



Environmental Review Committee
Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 21, 2020, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Roger Bolton (Chair), Edward Holub, Eleanor Tillinghast, Kate Fletcher, Malcolm Fick, and Kyle Hanlon

Others Present: Thomas Matuszko (BRPC), and Melissa Provencher (BRPC)

I. Call to Order

ERC Chairman Bolton called the meeting to order at 4:01pm and began roll call.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 18, 2020

E. Tillinghast made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by K. Hanlon. ERC Chairman Bolton conducted a roll call vote.

R. Bolton: Aye

M. Fick: Aye

E. Tillinghast: Aye

E. Holub: Aye

K. Fletcher: Aye

K. Hanlon: Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

III. Hoosac River Bank Stabilization, Adams- Expanded Environmental Notification Form

M. Provencher provided a brief description of the project. The proposed project has been developed as a safety measure to stabilize the bank for existing electric transmission infrastructure along the Hoosic River. The Project Site consists of an approximately 4.75-acre with the majority of the Site located within the New England Power Company (NEP) right-of-way (ROW) and a NEP-owned parcel east of the Adams 21 Substation. The Hoosic River banks exhibit severe signs of erosion within the Site, including bank undercutting and failure, putting multiple electric transmission line structures and poles at risk of damage or failure. The banks continue to deteriorate, and significant work is required to address bank erosion to protect existing electric infrastructure.

The bank stabilization involves the installation of biostabilization measures (log crib walls) along the banks at four locations and the use of log structures to stabilize the banks and protect structure anchors. In addition to biostabilization, linear sheet piles will be installed, and one structure will be relocated farther away from the river's bank.

The proposed project has meet or exceeded the following MEPA review thresholds:

- Greater than two acres of disturbance of designated priority habitat that results in a take of state-listed endangered or threatened species or species of special concern
- Alteration of one or more acres of bordering vegetating wetlands
- Alteration of 500 or more linear feet of bank along inland bank
- Alteration of 5,000 or more sf of bordering or isolated vegetated wetlands
- New fill or structure within regulatory floodway

The following permits are required:

- Individual 401 Water Quality Certification
- Conservation and Management Permit
- Chapter 91 Dredge Permit

This project requires a Mandatory EIR and the proponent has requested a Single EIR. M. Provencher explained that the staff recommendation is to support the request for a Single EIR. However, it should be noted that due to the velocity and unpredictability of the Hoosic River, it is unclear that this stabilization plan will provide a final resolution to the problem. More details should be included within the SEIR as described within the Environmental Review Report.

T. Matuszko suggested that a long-term re-vegetation plan be recommended for the area under NEP control. E. Tillinghast suggested that the proponent work with the Hoosic River Watershed Association and other relevant non-profits.

K. Hanlon moved to authorize the Executive Director to send a letter on behalf of the Committee consistent with staff recommendations within the Environmental Review Report and changes discussed regarding a long-term revegetation plan and work with relevant non-profits. E. Tillinghast seconded the motion. ERC Chairman Bolton conducted a roll call vote.

R. Bolton: Aye

M. Fick: Aye

E. Tillinghast: Aye

E. Holub: Aye

K. Fletcher: Aye

K. Hanlon: Aye

The motion was passed unanimously.

IV. Other Business

K. Fletcher inquired about whether the Housatonic Rest of River Cleanup would be a project that this Committee would review. M. Provencher explained that, it is her understanding that, since the project is under federal jurisdiction that it is not expected to be reviewed under MEPA. The project will need to be designed to comply with certain state laws, but will remain under EPA's jurisdiction and will not require state permits. K. Fletcher suggested that this might be a future topic for the Executive Committee.

V. Adjournment

M. Fick made a motion to adjourn at 5:00pm. The motion was seconded by K. Fletcher. ERC Chairman Bolton conducted a roll call vote.

R. Bolton: Aye

M. Fick: Aye

K. Hanlon: Aye

K. Fletcher: Aye

E. Tillinghast: Aye

E. Holub: Aye

The motion was passed unanimously.

Materials distributed electronically:

- ERC Agenda 10/21/20
- ERC Draft Minutes 8/18/20
- Environmental Review Report 10/19/20
- Hoosac River Bank Stabilization, Adams- Expanded Environmental Notification Form