

Herring River Restoration Committee
15 April 2009
CCNS Headquarters

Members Present: Gary Joseph, Steve Spear, Tim Smith, Eric Derleth, Carrie Phillips, Hillary Greenberg, Mark Adams
Project Coordinators: Margo Fenn, Maggie Geist

Members Absent: Charleen Greenhalgh, Steve Block

Others Present: Hunt Durey, John Portnoy, Jack Whalen, Don Palladino, Spence Smith (LBG), Craig Wood (LBG),

1. **Louis Berger Group (LBG): Draft EIS/EIR Scope of Work (SOW)**

Smith sent the draft SOW for the EIS/EIR to all committee members last week. NPS has a very regimented process for NEPA that must be followed. ACOE also has a unique process for its 404 permit. It is possible to integrate processes but this has not yet been done for a restoration project. Work by Berger to date includes: ENF filing, initial draft chapter 1 of the EIS, Comment coding, CYCC course options – exploring raising fairways in current location, geotechnical work-exploratory borings. Spence Smith reviewed the SOW proposal: this document will take us through a record of decision, Task one will include a data sources review to determine any data gaps that will need to be analyzed in the EIS/EIR, Task two is alternatives development this will include alternative evaluation to assess impacts and thresholds to resource areas. Smith asked Spence Smith what tasks one, two and three would cost the Committee. Spence felt this would be difficult to do as there are some unknowns. Data gaps may limit impact assessment and feasibility of alternatives. Fenn inquired how long it would take LBG to complete Task one. LBG felt as though HRRC and LBG would have to work on this together as HRRC knows what studies are currently underway, what is proposed and what is being planned. LBG thought that task two, alternative development, could go on concurrently with task one, data review. Task one is important to get underway as soon as possible. Spear asked if it may be possible to contract Task one and task two, part one: alternative meeting preparation. LBG responded yes. All data is electronic at this point, either through digitizing or a part of the Conceptual Restoration Plan (CRP), and ongoing monitoring is also mentioned in the Conceptual Restoration Plan. Derleth wanted to know how much information is necessary, and what level of detail do we need, if we are using adaptive management to restore the river. Smith envisioned the SOW of a roadmap for the project, the SOW outlines the framework nicely however, he is still struggling with the specific content. Known information, project specific should be identified in the document. Durey commented on uncertain topics relative to low lying properties. He would like to see some of these uncertainties settled prior to moving forward. There are four properties with structures that will be impacted. HRRC members are actively working on two of the four although all four have been contacted. Durey also mentioned upland impacts from tidal

inundation; this includes changing buffer zones and FEMA floodplain insurance mapping. Fenn brought the discussion back to the SOW draft document. Durey wants to be sure ecological data and practical information (socioeconomic) must be included in task one, data review. All properties that will be impacted must be identified; this will be a deliverable for chapter three. Wood will add project specific data to the SOW for a second draft. HRRC members will supply written comments by 24 April to Smith and Fenn, they will then send them to LBG. LBG will supply a revised draft by 4 May 2009. Spear would like to see a cost proposal for specifically task one and task two alternatives development. The rest of the SOW could be included as options. It may be best to look at the SOW in a phased approach with a cost estimate associated with each option. Portnoy feels it is important for LBG to read all primary source material that was used in drafting the CRP. Cultural resources and wildlife surveys were briefly discussed as there is currently some funding available for wildlife surveys.

On 4 May 2009, LBG will provide a comprehensive SOW document that describes the EIS/EIR process through the ROD and also a second document covering task one and the beginning of task two with cost estimates for these tasks. A ball park price range could be put on the comprehensive document and a more accurate price will be put on task one and a portion of task 2 (alternative development). A contract will then be executed for task one and the portion of task two specified above. Task three (alternative meeting facilitation) should also be included in the contract cost.

2. EIS/EIR Alternatives Selection Process

To develop alternatives, LBG will put together a matrix of big scope alternatives framework. Then hone in on what high tide elevation we want to restore each subbasin of the Herring River to. The next phase would be to assess alternatives based on elevations, then work in other data areas including public access. Methodologies for analysis and assumptions for defining analysis will need to be included in Chapter 4 of the EIS. Methodologies will be hashed out in alternative development. Alternatives development is a very long process. There will be the 4 or 5 alternatives that have already been laid out but they must be made more specific. When a preferred alternative is selected it must be implemented with no options. Within an adaptive management program, the analysis must be the full scope of the end result and the steps it takes to get to the end. It will also include some decision trees and a valid end point. If things are not progressing as intended then adaptive management allows us to return to the decision tree. All of the alternatives will have some level of uncertainty. It seems as though the HRRC should select target high and low tide elevations and salinity for each sub-basin as an organizing principle and then build the restoration elements and alternatives around the target elevations. This must also tie back to the original project objective. Organizing framework must be decided early and in order to make these decisions we need the final model report plus the additional runs decided upon at the last meeting(3-25-09). For LBG to do the work they will need the model runs, and knowledge of the maximum extent of tidal inundation.

3. Friends of Herring River

There are a number of questions coming in and interest is being generated

for the project. Palladino suggests a timeline for future activities including alternative workshops. There was discussion of updating and incorporating new information about the project on the Friends of Herring River website. The organizational stuff is complete and now the group is ready to get to the substantive aspects of the project. Once the EIS selection of alternatives is done, funding needs should be outlined. Fundraising will be needed; the monies will be used as price match for federal dollars. Friends of Herring River agreed to work with the HRRC and the Town to develop a process to reinvigorate the need and change the previously approved warrant article for the 1.2 million. For incorporation at Annual Town Meeting in April 2010 a new article will need to be drafted this fall.

4. Hydrodynamic Modeling: Discussion of additional model runs

Derleth (USFWS) is ready to put WHG under contract for the additional model runs through CAF. Derleth and Smith have been discussing next steps for the model including how to estimate what the elevation of the natural river channel would have been in 1908. This information could be used to assess the effects of changing the invert elevation and help select the elevation of the invert of the new proposed structure. Much discussion went on regarding the hydrodynamic modeling. Fenn suggested referring this issue back to the modeling sub committee. Smith stated the model is rather complex and we can not be looking for such finely detailed information such as peat rebounding... The model may not have the capacity to answer detailed questions regarding the effects of differing vegetation types on predicted water surface elevations and salinities. The modeling subcommittee will be in touch with WHG and HRRC. If consensus can be reached on model runs it will then be reported to HRRC.

5. Soil Borings

LBG is under contract to redesign holes within existing floodplain. Two things must be done: Howard Maurer will develop a set of centerline plans and form them in a more fully developed routing plan, and answer geotechnical questions such as what happens if you place fill on these types of soils, how the material will settle: data must be gathered on compressibility of soils. Soil borings have been completed and a geotechnical engineer is reviewing the data. The elevation is known to get the holes out of the floodplain, subsidence will be reviewed, and finally Maurer will come back with a refined plan, LBG will then design a schematic plan. The main goal will be to get to a plan that CYCC deems as viable as the plan for reconfiguring the course that utilizes the CYCC uplands. There was a bit of site variability with regard to peat. Once a plan is settled upon, it would be useful to present such data to the TWG for regulatory review. The deadline for this work is 30 June 2009 at 5:00 pm. Boring logs will be available this week for interest. Calculations will be available after Mahr designs a draft plan.

6. Approval of March 25 Minutes

Approved unanimously with **corrections**

7. Next Meeting Date and Topics

14 May 2009 at 12:00 pm

Town monies, Hydrodynamic information (10 copies of final report to Rex),
Historic assessments; scope of work for phase 1A, TWG,