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MEET ME IN SUNCOOK!
Minutes of Meeting
December 4, 2018

Present: Marie and Butch Ayles, Noreen Bean, Gerald Belanger, Jo-Ann Belanger, Joan Bussiere, Jackie Clark, Norma Daviault, Ron Daviault (co-chair), Jeanne Letendre, Louise Letendre, Roger and Mrs. Menard.

1. Co-chair Ron Daviault called the meeting to order at the Olive Garden Restaurant in Concord at 6:00 p.m. This was the annual Dutch-treat Holiday meeting, traditionally the last meeting until spring. This year, as noted in the minutes of the meeting of July 10, 2018, the *Meet Me in Suncook* committee did not meet from August through November.

2. Noreen Bean gave the Treasurer's Report, as follows:

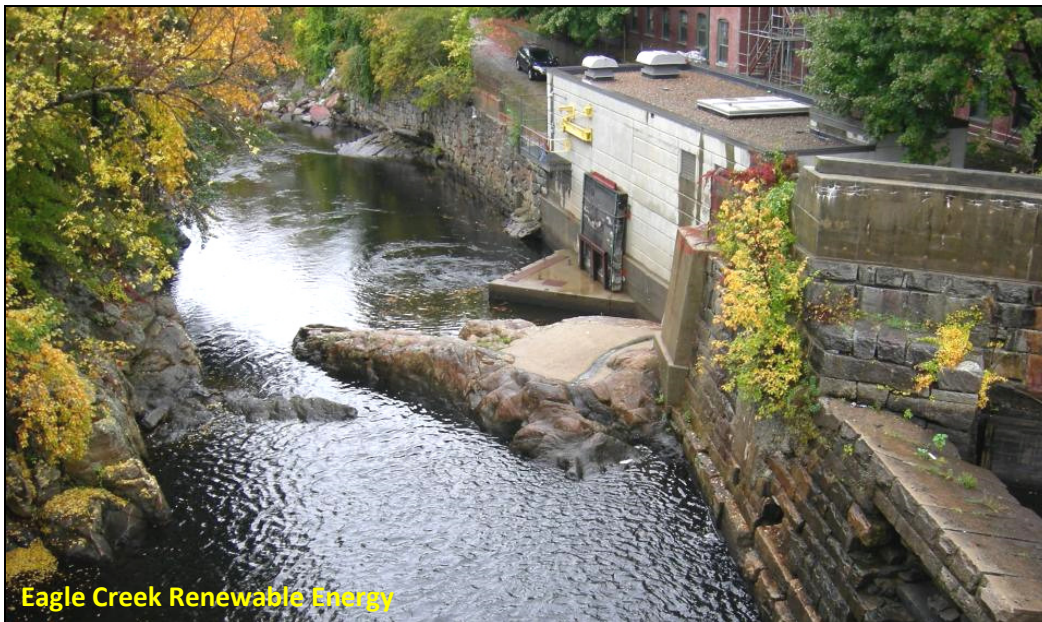 | | |
   |---|---|
   | Checkbook balance on July 10, 2018: | $7,376.52 |
   | Income: none | |
   | Expenditures: | |
   | New Hampshire Preservation Alliance membership | $50.00 |
   | Collins Tree Service pruning work at Robert Frost Park | 1,200.00 |
   | Armand and Claudette Verville reimbursement for Old Home Day Expenses | 200.00 |
   | Checkbook balance on December 4, 2018: | $5,926.52 |

New Business

3. At the meeting of July 10, 2018, Gerald Belanger had suggested that *Meet Me in Suncook* maintain our existence as an organization, keep our post office box, but meet only at the call of the chair or to respond to events in Suncook Village that might concern us or to which we might contribute in some way. The following is a report to members of the committee regarding a project that may interest the committee:

   On December 5, 2018, secretary Jim Garvin received a message from Kleinschmidt Associates, Engineers, regarding a proposed meeting on December 10 at the Pembroke (Emerson) Mill Dam at the Main Street bridge in Suncook. The same message was sent to Armand and Claudette Verville of the Allenstown Historical Society and Ayn Whytemare of the Pembroke Historical Society. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the partial removal of the dam.

