

ROCHESTER RIVERWALK COMMITTEE MINUTES
November 16, 2023
City Hall Annex, Cocheco Room, ROCHESTER, NH 03967

MEMBERS PRESENT – Jon Batson, Maggie McConaghy, Barbara Murphy, Stacey Purslow, Esther Thompson, David Walker

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE – Brian Hettrick of Sunshine Initiative, Jennifer Marsh of Rochester Economic Development, Renée McIsaac of Rochester Planning & Development

ABSENT - Peter Bruckner.

A. CALL TO ORDER — David Walker called the meeting to order at 6:02.

B. APPROVAL —

Motion to accept the minutes of regular meeting August 24, 2023, was made by Maggie, seconded by Jon, and approved by all.

C. DISCUSSION —

Overlook update

The project is funded for design and build. **Jenn** will ask for an update from Fuss & O'Neill. If the project costs stay within the budget, the next steps are the design work from Fuss & O'Neill and verification that the NHDES Dam Bureau has approved the plan. Installation is anticipated next spring.

Strategic plan update

Fuss & O'Neill wrote the current version of Riverwalk Master Plan and are best positioned to do the revision needed to provide a step-by-step build plan to take us through the next two to five years (Phase 1). City Council approved the funds for the update. The goal is to create a downtown loop of about two miles. This revision will provide a solid plan for DPW, the city, and grants. Features of interest are an amphitheater, a pocket park at Gafney, trail in the intervalle, around Elizabeth Seton and behind Fownes Mills Condominiums.

D. DISCUSSION —

Membership

Motion to accept the resignations of Kerrie Landry and Jennifer Gullison was made by Jon, seconded by Stacey, unanimously accepted.

A committee membership of eight or nine was considered ideal, with the addition of non-voting advisory members. **Esther** will approach a couple Rochester residents who recently attended Changemakers Bootcamp on the Cocheco watershed with Renée and her for consideration of membership on the committee.

We have a set of people who have provided expertise and assistance to the committee, people who may be eligible and interested in serving as advisory members. **Jenn** will compile their names into a list for our January meeting.

E. DISCUSSION —

CDBG applications open

A second kayak and canoe launch at a downtown landing is desired. **David** will investigate the possibility of an application for this purpose in the current round. Any committee member interesting in joining this investigation should contact David.

Updates RW story

Vision Statement of the Rochester, New Hampshire, Riverwalk was presented by Brian as written by Brian, Stacey and Renée. A motion was made by Barbara, seconded by Esther, and accepted unanimously to accept the Vision, Purpose and Competencies Document with minor wording and grammatical revisions agreed by committee.

This document will be released to the public in early December after the committee completes the requested edits. It is a living document subject to updates as approved by the committee after its initial release.

F. DISCUSSION — Other

There will be no December meeting.

To make the Hillsdale launch fully accessible, the pathway to the launch needs a more gradual descent than direct (perpendicular to the shoreline) descent offers.

Three significant items of progress bode well for success in obtaining grants:

- Updated strategic plan
- Commitment of the city
- Riverwalk story

Connecting Rochester to trailways in other towns is gaining interest, including Strafford Regional Planning Commission's Kyle Pimental and Colin Lentz.

- Farmington with a tunnel
- Barrington with a bridge

Danbury, Connecticut, was recommended as a model.

Rochester Recreation is in the process of updating their master plan.

Watch for the opportunity to participate in their survey.

G. Adjourn — Motion to adjourn was made at 7:11 by Maggie, seconded by Jon, and accepted unanimously.

Next meeting will be *after* the holidays, Thursday, January 25, 2026, 6:00pm at City Hall Annex.

—Respectfully submitted by Esther Thompson