



FARMINGTON RIVER COORDINATING COMMITTEE
100 East River Road – Squire’s Tavern
P.O. Box 395
Pleasant Valley, CT 06063
860-379-0282 **www.farmingtonriver.org**

Approved Minutes of Regular FRCC Meeting
Monday, July 18, 2011
Squire’s Tavern
100 East River Road, Pleasant Valley

Present: Roger Behrens (Barkhamsted Alt); Tiffany Caisse (SCA/AmeriCorps Apprentice); Eileen Fielding (FRWA Alt/Treas.); Liz Lacy (NPS Alt/FRCC Director); Susan Peterson (CT DEEP Rep/Sec.); Cherie Robinson (Canton Alt/Vice Chair); Mario Santoro (Barkhamsted Rep); David Sinish (FRWA Rep); Tom Stanton (Colebrook Rep); Edna Travis (Colebrook Alt/Chair)

Pre-meeting Event

Several FRCC members attended the CT DEEP “Commissioner in Your Corner” event held across the street from Squire’s Tavern at the pavilion at Matthies Grove in People’s State Forest from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. This was the final stop of a four part tour Commissioner Daniel Esty made of the West Branch of the Farmington River which began earlier in the afternoon at the MDC Goodwin/Hogback Dam. Among the speakers at Matthies Grove was David Sinish, who spoke on behalf of FRCC. (Thank you, David.)

Regular FRCC Meeting

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Travis at 7:20 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes of June 20, 2011 meeting:** The minutes were approved with the following changes:
 - p. 3 – Under In-river Patio Project – Change “ambiguity” to “uncertainty”
 - p. 3 - Under In-river Patio Project – After “P&Z and IW”, insert “commission”
3. **Treasurer’s Report:** Fielding reviewed the Treasurer’s Report which was distributed as a handout. As of July 12, 2011, the new checking account balance was \$327.68; and the new scholarship fund balance was \$4,522.21. (Note - \$2,000 will be transferred ASAP to the checking account from the scholarship fund to cover the scholarships checks cut. The adjusted balances will then be \$2,327.68, and \$2,522.21, respectively.) A transfer of \$15,000 was made from the Lower W&S account. Grant for Roaring Brook Nature Center mural for work by Michael diGiorgio is actually \$10,000, not \$5,000. However, because sponsoring foundation has already paid diGiorgio in full, final payment of \$5,000 will be to foundation. The (second) listing for Hartland Land Trust closes out a five-year-old start-up grant. Under amount paid to David Sinish, modify “description” to read “map distribution boxes”.
4. **Old Business:**

Resource Stewardship – Lacy led updates as Tim Anthony, Subcommittee Chair, was not present.

Invasives Plant Management Project – Betsy Corrigan and Caisse have been out in the field, continuing to survey for invasives, and conducting knapweed pulls. Two more “pulls” will be taking place this Friday and Saturday, probably at Greenwoods East. Please contact them if you would like to participate. Lacy reported that Cynthia Boettner (USFWS) of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge has submitted a grant for invasive plant management that includes a request for a coordinator to assist Corrigan and Caisse.

Vernal Pools – Although there are still about half a dozen small areas that need to be checked, Canton, New Hartford and Colebrook are close to being finished.

Still River Watershed Study – Lacy and Fielding provided an overview of the discussion at the July 11th Resource Stewardship subcommittee meeting. Lacy sent Sean Hayden’s (Northwest Conservation District) written summary of his work on the project to the subcommittee and would like comments by the end of the week. Travis thought the summary was excellent. Lacy has spoken with Hayden and reported that the project appears to be on track. Hayden is working on a description of potential areas that contribute to both bacterial loads and sediment loads - and potential solutions. The major water quality issue is high *E.coli* from residential areas. The Mad River is also contributing to problems in the Still. Jim Rollins, who sits on many Winchester town committees, also attended the subcommittee meeting. He is a good connection and willing to work with other entities. There is potential funding for brownfields work at the Lambert Kay building which sits along the Mad River. Jim Rotondo, Winchester Public Works Director, is working on some of these sites. He is an engineer who has familiarity with these types of projects. The Town of Winchester is “taking baby steps” to address issues. It became apparent from the discussion that a lot is being planned. However, solving these issues is not going to be easy nor happen quickly.

Greenwoods Anglers Trail – Caisse and Anthony went out to the site and scoped things out. Signs to direct anglers to use existing trails are “in the works”.

Mapping – Lacy has been in touch with Jeff Bolton (FRWA) by e-mail to discuss maps for the Management Plan Update. Among other things, they are trying to determine how to include the invasive plants maps produced by Corrigan.

Mountain Road Project (Riverton) – USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is administering \$500,000 in earmarked funds designated to address drainage and erosion issues at this site. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection and a private engineer are also involved. Lacy brought Jamie Fosburgh out to look at the site to identify NPS concerns and discuss potential comments with regard to the forthcoming ACOE permit. They narrowed down primary areas of focus to the parking lot and outfall area.

In-River Patio Project (School St., Riverton) – The Barkhamsted IW Commission denied the applicant an “after-the-fact” permit. ACOE also issued a letter to the property owner, basically suggesting that they remove the structure or submit to the rigorous ACOE permitting process. There will not be a P&Z Commission hearing as the property owner has withdrawn their permit request. Concerns now focus on the removal process and use of equipment in the river. The property owner has been given a date by which they are supposed to have the structure removed. The Town wants to know how it will be removed. Debbie Brydon of the Barkhamsted Building Dept. is on top of things, and following the matter closely.

