicles from entering. In addition, the organization is very attentive to picking up litter and trash such as broken bottles and refuse that has been buried. They have removed rail tracks and ties. He said that the FLSRT is committed to taking care of what they build. They have engaged in studies about the impact of the rail trail and will continue to do so. If the information indicates that the project in a particular location should be abandoned, they will do so and make alternate plans. He said that the FLSRT take's Mr. Carroll's comments seriously. Mr. Carroll commented that the FLSRT has a good policy for taking care of the trail; however, "what you do on the trail is something else." In addition, Mr. Carroll and Mr. Sherman politely disagreed on the potential for economic benefits to the communities along the trail. Pete S reminded the Committee that WRLAC's role is to advise. Chair Ken wondered if there's room for compromise. He also noted that WRLAC would stay in touch with both parties.
- b. This discussion reminded Chair Ken to alert the Committee to the fact that the Merrimack River Watershed Council will no longer be administering/coordinating the VRAP program. The role of the admin/coordinator would be to muster, organize, and oversee volunteers. In addition, the admin/coordinator might want to attend the yearly training session in May. Chair Ken has the instruments. Laura and Chris are interested in participating in data gathering. Further discussion is needed to determine an admin/coordinator.

#### New Business

1. No continuing permit applications.
2. Warner River turbidity coming out of Breezy Hill logging - DES, having serendipitously had the opportunity to observe the conditions, has sent a letter of deficiency requesting that the owners submit plans to prevent further discharges. The owners have hired an engineer, and in February, they submitted a stabilization plan for DES to review. It has been difficult for this Committee to get further information. This Committee's concern is that with mud season and snowmelt occurring at this time, it's imperative to stop any further damage. This problem raises the question of whether this Committee should be informed of intent-to-cut notices within the

Corridor (at least). With rain in the forecast this weekend, Pete will try to document the flowage. Ken will reach out to Tracie to make her aware of the Committee's concerns.

3. Website - Former Committee member Andy Jeffrey has graciously signed the Committee up for 10 hours of consultation with Andy Catts. Laura and Mike will meet in June to discuss the questions we have for upgrading the website and then schedule a meeting with Mr. Catts soon thereafter.
4. Reps - The Committee continues to need more voices from Webster and Hopkinton!
5. Instream Flow Report - The Chair thanks all those who attended the DES presentations. He was able to submit our Committee's comments before the March 24th deadline. Thank you, Ken!!! The next step will be a water management plan. Mike reminded the Committee that if there were ever to be relief pulses (not drawdowns), the level of the lake would be reduced by about 2 inches.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:07.

Meeting Schedule for 2023: May 24, July 26, Sept 27, Nov 29

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Russell, WRLAC secretary