

**Friends of Hanover Crew**  
**PO Box 855**  
**Hanover, NH 03770**

**To:** Hanover Select Board  
**From:** Friends of Hanover Crew  
**Date:** October 12, 2009; revised October 16, 2009  
**Re:** **Pros/Cons of Various Sites for a Rowing Facility to be Sponsored by the Friends of Hanover Crew**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Select Board with a summary of constraints related to several possible alternative sites for a rowing facility for the students of Hanover High School, as requested, following the meeting with the Select Board on September 14. The information covers 6 most relevant sites including all those mentioned during the previous Select Board meeting, either by FOHC, the Board or members of the public. This summary reflects the considerable time the FOHC has spent carefully considering these 6 and other sites prior to selecting the Fullington Farm/Wilson's Landing site as the only viable home for HHS crew. We have conducted additional review of sites since the Board last discussed our Wilson's Landing proposal in September.

HHS crew and UVRF have investigated other potential sites not included in this summary. We have not included these sites due to their unsuitability due to safety issues, distance from HHS school, or size of parcel or prohibitive costs. Safe conditions for our teenage rowers are of paramount concern to FOHC. Water conditions, especially early in the season when the river runs swiftly and the possibility of ice on steep pathways, docks and shallower inlets have a great impact on the suitability of a site. A site must be close enough to Hanover High so that students and coaches can both have sufficient time to practice and get to classes and day jobs quickly and efficiently, by 7:55 am in the case of HHS students. Therefore we do not list distant sites like Lake Mascoma. Our survey also does not include the numerous private properties north of Wilson's Landing as, to our knowledge, nothing of sufficient size is currently on the market, all face the same RR zoning constraints, none host public docks, and all are located a greater distance from HHS making them less practical.

We urge the Board to take another look at the excellent summary of the Hanover shoreline compiled by Jonathan Edwards in September, prior to our first meeting. Jonathan's colored map and his statistics of both "Characteristics of Hanover's Shoreline by Constraint" and "Characteristics of Hanover's Shoreline by Ownership" summarize the challenge we face in finding a permanent home for the crew team of the public high school in Hanover.

## **Wilson's Landing**

### Pros

- Existing public boat launch
- Enhancement of public recreational facility utilizing private funds
- No taxpayer monies requested to install dock
- Adjacent land already owned by FOHC for covered boat storage
- Early seasonal access possible because ice is out of main river channel sooner than in inlet areas along river.
- Safe and reasonably short commuting distance to HHS
- Width of river good for dock and public navigation
- Safe launch site for novice crews due to nature of current in this area
- Capacity for continued easy access for all boaters – providing better dock for kayaks, canoes. Sculls and rowers with accessibility needs
- Team rowing in early morning does not conflict with current recreational use later in day and during afternoon/early evening.

### Cons

- Abutters concerns over seasonal noise and time of use
- Public perception that use of the public landing will change in negative ways (reduced access for others who now use the Landing; impact on local flora and fauna, etc)

## **Dartmouth Boathouse**

(see October 15, 2009 letter from Dartmouth College Athletics Department)

### Pros

- Safe launch site for novice crews due to current conditions in this locale
- Early seasonal access possible because ice is out of the main river channel earlier
- Safe and reasonably short commuting distance to HHS
- Current cost to team minimal
- Parking and drop-off easy for rowers and parents
- Public rowing sweep rowing activity currently centered here with existing dock and some boat storage facilities.

### Cons

- Area cannot accommodate existing college and HHS teams which has led Dartmouth in recent years to put limits on number of boats that HHS can launch, which is smaller than the number of boats that need to be launched to accommodate all comers (which is a policy of HHS)
- Uncertain future costs and permanence of home for HHS crew due to Dartmouth's unwillingness and inability to agree to long-term use agreement

- Cannot afford to lose potential of permanent home due to inability of College to make long-term commitment to host HHS and with no restriction on team size
- No covered boat storage which leads to reduced useful life of boats

### **Dartmouth Land North of Sophomore Swim Docks**

#### Pros

- Clusters sweep rowing activities in same area along river
- Safe commuting distance to HHS
- Parking and drop-off easy

#### Cons

- Extremely hazardous to crews due to Spring currents near Ledyard Bridge – of particular concern regarding Novice crews.
- Major excavation work required on land not owned by FOHC – steep drop-off would require significant investment and extensive permitting requirements to change the topography of this area
- No guarantee that Dartmouth would agree to host public docks on their property
- No covered boat storage

### **Dartmouth Organic Farm**

#### Cons

- Under stringent conservation easements which prohibit such facilities

### **Mink Brook South Bank (Town Owned Cemetery/WWTP Property)**

#### Pros

- Seemingly not a problem relative to abutters due to distance from sites
- Town-owned land has potential for private/town partnership
- Potential parking and drop-off good
- Reasonable commuting distance to HHS
- Opportunity to design boathouse with potential community use

#### Cons

- Mink Brook cove ice out well after season usually begins (2-3 weeks)
- River access too shallow, dredging required
- Unsafe main river access due to hazardous spring currents below Ledyard bridge
- Potential for perceived negative impact on identified neighboring conservation area
- Smell of wastewater treatment plant
- Safety of getting boats to the dock because of ice and grade
- Major excavation work required on land not owned by FOHC

### **Chieftain Motel**

#### Pros

- Dock already in place

- Permits for a limited degree of rowing already exist
- Reasonable commute for HHS students
- Good venue for large regattas
- Safe water launch

#### Cons

- Uncertain future costs and permanence of home for HHS crew
- Terms of lease and of subsequent lease uncertain and unpredictable
- Ice out occurs later in the spring in this shallower inlet location, by at least 2 weeks
- Driveway to launch site is inaccessible for a significant portion of season due to steep slope and shady location – icy and hazardous in early spring
- Lack of parking and drop-off make for dangerous location
- Impact on lodging guests
- Legal limitations on use of facilities by non-hotel-guests
- Inadequate size of waterfront to accommodate both a dramatically larger rowing program and hotel-guest-related events
- Shallow river requiring moving dock further out in order to moor launches on inside of dock or other mooring/anchoring required
- Necessity to re-permit relocated and lengthened dock and to remove legal limitations on facilities use.

#### **Norwich Land Owned by Upper Valley Rowing Foundation**

##### Pros

- Partnership with existing rowing organization
- Safe water launch

##### Cons

- Railroad allows agricultural crossings only
- Cost for changes to railroad crossing prohibitive and rail owner notoriously difficult to deal with. Legal action likely involved to enable desired land use.
- Long commuting distance to HHS (backup at River Road and Ledyard Bridge and Bridge crossing adds significant time to commute to HHS)
- Stated concern by public officials about traffic congestion on Route 5 while waiting for railroad crossing