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UMRLAC, PO Box 3019, Boscawen, NH 03303

UMRLAC Meeting Minutes DRAFT for September 23, 2014
Canterbury Town Hall, Canterbury

Members present: Michele Tremblay (Boscawen), Steve Landry (Boscawen), Gary Lynn (Bow), Harry Anderson (Northfield), Nita Tomaszewski (Franklin), Donna Liolis (Franklin), Krista Crowell (Bow), Nancy Roy (Canterbury), Anne Emerson (Canterbury), Rick Chormann (Concord), and Bill Dawson (Northfield)

Members absent: Wayne Ives (Franklin) and Madeline Mineau (Concord)

Others Present: Jonathan (?) from T.F. Bernier, Inc. (TFB) Christy Liolis, Howard Moffett (Canterbury State House Representative), Ruth Mann (Canterbury), Bob Scarponi (Canterbury), George Glines (Canterbury Selectman), Cheryl Gordon (Canterbury Selectman), Ken Folsom (Canterbury Town Administrator), Alan Hardy (Boscawen Planning and Community Development Director), Elaine Clow (Vice Chair Boscawen Agricultural Commission), Bruce Crawford (Chair, Boscawen Planning Board) and Tyson Miller (Canterbury)

The Chair of UMRLAC, Michele Tremblay, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. UMRLAC voted to accept the consent agenda. The next meeting will be convened on **October 20, 2014 at the Boscawen Town Hall.**

Project Proposals, Permits, and Complaints

This meeting is a special single purpose meeting convened to discuss the proposed Boscawen Canterbury bridge demolition project. This project is being proposed as a minimum impact expedited wetlands permit project with demolition scheduled for October. The special meeting was necessary because UMRLAC would not be able to review the permit during its regularly scheduled meeting cycle. It should be noted that UMRLAC did not receive a permit for review from the contractor or the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services prior to this meeting.

The proposed project consists of dropping an end of the bridge into the river and then dragging the bridge through the river to the other side. This would be completed twice, one for each half of the bridge (each half consisting of the bridge from the bank to the centrally located pier). The bid specification for the project specified that the bridge would be removed by crane but allowed the contractor to specify an alternative. If the contractor specified an alternative, the contractor is responsible for obtaining all permits. The contractor must honor his commitment to the fixed price for bridge demolition whether or not the contractor can employ the alternate means of bridge demolition (i.e., the alternative may not receive all necessary permits and the contractor would need to revert back to the bid specification approach).

The contractor presented the dropping the bridge into the river alternative as the lowest possible environmental impact approach in his permit application. The contractor indicated that it would be necessary to remove 150 feet of trees on either side of the bridge to remove the bridge via a crane and the trees are bald eagle habitat. The proposed approach would eliminate the need for tree removal. The proposed project estimated that there would be 150 linear feet of impact and 14,065 sq ft of temporary impact to the river.

UMRLAC and members of the public expressed the following concerns and asked the following questions.

- Decking removal: The bridge decking includes creosote treated wood. The proposal consists of removal of the bridge decking prior to dropping the bridge into the river. UMRAC is concerned that debris would go into the river since the demolition of the decking would be directly above the river and also that creosote residue left behind on the bridge structure will be dragged through the river sediments. The response provided by the TFB representative that divers will be sent into the river to recover debris was not reassuring since the river can be waded at this particular river reach. This raises an additional concern of whether the contractor has sufficient familiarity with the site to select the lowest environmental impact option for the bridge demolition.
- Bridge debris and public safety during and post-construction: The UMRAC representatives requested details on how rusty segments and pieces of the bridge will be recovered from the river once they have been dislodged from girders that have nearly rusted through in sections. The Town of Boscawen representative (Alan Hardy) indicated that divers will be on site during construction to screen river for dropped materials. In addition, a curtain will be installed to trap any materials downstream of the bridge demolition site.
- River dredging and sediment release: One end of the bridge would be dropped into the river and the bridge would be dragged to the other side. UMRAC is concerned about the release of sediments during this activity and the dredging of the river bottom as the bridge is dragged through river sediments. No information on sediment release control was presented during the meeting.
- Introduction of rip-rap from center pier into Merrimack River: The UMRAC raised concern over the fact that the mid-channel ends of each bridge structure are to be cut and dropped onto the center pier rip-rap and then dragged toward the shore during removal. What will prevent large pieces of rip-rap from becoming dislodged and deposited on the bottom of the Merrimack River? A response from the Town of Boscawen and Town of Canterbury representatives indicated that a combination of lifting the bridge spans in concert with pulling them to shore should reduce the footprint stress on the rip-rap and river bottom during removal and this will minimize rip-rap migration. If any rip-rap is dislodged, it can be replaced by the contractor according to the TFB representative.
- Minimum impact characterization: The demolition contractor has a financial interest in selecting the lowest cost approach to demolition of the bridge. UMRAC voiced concern that lower environmental impact approaches were not evaluated due to financial considerations. For example, is it possible to minimize tree removal by employing a larger crane or cranes, different rigging or by using a different piece of equipment in conjunction with the crane(s) to pull the bridge out without swinging it through the area of the trees?
- Impact minimization: Questions were posed on whether there would be less impact if the project was completed at a different time of year. For example, during the winter ice would limit sediment transport and would potentially minimize dredging. In addition, there would be less impact if the bridge is dropped into the river upright rather than the larger cross section if it falls on its side. What steps would be taken to keep the bridge upright while

