

Groton Greenway Committee
Meeting Minutes

Date: August 1, 2012
Location: Town Hall, 1st Floor Meeting Room, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Members Present: Adam Burnett, Carol Coutrier, Fran Stanley, Marion Stoddart, David Pitkin

Other Attendees: Pierre Comtois (Nashoba Publishers correspondent)
John Wiesner (brief attendance to submit invoice)

Group reviewed invoices from Moisson Music for \$100 and John Wiesner for \$250. Members signed bottom of invoices to indicate their approval for these bills to be paid. Expected bills not yet received include tent rental and bus driver tip, both bills to be submitted by the Carsons.

Group briefly discussed river festival and desire to hold a meeting with the larger group of volunteers who organized the river festival. The motor boat trips to Fitch's Bridge were popular and more boat trips might be organized for future months or at future festivals. Thank you letters will need to go out. The cash from the donation jar will need to be counted and turned in to the Town's Greenway fund. Fran Stanley will turn in liability waivers signed by motor boat riders and cardboard canoe participants to be held in the Town Clerk's office.

The cosponsored water chestnut pull in July was a good effort by Greenway committee members who participated. Hand pulls help with public education and to slow the spread of the unwanted invasive. Mechanical harvesting conducted for four to five consecutive years are necessary to really address the core problem. A company called Aquatic Control/Technologies owns the machines that cleaned the Nashua River previously. The Lost Lake area has a different invasives problem that calls for a different and less robust form of mechanical harvester. Therefore, the Lost Lake harvester cannot be used on the Nashua River.

Adam Burnett informed the group that the re-introduction of shad and herring on the Nashua River is planned and underway.

The group discussed whether to support the Town's MEPA interbasin transfer request related to the proposed sewerage of the Lost Lake area by transporting water from the Merrimack basin to the Nashua basin. Treated water would be released into the Nashua River by the Ayer waste water treatment plants. It was noted that water is removed from the South Branch of the Nashua River presently to supply drinking water for Boston area communities. Marion Stoddart has begun her investigation of the Town's proposal but still has questions. Adam Burnett is philosophically opposed to measures that would degrade one resource in order to improve another resource. So, while addition of water into the Nashua River is not a problem, it may be problematic if the treated water contains elevated levels of nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen. The group was generally aware that the Ayer treatment plant releases are regulated according to the Commonwealth's designation of desired river water quality. Over time, the standards for plants have become more stringent.

The group agreed that the Groton Greenway Committee supports the continual improvement in water quality for the Nashua River. In accepting more water, meaning increasing the flow, we support efforts to improve water quality. Any letter of support from the Groton Greenway would recite this tenet as a way to help focus governmental bodies on the importance of preserving and improving Nashua River water quality.

David Pitkin moved for the Groton Greenway to offer our support for the MEPA interbasin transfer request to the appropriate regulating agency. Carol Coutrier seconded. Motion carried 5:0.

The group discussed Fitch's Bridge and agreed that Town Manager advice was needed on how to get a warrant on the Town Meeting schedule and how to keep any Fitch's Bridge project costs from tipping the Town levy limits above the two and a half percent level. An override is not wanted by the Greenway committee and residents are unlikely to support a discretionary budget measure that requires an override.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. Minutes by Fran Stanley.