On July 26, at 7:00 p.m., Lacy will meet with the Barkhamsted IW, P&Z and Conservation Commissions to have a conversation about the Farmington’s W&S status – what it means and the various authorities and best management practices these local Boards have in their power in regards to the river.

Education and Outreach – Sinish, Subcommittee Chair, led updates.

Sinish noted that the last E&O meeting was cancelled, and there is not much to report.

Open House – Reminder: the Open House is scheduled for October 6.

Kiosks – Travis asked who will be overseeing the Goodwin Dam kiosk. She visited this kiosk recently with her grandchildren while working with them on some of the activities in the Junior River Ranger booklet. Travis reported that this kiosk is in very poor shape. Lacy noted that many of the kiosks are getting to the end of their lifespan. Nicki Hall has volunteered to tend this kiosk.

Executive – Travis deferred to Lacy to provide report.

Management Plan Update – Joyce Kennedy Raymes has been working on updating the management plan but her time has been constrained. We probably need to set up an Executive Committee meeting to discuss. Comments (from the special retreat, etc.) were collected, combined and provided to Kennedy Raymes to use in revising the document.

Financial Overview – Lacy submitted a Cooperative Agreement modification packet for the Upper Farmington for 2011 to the NPS contracting office in Philadelphia. Through this modification we have been allocated \$51,300 to work with this year. We

will not find out what funding levels are proposed for 2012 until next summer. However, things are looking better than originally assumed. We need to have an Executive Committee meeting to discuss.

5. New Business/Other

New Hartford Revised P&Z Regulations – Lacy sent around revised regulations via e-mail. Changes have been made to the river overlay district, floodplain, Route 44 corridor, etc. Lacy asked committee members to take a look at these as well as other sections, and provide feedback. Please compare overlay district with the general overlay district language provided on FRCC’s website. New Hartford has indicated that it has “tightened” these sections but it is not clear what this means. Need to discuss at next Resource Stewardship Subcommittee meeting.

Junior River Rangers Program – Fielding reported that Caisse gave a great presentation at the Lower Farmington River/Salmon Brook W&S Study Committee meeting last week. Travis asked for more information about the program to be given to FRCC so that the reps can be prepared to answer questions.

It has been decided that instead of having volunteers present at Squire’s Tavern every Sunday for a specified period of time, volunteers would be “on call”. Parents will need to call ahead and make arrangements to have a child’s completed activity booklet reviewed, and ceremony preformed. This way, volunteers scheduled for a particular Sunday would only come to Squire’s on an “as needed” basis. Caisse will send out an e-mail regarding dates for which she still needs volunteers.

Thus far, at least 30 activity booklets have been requested. Activity booklets are available at various locations, including local libraries, campgrounds, etc. It was noted that we need to get activity booklets to Roaring Brook Nature Center.

Behrens asked if there was something volunteers could wear to look “official” when conducting the ceremony. Lacy said that she could leave her NPS hat at Squire’s for volunteers to use.

A feedback survey will be developed to get input on the program.

Caisse passed around a sample badge so that Committee members could see what would be given to children who successfully complete the program. (It was suggested that there also be a Senior River Rangers program so that Committee members could also complete activity booklets and earn one of these cool-looking badges! 😊)

Invasive Plant Management using Goats – Caisse reported that they are pursuing another source of goats because the original vendor is not able to provide goats this year.

6. Town Reports

Colebrook – Stanton reported that the Connecticut Siting Council has approved several 500’ industrial wind turbines to be located in a pristine wetland area in Colebrook. Stanton, who is also Chair of the Colebrook IW Commission, is concerned about habitat destruction. Although the IW Commission has submitted comments, they have no official purview in the matter because the decision rests with the Siting Council. However, ACOE also has to review the project. A nonprofit organization is litigating the issue.

At this point in the meeting, the Squire’s Tavern bat made an appearance and did a few loops around the rooms before settling back in behind one of the wall beams ... It was unclear if the bat was simply letting its presence be known or providing commentary on the proposed wind turbines ...



Barkhamsted - Santoro asked – and Lacy replied – that with regard to the in-river patio issue, FRCC should consider its work done. Santoro had read FRCC’s comment letter at the public hearing at the IWC meeting. Sinish spoke as well on behalf of the river. Lacy thanked those on the Committee who worked on the issue. It was noted that Don Stein and Don Mysling also wrote good letters.

Canton – The Town continues to work on the Upper Collinsville impoundment project and associated survey.

7. **Next meeting dates:** FRCC: Aug. 15; NO Sept. meeting; Oct 17; Subcommittees (by conference call unless otherwise noted): Aug. 8, Sept. 6; FRCC Open House and Art Exhibit: Oct. 6

Robinson will chair the August FRCC meeting as Travis will be away. There will be no September meeting because Lacy will be away.

Ideas are being solicited for pre-meeting activities. Suggestions thus far include: an invasive plant pull; mural tour at Roaring Brook Nature Center.

Travis would really like to have someone speak about the USFS Highlands Study at a future meeting.

8. **Adjourn:** 8:50 p.m.