dropping it into the river? If one side drops before the other, the rotational movement and resulting torque could end up putting the bridge on its side; this would increase river impact.

- Impact square footage: Are there any permanent impacts in this project? The application that was presented on September 23 does not list any.
- Review time allotment: The plan indicated UMLAC received the permit application on September 16. UMLAC indicated that a completed permit application has not been received on that date and that the application provided at this September 23 meeting did not appear to be administratively or otherwise complete.
- Impact area: During the quick review of the draft permit package application brought to the meeting by the TFB representative, it was noted by UMLAC representatives that the total impact area of the project was listed as the entire drainage area of the Merrimack River itself. This will need to be corrected by TFB in order to calculate the appropriate impact fee for the project relative to a Wetlands Permit Application.
- Brook floaters: The natural heritage inventory indicates that brook floater mussels are present in this area. The contractor provided a study indicating the mussels are not present. How will this contradictory information be reconciled?
- Brook floater survey report: A mussel inventory report was presented to UMLAC for the first time at this meeting. The report indicated that no Brook floaters were found in the immediate project area. The report also listed a river width figure within the project area to be 360 feet when the river at that location does not exceed 200 feet across. The UMLAC would like to see these discrepancies corrected before the final permit application is submitted to DES.
- Bid Process and Contractor Selection: The UMLAC inquired about the bidding process for demolition firms and how the change order for construction scope was arrived at. The Town representatives from Boscawen and Canterbury indicated that a pre-qualified bid process had been carried out and pre-construction meetings have also occurred. The winning firm (Apollo) proposed the change in construction scope after their bid was selected by the Towns. The UMLAC inquired as to why Apollo waited until after the alternative methods for construction was not discussed or considered within the context of their original bid package to the Towns. The response from the two Town representatives was that Apollo had included alternative methods for construction/demolition in previous bid packages for other projects and they had consistently lost those jobs to other firms who did not offer alternative methods. Therefore, Apollo decided to wait until they secured the bid before proposing the alternative methods for this project.
- Options for demolition with less environmental impacts: The UMLAC asked whether or not various alternative methods have been proposed by Apollo or just the single one relative to dropping one end of the bridges in the river and then drawing them across the river bottom to each shore. The UMLAC asked whether or not tower crane methods had been explored by the firm to eliminate the need for dropping the spans in the river at all and creating the lifting power to pull them up and over the trees on the bank. The TFB representative indicated that he would have to research that question and get back to the UMLAC members. The UMLAC questions whether or not the proposed method is the least environmental impacting or simply the cheapest for the firm to perform.
- Comments from audience: Representative Moffitt from Canterbury expressed his concern that the demolition contractor did not show up to the meeting to answer questions.
- Comments from audience: A member of the public asked whether or not there was a possibility of a snow machine corridor bridge being constructed over the river once the bridge spans were removed. The Town representatives indicated that discussions were

ongoing about that but it seems unlikely since there are no trail connections on the Canterbury side. It would be a parking and off/on-loading site in Canterbury only.

UMRLAC indicated that it is our belief that the permit application is not complete and that the permit was not a minimum impact application subject to expedited review. UMRLAC proposed reviewing the completed application during our October 20 regular meeting.

Minutes submitted by Gary Lynn, UMRLAC Secretary