

Meeting Minutes
Weir River Estuary Park Committee
Tuesday January 11, 2022, 4:30pm
Remote - Call in Meeting

This is a Tri-Town Committee, appointed by the Boards of Selectmen for Cohasset, Hingham and Hull, not a non-profit Watershed Association. Formed in 2002 approved in 2005, the goals of the WREP Committee are; to **Preserve** the rare and idyllic setting, **Expand** public access and low impact recreational opportunities, **Protect** the historical and geological integrity, **Protect** and restore natural resources and biological diversity, **Conserve** a contiguous corridor of open space and healthy habitats, **Develop** educational opportunities and foster stewardship, **Establish** Community support for land and estuarine habitat protection and maintain working relationships with Town Selectmen, Conservation Commissions, Planning Boards and Advisory, Open Space and Harbor Development committees, local Land Trusts, Land preservation organizations, and related regional state and federal agencies.

1. **Call to Order** by Sharon Allen (Hin), Dick Avery (Coh), Tom Bell (Coh), Judeth Van Hamm (Hul), Scott Plympton (Hul), Mark Buonagurio (Hin), Hingham resident Clark Frazier. Meeting called to order with quorum at 4:48 pm.
2. **Minutes** from the meeting 12/14/21 were approved for posting.
3. **Opening:** Sharon notes that Patti Coyle (Hin) will not be able to attend meetings until spring. She is transitioning her role as Facebook Admin and committee member to Mark.

4. **Updates by Town:**

Cohasset: Dick Avery and Tom Bell reports:

- a. Otters sited in Straits Pond with a possible den on Rattlesnake Run
- b. The proposed housing development (the Curtis Estate) by Jerusalem Rd. LLP has the potential for environmental concern:
 - i. After reviewing a digital elevation study, Tom notes that Vernal pools may exist (This is an isolated pool that retains water for a minimum of 60 days). More study needed.
 - ii. There are wetland buffer restrictions and a requirement for 60K sq. ft. lots in a residential zone.
 - iii. The development sits within the Rattlesnake Run watershed and will be very disruptive.
 - iv. The developing group received approval for a subdivision in 1999, but never filed paperwork. They must now start the permitting process from scratch.

Hingham: Mark Buonagurio reports the following:

- a. Bald eagles and many hawks sited at Foundry Pond
- b. Many small birds are consuming invasive bittersweet berries
- c. Challenges noted with trash pickup on public lands. Since the 'Do not Litter' sign was taken down, trash has increased. Significant trash left by fishermen. Perhaps a volunteer cleanup is needed.

- d. Judeth discussed an upcoming hearing in Hingham on the Road Diet (Summer St to Martins Lane). Mark to send information to Judeth. Expect this project to take 3-5 years to complete.
- e. Clark discussed a recent Hingham Hazzard report which highlighted concerns of sea level rise, storm water flooding noting the West Corner Pump Station as vulnerable. Although a tsunami is a low probability event, evacuation routes are needed.

Hull:

- a. The Walking Path to the Island in Straits Pond via Eastman Road project is moving along. Hull's Department of Conservation presented the proposal to the town's Community Preservation Act (CPA) Committee. We discussed how the State will match the funds. Expectations are for this project to be voted on at Town Meeting in May.
- b. There was a discussion on challenges with the fish ladder at Foundry Pond, specifically about low flows in the summer impacts hatchling herring. We need our ladder to be more like the one at Jackson Square. We also spoke of our previous relationships with Aquarion Water, and we need to include citizen advisory input into the new Weir River Water Co. We note that John Struziarri (Sewer Dept Head) and Jen Purcell represent Hull.
- c. Judeth discusses Solar Rapid Transportation and speaks of its positive aspects.

5. Tri Town-Annual Report:

- a. We discussed that our approach would be for a single Annual Report to be shared by each of the towns. We would leverage the meeting minutes opening statement as our intro
- b. Scott prepared a draft of the past year's accomplishments and future efforts for Hull.
- c. We will try to complete this effort by end of this week.

6. Estuary Clean Up Day

- a. Date is Saturday, April 23 from 9:00 to 12:00 with a gathering and picnic hosted by the SPWA.

7. New Information

- a. No new information (last 24 hours) was entered into discussion.

8. Next Meeting:

- a. Motion to hold our next meeting on Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 4:30. This will be a Zoom call. Approved.
- b. **Meeting Adjourns:** 6:03PM