

Friends of Hanover Crew
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To: Hanover Board of Selectmen
From: Friends of Hanover Crew
Subj: Response to concerns raised in letters from the CT River Joint Commissions and the CT River Watershed Council
Date: October 12, 2009

In boldface below are FOHC's responses to suggestions raised in the July 28, 2009 letter from David Minsk, Upper Valley River Subcommittee, CRJC. As Mr. Minsk prefaced in his letter: *"The following observations and comments are intended by the Subcommittee not to support or discourage the project, but to help guide the Friends' continued planning..."*

Suggestions relative to the docks and town landing:

1. Can the dock be placed far enough out beyond the 380-foot low water level without interfering with river traffic or requiring placement of launches on the outside of the dock? **Because the riverbed profile drops off quickly beyond the 380-foot low water level, movement of the dock location would be a matter of only a few feet.**
2. Explain rationale for the large dock size and relationship to the Dartmouth dock size: **As explained in the FOHC operating plan, the 180-foot dock length is necessary to launch three '8's' at a time, maximizing practice time and allowing students a prompt arrival at school. The Dartmouth dock is approximately 170 feet long.**
3. Recommend a neutral color/non-reflective dock material to mitigate visual impact, and installation of reflectors to make dock visible to night-time boaters: **FOHC agrees, as in our original plan. The proposed dock is of the same material as the Chieftain and Dartmouth docks, with the added benefit of a consistent appearance along the river.**
4. Impact on riparian vegetation and river bank if mechanical assistance is needed to remove dock: **No mechanical assistance is needed; dock sections would be floated to the boat launch and hauled up by hand onto trailers, just as motor boat trailers are used.**
5. Encourage the Town of Hanover to explore opening new river access for non-motorized boats at Mink Brook: **This is a Town responsibility, not FOHC.**

6. Level of Town patrol and enforcement to prevent the new dock from becoming an attractive nuisance, especially at night: **This is a Town responsibility, not FOHC. We anticipate the impact would be minimal, based on data from existing Town patrols.**
7. Can Friends work with the Town to replace the small signboard at Wilson's Landing with a covered kiosk? **FOHC is willing to assist the Town with this task.**

Suggestions relative to the riparian buffer:

1. Removal of invasive species: **FOHC is willing to help provide volunteer labor.**
2. Rigorous boat cleaning: **FOHC is willing to comply, consistent with our present practices.**
3. Minimal disruption to existing trees and shrubs that contribute to bank stabilization and erosion control at Wilson's Landing: **There would be no disruption of trees and shrubs other than installation of a 12-foot footing for the ramp, near the existing dock. We will be sensitive to locating the ramp to preserve native species.**
4. Trampling of vegetation by team members and spectators: **Large regattas will be held at the Chieftain finish line, consistent with our current practices. FOHC would be happy to cordon off sensitive areas for the one or two weekday dual regattas at Wilson's Landing, to which few spectators come because of work hours.**
5. Recommend use of 4-stroke engines rather than 2-stroke engines, to minimize wave action: **FOHC motor launches already use 4-stroke engines.**
6. Rope off the area or add a fence of rustic design along the edge of the parking area to keep spectators away from wetland plants adjacent to and south of the dock – **see #4, FOHC agrees; use portable bleachers for larger regattas – see #4, large regatta will be at the Chieftain; add signs to educate spectators about the importance of riparian buffers – FOHC agrees, see kiosk comment above.**

FOHC response to suggestions raised in 9/11/09 letter to the Hanover Board of Selectmen, with a CC to the FOHC, from David Dean, River Steward, CT River Watershed Council:

1. Recommends hydrologic analysis to assess potential impact on sandbar: **If the Selectboard approves proceeding to the next stage in state permitting, FOHC intends to fulfill all legal requirements for permitting, including a hydrologic study if required.**

2. Dock location 60 feet from shore, adequate distance for fluctuating water levels? **See CRJC Answer #1, above.**
3. Adequate river passage for power boats past dock, and impact of no-wake restrictions: **Wilson's Landing sits at one of the widest parts of the Connecticut River and the crew dock would extend only 10 feet further into the river than the existing Town dock. Because Dartmouth, HHS, and recreational rowing already takes place on this same stretch of the river, the no-wake impact on power boaters would be no different than at the present time.**
4. Preventive steps to protect the shore line and sandbar from the effects of spilled/leaking gas, oil and other fluids: **FOHC is willing to work with state officials in designing an appropriate plan to protect the shoreline and sandbar from such effects.**
5. Impact of running engines in shallow water near the launch: **Each launch is equipped with paddles and we intend to start engines only when we reach deep water. On the return, coaches will cut off motors, coast in, and flip engines up out of the water when they reach the shallow area.**
6. Adoption of a cleanup plan to counteract potential increased levels of trash: **FOHC agrees.**