   The meeting took place beginning at 11:00 a.m. on December 10, with representatives of Kleinschmidt Associates (project engineers), Eagle Creek Renewable Energy (operators of

the Webster Hydroelectric Station located just below the Pembroke Mill Dam), the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (the State Historic Preservation Office), and Vikam Associates, Inc. (construction consultants) in attendance, along with Mr. and Mrs. Verville, Ms. Whytemare, and Jim Garvin.
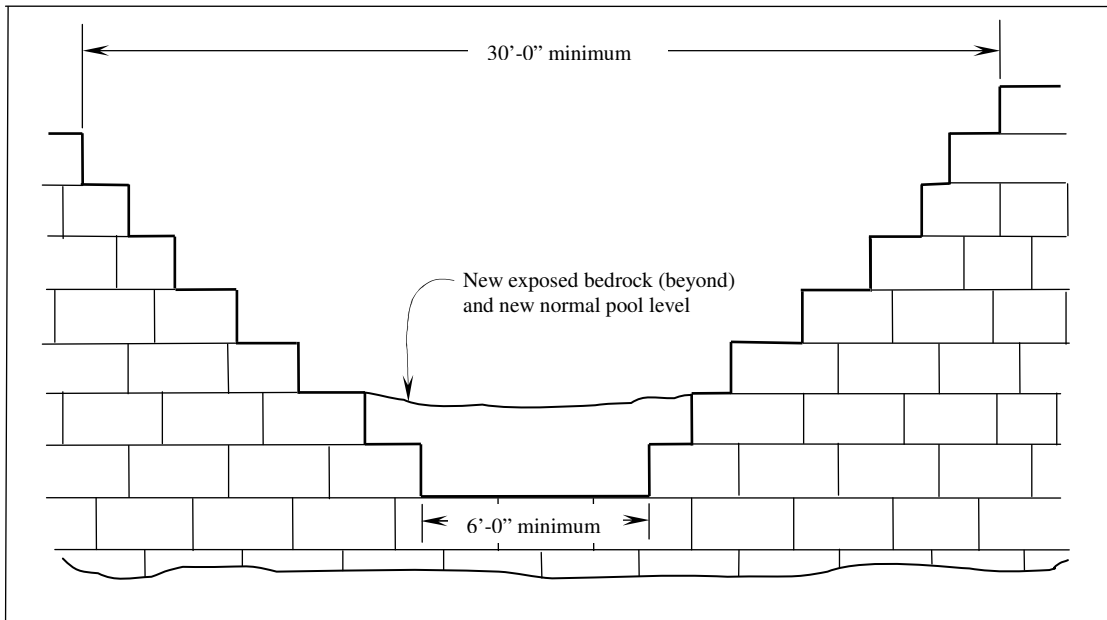
Nicholas Ciomei, P. E., of Kleinschmidt Associates explained that this project is being developed at the request of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), which licenses the Webster Hydroelectric Station, seen in the photograph below. This hydroelectric generating station takes its power from water impounded by the Webster Mill dam, located behind the Suncook Post Office on Glass Street. The water passes through the open canal of the former Webster Mill, then enters a closed concrete structure that passes under the Main Street bridge and through the granite wall of the Pembroke Mill Dam to enter the turbines that are enclosed in the light-colored building seen in the photograph. After passing through the turbines, the water exits back into the Suncook River, as seen in the ripples at the center of the photograph.

Eagle Creek Renewable Energy

The granite Pembroke Mill Dam formerly powered the turbines of the adjacent Pembroke Mill, later named the Emerson Mill and now the Emerson Condominiums. The dam is no longer active as a functioning dam, and impounds little water at times of low river flow as shown in the photograph above. At times of higher flow, water flows over the spillway. At times of extreme high water, the water rises above the elevation of the spillway and partially fills the basin behind the dam. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission calculates that at a flow equivalent to something between a "hundred-year flood" and a "two-hundred-year flood," the water would overtop the concrete wall seen to the right of the generating station, entering the lower story of the adjacent condominium building and endangering the National Register-listed building and its occupants.

In response to this analysis, FERC is proposing the partial demolition of the dam. The proposal calls for removal of granite blocks at the center of the dam, creating a V-shaped cut in the structure that would extend downward nearly to the ledge that underlies the dam. This cut would release water from the basin before the water level rises to the crest of the dam,

reducing the tendency for water to fill the basin and potentially overtop the concrete wall. This is shown in the drawing below.

As seen in the photograph on the preceding page, the downstream face of the dam has lost a number of stones over the years. The proposed V-shaped notch would lie in the area of this structural loss.

Nadine Peterson explained that a federally licensed project like this one, which affects a National Register-eligible building or district, is subject to review under Section 106 of the Federal Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Section 106 seeks to avoid, minimize, or mitigate "adverse effects" that would damage or diminish the characteristic features of National Register-eligible properties. In this case, eligible properties include the dam, the mill (condominiums), and the Suncook Village Commercial/Civic National Register Historic District, which was listed in the Register in 2005 under the sponsorship of *Meet Me in Suncook*.

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the *Meet Me in Suncook* committee that Section 106 of the Federal Historic Preservation Act invites public comment on the Pembroke Mill Dam project. If the committee wishes to comment, we may do so by developing a document and presenting it to the State Historic Preservation Office. The Pembroke and Allenstown Historical Societies, and other members of the public, may do the same. If we wish to do this, we should plan to hold a meeting and prepare written comments or recommendations.

4. The next meeting of *Meet Me in Suncook* will be at the call of the chair or the co-chairs.

Respectfully submitted,
James L. Garvin, Secretary