

**State of New Hampshire
Coastal Risks and Hazards Commission (CRHC)**

**Meeting Minutes
Urban Forestry Center
45 Elwyn Rd
Portsmouth, NH
January 19th, 2014**

Members in Attendance

Name	Representation
Watters, David	Senator, NH District 4
Stiles, Nancy	Senator, NH District 24
Rice, Fred	Representative, District 21
Muns, Chris	Representative, District 21
Borden, Rep. David	Town of New Castle
Becker, Dr. Mimi	Town of Exeter
Bird, Steve	Town of Dover
Caron, David	NHMA
Cormier, Robert	Homebuilders and Remodelers
Feighner, Edna	NH Div. of Historical Resources
Fitzgerald, Brian	Alternate Town Rye
Gilbert, Jennifer	Office of Energy and Planning, Johnson Hall
Godlewski, Sherry	DES / Alt for Vicky Quiram
Houle, Jamie	Town of Durham
Howard, Kirsten	DES
Huber, Richard	Alternate, Town of Exeter
Kinner, Peter	Town Greenland/UNH Coastal Response Research
Kipp, Jonathan	Primex
Kirshen, Paul	UNH
LaBranche, Julie	Rockingham Planning Commission Sen. Planner
Melanson, Paul	Town of Hampton Falls
Morgan, Thomas	Town of Newington, NH
O'Sullivan, Michael	Town of Madbury
Pimental, Kyle	Strafford Reg. Planning Commission
Pennock, Jonathan	UNH Marine NH Sea Grant
Rice, John	Seacoast Board Realtors
Riley, Cory	NH Fish & Game, Great Bay NERR
Ryan, John	Portsmouth
Scholz, Ann	NHDOT
Sinnott, Cliff (Chairman CRHC)	Rockingham Planning Commission
Stanwood, Sabrina	Div. of Forests and Lands, DRED
Stephenson, Roger	Town of Stratham
Winslow, Phil	Town of Rye
Wolek, Gail	NH Dept. of Res. & Econ. Dev- Parks & Rec.
Wood, David (Clerk CRHC)	Town of Hampton

Minutes

- Cliff Sinnott presided as chairperson and seeing a quorum called the meeting to order at 10:12 AM. There were no members communicating by telephone or other electronic means. Introductions were made by those in attendance. Chairman Sinnott welcomed Representative Spang from Durham.
- Chairman Sinnott thanked Gail and Sabrina for their hospitality. Mr. Sinnott recommended approval of the minutes from the meeting 11/15/13. Mimi Becker moved and Senator Stiles seconded. By a unanimous vote in favor by the members in attendance the minutes were approved. (Roger Stephenson abstained)
- **Clerk report:** David Wood of Hampton and clerk of the Commission requested that everyone review the member list for errors and that all corrections and updates as to alternates be referred to him @ dkwood20@gmail.com or call 603-926-8822. He also asked that everyone sign in on roster for attendance.
- Mr. Wood reminded that our new web site is working well. The url to access the site is <http://nhcrhc.stormsmart.org/> or through the NH StormSmart Coasts site at <http://nh.stormsmart.org/> right side tab. It was asked that all presentations made should be provided to the Clerk and therefore will be posted on the website.
- Commission Clerk Wood will gather information to be added to the website and he in turn will provide that information to Ms. Coletti who will actually update the website. Chairman Sinnott recommended that 3 articles be added to our website. They are: An article sent by Bob Cormier regarding how the polar vortex does or does not impact climate change, Roger Stephenson sent in an article from the NY Times on this subject, and lastly Julie sent information regarding FEMA and its change in including sea level rise in grant proposals.
- **Part 2 State Agencies status updates on impacts from climate change.**
Gail Wolek, DRED Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation, gave an overview of her Department. The four divisions consist of Forest & Lands, Parks and Recreation, Travel & Tourism, and Economic Development. The Bureau of Park Operations oversees the management, operation and maintenance of the 75 State Park properties. The properties include campgrounds, beaches, day-use facilities, waysides, and natural areas. The Retail Operations at the parks are overseen and managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation. The Division is comprised of the following management areas: Bureau of Park Operations - includes management, operation and maintenance of state parks, campgrounds, waysides, and natural areas. Bureau of Trails - includes management of motorized trails for snowmobiling and ATV use, as well as, non-motorized trails for hiking, biking, cross country skiing, sled dogs and equestrian use. Bureau of Historic Sites - is responsible for the care, maintenance and administration of the State Historic Sites as well as the historic resources under stewardship of the Department of Resources and Economic Development.
- Some issues mentioned:
- Snowy owls are heading south in large numbers. Their food supply is moving south and this is something we need to take note of.
- The RSA 216.1 is what determines the priorities of this department. From the state park at Hampton beach to Odion Point, they are developing plans to address the impact of sea level rise. The renovation work done at Hampton beach considered storm water surge and protective measures were put in place such as sand dunes and granite blocks. Representative Rice stated that these surges have been going on for decades and that sand from dredging had been relocated to widen the beach and the current state park was created from sand relocation from major storms from the past.
- Gail mentioned that from a historical perspective our seacoast has treasures valuable from both a State and National level. She mentioned Fort Stark and how important funding will be for mitigation efforts. She also stated that not only the seacoast but inland areas such as trails will be impacted by climate change.
- From an operations standpoint she stated that in the event of an emergency if the expense is over \$2,500. It must go before the Governor and Executive Council which can delay the work. She also mentioned that projects over \$250,000.00 must be turned over to Public Works. They are requesting that both \$ amounts be increased so they can continue to manage projects within their own Department.
- She stated that the Corp of Engineers has requested our planning department to provide them a list of our assets that could be impacted from climate change. Senator Waters asked what level of water rise were the Engineers

