

York River Study Committee

York River Study Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

Grant House, 200 US Route 1, York, Maine

Voting members present: chairman Chuck Ott, Karen Arsenault, Jean Demetracopoulos, Cindy Donnell, Thom Kearns, Mike Masi

Voting members absent: Stefan Claesson, Joan LeBlanc, Jack Murphy, Judy Spiller, Beth Walter

Non-voting committee members present: Jennifer Hunter, Paul Dest, Jim MacCartney, Emma Lord

Guests: Paul Schumacher and Abbie Sherwin

5:30 Chuck welcomed our visitors and asked Paul Schumacher and Abbie Sherwin from Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission to discuss the buildout study/ordinance review.

1. Build-out/ordinance review project update – Paul Schumacher & Abbie Sherwin, SMPDC
Paul and Abbie distributed a table, “Watershed Protection Strategies Matrix” that included a list of regulatory, non-regulatory, and revenue raising approaches for resource protection strategies by town. They discussed the information compiled to date and requested feedback on where to focus additional effort. Certain areas including shoreland zoning, cluster/open space subdivisions, low impact development recommendations, creating additional overlays for key resources like marsh migration areas (or adding them to existing overlays or expanding other protections to them), and highlighting exemplary approaches to resource protection were discussed and seemed to rise to the top. The analysis should allow for town-by-town comparison, and recommendations for watershed-wide consistency in protective measures should be developed. Additional feedback can be provided to Paul and Abbie.

They did not have information on Judy’s updates or comments on recent feedback. She continues to work on the build-out. The build-out and the review of community approaches will be presented at the April 3 meeting.

2. Budget update – Paul Dest

Paul indicated the Federal FY18 budget has passed and funding looks good for NPS and NOAA programs, which affects the York River Study and the Wells Reserve, respectively. The latest Cooperative Award amendment for \$60,000 was submitted in early March and we hope to have funding by May. The amendment includes \$10,000 for current FY18 and \$50,000 for FY19. A FY19 budget will be presented at a later meeting.

3. Meetings, events and activities – Jenn

Recent meetings and activities include:

- February 15 – Great Works Regional Land Trust Annual Meeting, with presentations by historic resources contractors for York River Study projects
- February 16 – Submitted grant application to York Community Initiatives Fund for \$2,000 to create a Story Map to accompany the Stewardship Plan. Paul received notice yesterday that we received the grant. Jenn will work with the outreach team to develop the project.
- February 21 – Hosted NPS officials (Bob Ratcliffe from Washington, DC and Helen Mahan from Boston office), giving them a presentation and taking them on a tour

- March 2 – Paul and Chuck gave a presentation on the York River Study at a York Rotary meeting
- March 2 – submitted the \$60,000 Cooperative Award amendment
- Early March – developed and submitted two applications to the National Park Foundation. Jim submitted applications on our behalf. If awarded, funds would support partners’ work on watershed projects. One project involved the Wells Reserve leading two culvert assessment and design projects to improve fish passage and habitat access. The other involved the York Land Trust developing a management plan and trails for its newly-acquired Fuller Forest property. Jim indicated lots of proposals were submitted: 83, totaling about \$3million in requests.

Upcoming events where YRSC volunteers are needed:

- Saturday, May 19, York voting day table
- Tuesday, June 12, Eliot voting day table
- Saturday, June 16, Kittery Block Party

Jenn will circulate a sign-up by email for coverage for all the events.

4. Review draft ORV table for NPS Study Report – Jenn and Emma

The table was emailed in advance and a copy was handed out. This will be used in the Study Report and will be included in the Stewardship Plan. People liked the format and thought it would make a useful outreach tool. Emma received internal NPS guidance that including the region of comparison and rare, unique or best examples would be helpful, so those columns were added. Comments or edits can be sent to Emma by email. She will maintain the most up to date copy. It will remain a work in progress, as we continue to develop the Stewardship Plan.

5. Discuss draft warrant article language for town votes – Jenn

Draft language for two options was handed out and discussed. YRSC will prepare and suggest language for warrants/resolutions, plus the associated statements of fact or supporting statements, but ultimately the towns or councils decide on language. Jenn will incorporate input from tonight’s meeting and work with the outreach team to refine. Jenn will confirm voting process and timing for Eliot.

6. Stewardship Plan status and plans – Jenn

Draft objectives and actions for natural resources and working waterfront, community character, and recreation resources were handed out and briefly discussed. Jenn noted where she could use additional input and mentioned areas that were still under development. She is meeting with Joan next week. Jenn would like input on the document as soon as possible. She will circulate to natural resource and conservation professionals for review this week. She aims to have all actions and objectives ready for widespread circulation and public review by end of April.

7. Additional items / Identify agenda items or plans for next meeting – Chuck

The administrative structure for the plan will be discussed. The next iteration of the resource objectives and actions will be provided, with opportunities to discuss.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Hunter, Study Coordinator