

MOUNT SUNAPEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RSA 21-G:11)
October 14, 2014 MINUTES (*Approved on 04.16.15*)

A meeting of the Mount Sunapee Advisory Committee was held at the Newbury Veteran's Hall on October 14, 2014.

Call to Order. Commissioner Jeffrey J. Rose as chairman called the meeting to order at 9:35 am. Members present were Dan Wolf/Town of Newbury, Nancy Marashio/SPNHF, Nate Miller/UVLSRPC, Peter Fenton/designee LSRCC, Director Phil Bryce/Div. of Parks and Recreation, June Fichter/LSPA, Tim Drew/DES, Melanie Bell/Town of Goshen, Sabrina Stanwood/DFL and Johanna Lyons, Clerk.

Minutes. Ms. Marashio referring to Mr. O'Clair's statement on p.2 wanted to point out while the statement was correctly recorded, the statement is not clear as to whether the Planning Board or the Town of Goshen supports the expansion of the ski area.

Mr. Wolf moved to approve the minutes of June 3, 2014, seconded by Ms. Fichter. The minutes were adopted as written.

MDP/EMP 2015-2019. Commissioner Rose opened the discussion with his appreciation of the Mount Sunapee Advisory Committee and the value he places in their input. He reiterated his commitment to an open and transparent process and to that end, he will make his draft response to the MDP public and seek additional public comment. He does not have a specific timeline for his response, but will be respectful to the Mount Sunapee Resort in recognizing they need to move forward with development of their Annual Operating Plan.

Summary of Public Comment

Commissioner Rose handed out a comment summary prepared by the Division of Parks and Recreation. The summary tallies the tenor of the response of 21 issues (positive, negative, mentioned, opposition and support) and summarizes the comment (which is not a quote but summary statement). Over 300 comments were submitted to the agency between the public hearing, mail, and email.

Committee Comments and Discussion

- Mr. Wolf – Will the committee get to vote on the draft decision?
 - Commissioner Rose – This is an advisory committee so they will not vote, however, he values the input of the committee.
- Ms. Marashio – Will there be a phased approval so the resort can implement the easier things as the harder issues are resolved?
 - Commissioner Rose – Yes if needed to be responsive and timely so the AOP can be developed.

Commissioner Rose noted that many committee members had provided written comment; however, he asked each to share their thoughts.

- Mr. Wolf – A lot of the discussion is about the potential for residential development; he's not sure whose decision it is on the real estate between the state and the town.

- Ms. Marashio – Looked at the plan two ways; on-going management is going well with everything in the leasehold so far. The marriage of private and public lands proposed is new, and not sure how it benefits the public. What authority does the state have over the private lands? SPNHF can't make a comment to that until it is untangled. Can't address the development but would assume there is a buffer.
- Mr. Miller – Resort is important to our regional economy and recognize the challenge that DRED has with this proposal.
 - In order to make an informed decision, need more information on expansion in the West Bowl.
 - Concurs with Commissioner Bald's letter of 2002 that the MDP should encompass all activity on the ski area and private lands.
 - Mechanics of how this arrangement will work for the public/private development.
 - How will revenue sharing be impacted or shared with the West Bowl development?
 - The EMP cites two studies and concludes the old forest is not a problem, the EMP neglects to mention the 2004 Natural Heritage Bureau report in which Polygon D is recognized as having old forest characteristics.
 - The mountain coaster impacts two polygons identified in the 1999 Natural Heritage study, not enough info in the MDP to determine its long term impacts.
 - The parking analysis uses old data and model. Not sure parking lot #4 is needed, especially if the parking lot at the Sunapee Beach is used.
 - Expansion will cross town and county lines. Heard from the town perambulator about the historic markers and want to be sure they are preserved.
 - Concerned that the West Bowl development outlined is not as great of detail as the rest of the resort.
 - The water system for the West Bowl will be drawing from one watershed and used in another, should coordinate with DES.
- Mr. Fenton – The Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce have discussed the plans. Should leave the decisions to the citizens of the towns affected.
- Ms. Fichter – The Lake Sunapee Protective Association (or LSPA) Board of Directors met this weekend. The Resort has been great stewards of the property and has been helpful in addressing storm water runoff.
 - Calculated the increased amount of water needed to supply the ski area and West Bowl and it is negligible.
 - She did some research on the public/private interaction and there are examples on state and federal lands nationwide (including Loon in NH). Can be explained but not sure how to be implemented.
- Mr. Drew – DES needs to remain neutral because they are a regulatory agency. Mount Sunapee Resort is in complete compliance regulatory. DES is more involved in the AOP and permitting.
- Ms. Bell – Need to make sure the legalities of public/private management are sorted out because it will fall to the Town of Goshen planning and zoning. Good planning now will identify issues so we don't wind up in court. Asks if the lease will be amended.
- Ms. Stanwood – The old forest that is spoken about is officially an "exemplary natural community" which has a set of protection recommendations.

- Need to include the data and recommendations from the Natural Heritage Bureau's (NHB) studies in the MDP/EMP/AOP.
- Need reporting on if the recommendations from the NHB Datacheck letter, such as mowing, are being followed.
- Clarify in the MDP that the 1999 NHB study recommended additional study.
- NHB requests additional information and will work with the Resort when they are planning and designing the improvements.
- Ms. Fichter – Wanted to also add that the increase in water withdrawals is still within the permit the Resort has.

Other Business

- Mr. Miller – What is your timeline for response
 - Commissioner Rose – Not a hard timeline, but the AOP needs to be approved by June 30th, so I anticipate a thoughtful and deliberate response in time for the AOP can be completed.
- Ms. Marashio – Will you ask the Resort for more information?
 - Commissioner Rose – Yes as needed to address questions from the MSAC and the public comments.
- Mr. Wolf – Would your response include information on lease amendments?
 - Commissioner Rose – Yes, as needed.
 - Director Bryce – The agency will be working closely with the Attorney General's Office also.

Commissioner called for a motion to adjourn, Ms. Stanwood makes the motion and it is seconded by Mr. Miller. Meeting adjourned at 10:25 am.

Respectfully Submitted, Johanna Lyons, State Park Planning and Development Specialist.