using and she thought between 18"-24". 60% of Federal grant monies are deemed for local use and 40% stays at the state level.

- Historic sites are very concerned about climate change as well.
- **Sabrina Stanwood Administrator, Natural Heritage Bureau, Division Forest & Lands**
- She explained the function and description of the 182 acres of the Bureau and mentioned their mission is to protect and promote the values of trees and forests and to educate the public as well. Rye Harbor was formed by dredging the salt march. She emphasized the value of marshes and their contribution to the quality of life for residents. They act as a water filtering system and act as a buffer during storm surges. They protect against sand lost and offer a home to wildlife.
- Tidal marshes are a limited resource for New Hampshire. We had 6,000 acres but by 1994 we were down to 1,240 acres. Restoration since then has improved the situation somewhat. She recommended that local officials keep this in mind to offset the loss of marshes to development and to consider this in their planning efforts to prepare for the effects of climate change.
- They have developed a data base to assist in planning. They work with Fish and Game regarding permits and regulations that are impacted from coastal flood risk.
- Some barriers they face are the perception of people as to the value of plants and marshes in coastal regions and also her lack of staff.
- They work closely with DES and DOT regarding rare plants and invasive species. Senator Walters asked what planning is being done on the Isle of Shoals. She mentioned that they do have a presence but wishes we had more.
- A question was asked what problems might arise from the loss of marshes and Representative Rice mentioned that encroachment has already happened. As examples he cited the street at the end of Haverhill Ave that no longer exists and the sand dunes of White Island moving to block resident access.
- Corey Riley mentioned that we need to consider the tradeoffs between development and the loss of dunes and marshes and what that means. Gail mentioned that her department and the planning groups are sharing those concerns to the public and local officials.
- (Entire presentation is on nh.stormsmart.org/crhc website)
- **Edna Feighner Department of Cultural Resources, Compliance Coordinator/Archaeologist**
- Edna mentioned they adhere to RSA227 Historic Preservation Act and they could be impacted by sea level rise and they work with the State Historic Preservation SHPO office.
- She mentioned Section 106 created in 1966 to address issues impacting cultural resources because of highway construction and urban renewal projects.
- She mentioned that just last year National Parks identified the need to consider the impact of climate change on historical sites. There is an opportunity to obtain Federal grants on this matter. An example is utilizing a grant to help digitalize their records. This will take 3 years.
- She mentioned how important it was for towns to contact her department on issues that may impact historical sites. Dave asked if she was involved in Hampton's grist mill funding grant. She was not but is willing to offer assistance. Dave will forward information to Hampton Public Works Director.
- We have 144 archeological sites in NH that are below 15 ' and they are concerned how sea level rise may impact those sites.
- Phil Winslow asked if Rye historic sites such as the first transatlantic cable from Europe to America and massacred sites were in her database. Chairman Sinnott pointed out that a survey was done in the 80's that captured that information.
- Senator Waters stressed the importance of keeping the Native American community up to date on all of the issues. He also asked what State statutes needed to be changed and asked Edna's Department to keep him informed.
- Representative Rice stressed the importance of keeping a balance between coastal and inland issues at the forefront. "If we forget where we came from will forget where we are going".
- Edna concluded that there is 12,000 years of history here in NH and we need to preserve it not only for ourselves but for future generations. She also stated that changing rivers and coastlines have always changed over time but now they are changing at a much faster pace.
- (Additional material on our website)

