

Working group - Mill Brook Watershed Management Committee

2/3/24 minutes, approved 3/224

Present: Bill Wilcox, Prudy Burt, David Bouck, Julie Pringle

Recent email communication with consultant Neal Price was discussed. Neal indicated that due to other projects on his plate with hard deadlines, it is unlikely that he'll have a draft to us before the week of 2/19-2/23.

Once we have that draft, we will prioritize what issues might require further analysis.

There ensued a free-ranging discussion about the final report and accompanying public information forum.

In regards to Mill Pond scenarios, Prudy shared that, years ago, she had been in contact with staff at the Conway Landscape Design school (a master's design program in Conway, Ma.) about having their graduate students develop a conceptual design of what various forms of stream restoration might look like within the current configuration of Mill Pond. Included in that discussion, and in the conclusions and recommendations of our 2018 report on the Mill Brook watershed, is the idea of investigating the feasibility of a smaller, separate pond here, with Mill Brook flowing freely around it. Such a scenario would restore historic fish habitat and passage, natural sediment transport, and eliminate the lethally high water temperatures and low dissolved oxygen readings resulting from the present impoundment.

Among significant engineering questions about this idea, it remains unclear whether groundwater levels in this area could support such a possibility. David will confer with surveyor Bill Austin about the location of Kent Healy's former groundwater wells, and match these up with Kent's hard copy data that he scanned and digitized in 2021.

Next meeting will be in person at 10 a.m. on March 2, 2024, small conference room downstairs at WT library

Submitted by Prudy Burt