

Natural Resources Committee

DRAFT Minutes

Nov 9, 2016

Committee Members: Barrie Bailey, Nick Causton, Colin Davis, Peter Grant, Stan Grzyb, Wendy Sue Harper (Chair), Arabella Holzpfel, Ed Payne, Ron Payne, Paul Wagner, Kent Wright

Present: Wendy Sue Harper, Peter Grant, Arabella Holzpfel, Ed Payne, Ron Payne, Paul Wagner, Kent Wright

Staff: Kevin Behm

Guest:

Wendy Sue opened the meeting at 6:00. The Sept 14th minutes were moved for approval. (Arabella motion, Paul 2nd). All were in favor.

The Committee discussed the meeting time and agreed to retain the 6:00pm time just prior to the Commission meeting at 7:00.

Ed mentioned an article in the Addison Independent on new forestry regulations and asked whether they were in regard to the Lake Champlain TMDL. Kevin said that the TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load of phosphorus) is requiring a reduction in phosphorus loading from forest land, but the new forest regulations are primarily directed at requiring foresters to obtain a 'harvest number' prior to cutting. This is designed to help identify the origin of cut logs and limit logging operations on areas that are off-limits. Peter stated that the forest phosphorus was probably mostly from logging roads. Ed felt that much of the phosphorus was likely to be a part of the natural process of decomposition of debris. Wendy Sue said that as a soil scientist she is aware of a lot of research on appropriate logging practices to limit soil erosion on logging roads and along stream banks. Kevin also mentioned recent studies that are reviewing the practices related to the disposal of leaf litter from urban trees and parks. Barrie stated that she knows of several locations where trees have been cut right down to the river. Ed stated that the State's Shoreline Permit requires the vegetation to be retained for the first 100 feet and he sends landowners to the state if they are intending to develop shoreland. Kevin noted that the Shoreline requirements are for Lake Champlain and other lakes and ponds over 20 acres.

Kevin introduced Act 174 and the new energy siting requirements. He provided background to the Act and passed out the Standards developed by the Department of Public Service for Regional and Municipal Plans. The NRC will be reviewing the map layers identified in the Standards and deciding whether to recommend any other natural resources that should be considered as constraints or considered as preferred siting locations. He briefly reviewed draft regional maps and offered to prepare additional maps with other resources the NRC may want to consider.

The Committee adjourned at 6:50pm.