

**Nashua River Wild & Scenic River Study Committee**  
**Notes from the Study Committee Meeting**  
NRWA's River Resource Center, 592 Main Street, Groton, MA  
April 19, 2018

**INFORMAL NOTES**

*Members Present:* Beth Suedmeyer and Robert Pontbriand (Ayer); Rona Balco and Rebecca Longvall (Bolton); Drew Kellner (Brookline); Nadia Madden and Stacey Chilcoat (Groton); Lucy Wallace (Harvard); Laura Bianco (Hollis); Bill Flynn (Lancaster); Paula Terrasi (Pepperell); Heidi Ricci (Shirley)  
*NRWA Staff:* Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell, Al Futterman, Martha Morgan  
*NPS:* Jamie Fosburgh  
*Ex Officio:* Anne Gagnon (MA DFW); Neil Angus (DEC)  
*Guests:* Mike Fleming, Warren Kimball and Joan Wotkowicz (NRWA Board members)

The meeting was called to order at 6 PM by the chair, Lucy Wallace.

Training Session for Annual Town Meeting

Robert Pontbriand led a training session for Committee members as preparation for the upcoming Massachusetts towns' Annual Town Meetings (ATMs). He began by distributing copies of Ayer's "Residents Guide to Town Meetings" along with a "Town Meeting Cheat Sheet" he had prepared. Using the Cheat Sheet, he walked through the general protocol and flow of town meeting and aspects of our proposal we should make sure to clarify in our presentations or be ready to answer. He stressed that the Moderator runs the Meeting and clarified that because this article is being considered by multiple towns, it cannot be amended. While all towns' meeting protocols allow tabling a motion, he is checking with legal counsel to see if an article being presented to multiple town meetings can be tabled.

Robert suggested that Committee members who are presenting or speaking to the article prepare their own notes to refer to covering the basic points of what the Plan and designation mean and do not mean. He also suggested that we consider what questions we may be asked and be prepared to answer them.

Drew Kellner noted that it is very important to meet with the Moderator prior to the start of the meeting, especially if a non-resident will be attending to answer questions and so needs authorization to speak or if the presenter intends to show the video. He also suggested that supporters of the article be primed to speak in its favor.

Robert then asked Committee members to suggest more problematic questions; possible answers we discussed as follows:

- Why voting at this ATM? This is a regional voted being considered by eight other MA towns at their spring ATMs.
- Must all nine MA towns vote "yes"? No, but which towns vote no could impact ability to proceed with designation (for example, if town(s) in middle to Nashua mainstem, for instance, vote "no" it may make designation less feasible).
- Will designation impact gas pipelines? As a FERC-licensed activity, NPS could comment and suggest most appropriate route, but could not prohibit a pipeline.
- Were abutters informed? There is no requirement to hold a hearing; that said, there were multiple public meetings, forums and outreach to the towns. This is a voluntary, grassroots Plan and request for designation.

Robert suggested that we consider 3 categories of questions in preparing for our ATMs: general (what will happen if designated W&S?); specific (what might be particular concern in given town); odd/not strictly pertaining to the article (let the Moderator address/rule on appropriateness). Robert also advised that presenters not respond to a general comment, unless it contains misinformation. Otherwise, limit speaking to answering questions.

The Committee members thanked Robert for his training and materials. Robert offered to send his materials electronically should members wish to customize them. Committee members also thanked Drew for his input.

### Administrative

The notes of March 15, 2018 were approved as presented.

### Update on Public Forums

Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell reported on public forums that Al Futterman and Committee members have organized since our March meeting and other outreach activities. Four towns (Bolton, Harvard, Pepperell and Shirley) have held forums. Forums in Harvard and Shirley were held as part of the regular Board of Selectmen's meeting and, therefore, able to be recorded for local access. Upcoming forums include:

- Groton – April 22 as part of an Earth Day Celebration at the NRWA's River Resource Center (which will be videotaped for rebroadcast on local access).
- Dunstable – April 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Lancaster – April 25<sup>th</sup>
- Townsend – April 26<sup>th</sup>
- Ayer – May 3<sup>rd</sup>

The Wynne Treanor-Kvenvold, NRWA Communications Manager, has sent our Wild & Scenic video to all of the local cable TV access station managers for broadcast. She also has sent a Public Service Announcement to these station managers for broadcast. Additional outreach generated by NRWA staff includes flyers customized for each town; evites to town forums, press releases and letters to the editor. It was noted that the *Lowell Sun* had an excellent op ed piece from its Editorial Board on the Stewardship Plan and designation.

