

ROCHESTER RIVERWALK COMMITTEE MINUTES

June 26, 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING: Remote phone conference session with public access on 857-444-0744 via 689461  
ROCHESTER, NH 03967

MEMBERS PRESENT –

Jon Batson, Stacey Marchionni, Susan Mills, Stacey Purslow, Esther Turner

MEMBERS ABSENT – Peter Bruckner, Ray Felts, David Walker

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE – Michael Bezanson (City Engineer), Jennifer Marsh (City Staff Contact)

Preamble for City Meetings during COVID-19

Stacey Marchionni read the preamble detailing the rules under which the meeting is conducted during the pandemic.

A. CALL TO ORDER – Stacey Marchionni called the meeting to order at 6:02.

B. APPROVAL –

- a. Motion to accept the minutes of February 27, 2020, by Jon, second by Suzie, and approved by roll call.

Member	Vote	Member	Vote	Member	Vote
Jon Batson	Yea	Stacey Marchionni	Yea	Esther Turner	Yea
Peter Bruckner	Not present	Susan Mills	Yea	David Walker	Not present
Ray Felts	Not present	Stacey Purslow	Yea		

C. DISCUSSION – Hillsdale launch

a. **Kayak launch installation.**

**Mike Bezanson** reported that he had contacted the Dam Bureau of NH DES and had received no guidance on necessary signage. He is following the national organization for appropriate warning signs on rivers approaching dams. Warning-of-dam-ahead signage will be fastened to both piers and each abutment, for a total of four signs, on the upstream side of the historic bridge. Mike has verified that no permitting is required from the State for this signage on an historic structure. He recommended that a proof of the sign be provided to Michelle Mears so that she may inform the Historic District Committee.

Mike informed the committee that this signage and its installation is within the domain and the budget of DPW. In previous experience with ordering such signs. Mike has seen quick turnaround and believes that these can be ordered and installed within three weeks. When Mike has the date, he will share it with Jenn so that Jenn may work with the committee to finalize the launch event.

The other recommended signage would be rules for the waterway which would be posted at Hillsdale launch. The committee reviewed a sample of canoe and kayak launch safety rules and regulations from Baton Rouge Blueway Launch. **Jenn** will check with city police, fire, and recreation to adapt these for Hillsdale launch. Of particular interest was a caution about swimming. **Ray Felts** will be asked to review the wording of the rule on matching river conditions to paddler’s capabilities, using his knowledge of the upstream portion of the Cocheco.

**Stacey Marchionni** reminded the committee of the donation of water safety life vests to be stored at Hillsdale launch.

**Esther** reported that the COVID-19 shutdown of the high school buildings closed off the opportunity for student construction of a storage rack for water safety life vests.

**Stacey Purslow** has some contacts that might be able to construct a suitable rack or bin. **Stacey Marchionni** has images of life vest storage units to share with Stacey Purslow. Once a builder and a design is selected, the committee will be looking for a donation of materials.

**b. Kayak launch event and date.**

Given that the dam-ahead warning signs must be in place prior to the launch event, the week of July 20 is the target date. **Stacey Marchionni** will contact John Moran at FWM Docks to alert him to our preferred date and to see if he can schedule installation to accommodate this.

At the moment, the Governor’s instructions for gatherings limits us to twenty-five. We will follow this maximum for the launch event unless something changes. An invitation list is being drawn up. **Jenn** will see about inviting Governor Sununu although we are within his one-month advance notice window. **Jenn** will also invite a representative from NH Fish and Game, Business and Economic Affairs Commissioner, City Councilors and Mayor. **Esther** will call Northeast Passage to see if they would like to attend, and invite Charlie Moreno, Rob Pallas, and Chris Bowlen to acknowledge their work with on this project.

**Esther** will invite at least one person who can demonstrate the usefulness of the handicapped accessible launch in allowing mobility-impaired individuals to get onto the water safely.

**Jenn** will establish the date for the event early next week, once she hears back from Mike and from Stacey Marchionni.

**D. DISCUSSION – Recreational Trails Program**

**a. RTP grant update and plan of action.**

**Esther** reported that D.P.W. had had no capacity to undertake the engineering specification required for construction of the boardwalk by Heath Brook in Dominicus Hanson Park. No other engineering resource has yet been identified.

Motion to request Julian Long to write a letter to Alexis Rudko informing the NH Bureau of Trails that the City is unable to achieve the completion of the project in 2020 due to the on-going pandemic, by Stacey Marchionni, second by Stacey Purslow, and approved by roll call.

Member	Vote	Member	Vote	Member	Vote
Jon Batson	Yea	Stacey Marchionni	Yea	Esther Turner	Yea
Peter Bruckner	Not present	Susan Mills	Yea	David Walker	Not present
Ray Felts	Not present	Stacey Purslow	Yea		

**E. DISCUSSION – Other**

**a. Chairperson updates.**

**Stacey Marchionni** notified the committee that she is stepping away from the Riverwalk Committee Chair position due to the extra requirements of managing a business and a family during a pandemic. Although she will not continue her participation as a member on the committee, she continues as an interested business person in support of the mission of the committee and may resume participation when life returns to normal. Stacey will resign her chair position immediately following the July meeting or as soon as the Hillsdale launch project is completed, whichever comes later.

Individuals who may be interested in taking leadership of the committee should send an email to Jenn and may wish to chat with Stacey Marchionni to get a good sense of where the committee is and what the challenges are.

ADJOURN –

Motion to adjourn by Jon, second by Suzie, and approved by roll call.

Member	Vote	Member	Vote	Member	Vote
Jon Batson	Yea	Stacey Marchionni	Yea	Esther Turner	Yea
Peter Bruckner	Not present	Susan Mills	Yea	David Walker	Not present
Ray Felts	Not present	Stacey Purslow	Yea		

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Next meeting will be held on **Thursday, July 23**, from 6:00-7:30 pm  
at a venue in accordance with rules of public meetings in effect on that date.

**Jon** suggested on outdoor venue if the weather permits.

—Respectfully submitted by Esther Turner