

Town of Londonderry, Vermont
Williams Dam Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 19, 2023
Williams Dam, Londonderry, VT

Committee Members Present:

Robert Forbes, Jim Ameden, Rachel Febbie, Richard Phelan, Paul Hendler, Melissa Brown (ex officio)

Committee Members Absent: None

Others in Attendance:

Community Member: Ron Bacon

Meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm.

Additions or Deletions to Agenda (1 VSA 312(d)(3)9A)): None

Old Business:

The Committee decided as a first step their focus will be to investigate the condition of the dam. There is concern that “the only narrative we have is that from the D & K study.” Forbes discussed observations he has made throughout time, and the condition of the Williams Dam in the last year. The Committee decided a visit to Williams Dam would be beneficial as part of this first step.

New Business:

The Committee and Melissa Brown took a close look at the Williams Dam, and the gate. There was lots of discussion between them all...Highlights of the discussion were:

1. The Committee needs to gather information to determine if the dam is deteriorating, and if it is how quickly is it deteriorating, moreover, how has the dam changed over time historically.
2. The D & K study inferred that the dam was backed with silt, but it seems likely faulty information because the silt would clog the leaks coming out of the dam.
3. Further investigation needs to be done to determine how much of the dam is ledge?
4. Water coming downstream towards the village will increase if the dam is removed because the water comes off a vertical drop over the dam then pooling at the bottom taking time for water to move downstream again.
5. Should there be a study of how much water the dam is actually holding back?

6. Sediment levels did not seem significant behind the dam. There was a measuring device present. Gate walls appeared plum, and should be properly measured.
7. Committee member Hendler is a new resident to town (welcome), and Febbie suggested he watch on GNAT the D & K special meeting the Selectboard hosted. Febbie felt it would help Hendler get a little back history on the study, and questions community members had asked.
8. Ameden, Committee Member and Fire Chief, talked of concerns with fires and “life safety” if the Williams Dam and Mill Pond are removed. The Mill Pond is the best and most accessible water source in all 4 seasons, especially winter, and his concerns grow even more with the anticipated new zoning laws allowing for 48 feet high structures, and smaller lot sizes for more buildings.
9. The D & K study was NOT a structural study. It was a cost analysis on possible options for the Williams Dam for the town. The Committee discussed inviting another engineer to look further into the structural components of the Williams Dam, and possible other alternatives like renewable energy with hydro.

Phelan moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Forbes, passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm.

The next regular meeting of the Williams Dam Advisory is scheduled for July 17, 2023 at Londonderry Town Office.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachel Febbie

Approved

Williams Dam Advisory Committee

Rich Phelan, Chair