Committee members and NRWA staff had been charged with contacting the towns' Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Conservation Commission for endorsement letters. Al distributed a list of endorsement letters received to date from the nine MA towns, noting that those that have not yet voted to endorse and/or sent in letters expect to do so before the end of the month. Neil Angus offered to show the video at the May 3<sup>rd</sup> Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC) meeting and to ask for an endorsement letter from the DEC as well.

Beth Suedmeyer suggested posting the endorsement letters on our website; Elizabeth agreed to have that done as they are received.

### Technical Support at ATMs

Al has made thumb drives of our Wild & Scenic video which Committee members were given to use as part of the presentation during ATM (if allowed) or as part of other outreach. If the video is to be shown at the ATM, make sure it can be run on the ATM system (including audio).

Jamie Fosburgh, Liz Lacy and other NPS staff will be available to attend the nine MA ATMs, if requested. Al, Elizabeth and Lucy will also be available, if requested. Elizabeth distributed a list of possible meeting assignments, noting that Jamie will attend the Pepperell, Shirley and Townsend town meetings.

## Update on the Stewardship Plan

Elizabeth reminded Committee members that while the Stewardship Plan's content had been set at our February 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Committee had authorized Lucy, Elizabeth, Al, and Wynne to make necessary editorial (spelling, grammatical, and clarifying footnotes) and graphic improvements (layout, maps, charts, and photos) as needed to finalize the Plan and ready it for printing. Lucy had been given authority to make final decisions on behalf of the Committee. Elizabeth was pleased to announce that this phase of the Plan had been completed and held up a copy of the final document. The intent is for each MA town to receive two copies of the Plan in binders (one for the town hall, one for the public library) by the end of the week so they are available for public review prior to ATMs. This final version of the Plan will also be put up on our website by the end of the week. If Committee members cannot come in to pick up their town's copies of the Plan, the NRWA will arrange to have them delivered. (Note: the NH towns also had binders with the Plan prior to their respective ATMs in March, but those versions of the Plan, while final in content, did not have the final photographs, maps, etc.)

Lucy acknowledged that hard work of the staff over these last few weeks in bringing the Plan to fruition; Elizabeth acknowledged the important hard work and contributions of the Committee members, including Lucy's close work on the Stewardship Plan.

Lucy suggested that we ask each town to announce the Plan's completion on its website and direct interested residents to our website to view it.

## NPS Update

Jamie had two short updates. First, that funding of the Cooperative Agreement had gone through NPS-DC review and been approved for processing. And second, he is expecting the Study Report from Liz in the next day or so. Elizabeth confirmed that NRWA will contract with a graphic designer and printer to produce the Study Report, with the intent that it will be a companion piece to the Plan. Jamie noted that not all of the copies needed to be in color; that black and white was acceptable.

## Other Business

Lucy announced she and Elizabeth had been discussing the need to hold a celebration after the ATMs have voted to accept the Plan. Elizabeth noted that LeeAnn Wolff had offered to do something at her house, but that perhaps Hollis would be too far for some to travel. Lucy reported that she had been in touch with Alison Tocci, proprietor of The Bull Run Restaurant in Shirley (and on the Mulpus Brook) who was willing to let us use the outdoor Patio and Garden Room at no charge for such a gathering. It was generally agreed that would be a good location. Lucy and Elizabeth will look into costs per person and other details.

It was agreed to hold the celebration on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting adjourned at 9 PM.

The regular May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting will not be held; the June meeting will be held on the usual 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month – June 21<sup>st</sup>.