- **Jennifer Gilbert Office of Energy and Planning (OEP).**
- Jennifer gave a brief overview of the OEP on how they manage programs that provide fuel aid and floodplain management assistance. When transportation disruptions and port closures due to severe weather they are concerned and are planning ways to address those issues.
- Her program is concerned with flood insurance and providing mapping which determine what flood plan that you are located in. If you build below requirements you can expect increased premiums as a result. 214 NH communities are currently involved in the program. When building your lowest level floor must be above the 100 year flood plan. Increasing that free board height and your distance from the water's edge will reduce insurance premiums.
- Congress has delayed the steep hikes in the flood insurance rollout. The deal is buried in the omnibus budget agreement.
- Jennifer stated that her group will be involved in an outreach effort to inform NH Communities of the changes. New maps should be out in February and a workshop has been scheduled for 03/25/14 to help residents plan for the future.
- Chairman Sinnott indicated that Jennifer will be asked to appear before the Commission again to discuss recent changes to the flood insurance program, including the forthcoming flood insurance rate map updates. He also said that due to time constraints we will not be covering the update on the Steering Committee. He did mention that the next meeting of the Steering Committee will be on 02/14/14 so please submit any information prior to that date.
- **Dr. Paul Kirchen UNH on Update of Sub Committee Science and Advisory Committee**
- About a month ago a subcommittee was formed to help us keep track of the latest developments on climate change. This issue is very complex and constantly evolving so it's difficult for one person to stay up to date. This committee consists of 10 members who are considered experts in their field. At the recommendation of Representative Rice a person was asked to join the group who might have differing views and his name is Tom Wismuller. Chairman Sinnott agreed with that decision because there are some folks who are not convinced this is a man made problem and it would be helpful for the Commission to here opposing viewpoints. You can get more information on Toms view at the site www.colderside.com. The subcommittee will have a preliminary report in March with a more comprehensive report this summer.
- **Other Business**
- **Proposal to Georgetown Climate Center**
- Corey Riley informed us that the NH Coastal Risks and Hazards Commission has recently submitted (01/15/14) a proposal to the Legal and Policy Support for Adaptation in-kind assistance opportunity offered by the Georgetown Climate Center. Letters of Support were submitted by: Department of Environmental Services, Department of Transportation, Legislators, Office of Energy and Planning and the Rockingham Planning Commission. The goal is to obtain legal assistance on review of Statutes and what is being done in other States. All members of this team thanked Corey for her dedication and hard work over the Holidays on this matter.
- **Steering Committee** – The Committee will meet in February to discuss the new flood plan maps and what it means for the changes made regarding natural hazards. Jonathan was asked to participate from an insurance and risk point of view. In March the Committee will be focusing on the findings of the Science and Advisory panel.
- **The next meeting of the NHCRHC will be at the Hampton Beach Seashell pavilion on 02/21/14, 10:00-12:30PM.** Chairperson Sinnott motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:40 PM and Dave seconded.
- The March meeting for the Coastal Risk and Hazard Commission will be 03/21/14 (Location to be determined.)

*Respectfully submitted,
David Wood
Clerk CRHC*