



Warner's Pond Task Force
Harvey Wheeler Community Center, 1276 Main Street, Auditorium
Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Task Force members:

- Vickie Alani
- Paul Boehm
- Malcolm Bryant
- Ann Clifford
- Jeff Collins
- Bruce Curliss
- Christine Denaro
- Keith Hannon
- Mark Howell
- Delia Kaye/Bert Comins
- Bill Kemeza
- Liz Morrison Howe
- David Owen
- Samiksha Poudel
- Sven Weber

The Warner's Pond Task Force held its 18th meeting on February 11, 2025 beginning at 6:30 pm at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center Auditorium, 1276 Main Street, Concord, MA 01742, with an option to join online via Zoom. Task Force members and members of the public were in attendance in person and on Zoom, with Task Force members Bert Comins, Jeff Collins, Ann Clifford, and David Owen joining online. The meeting agenda, slides, and video recording are available on the [Warner's Pond Task Force website](#).

Welcome and Updates

Christine Denaro, Task Force co-chair, opened the meeting at 6:30 and took a roll call of members. All members were in attendance except for Bruce Curliss. Chris identified the goals for the meeting:

- Get consensus approval for the proposals document
- Share perspectives on fish passage memo
- Agree on plan for public meeting (scheduling, format, preparation)

Approve January 16, 2025 Minutes

Christine asked if the group was ready to approve the January 16, 2025 minutes. After beginning to vote on a motion to approve the minutes, group members commented that the minutes had only been distributed the day prior to the meeting, so it would be better to postpone the vote to the next Task Force meeting. The Task Force agreed to delay the vote.

Public Comment (limited to 2 minutes per person)

Bill asked if anyone was interested in providing public comment and named ground rules:

- Be respectful in your comments
- Avoid personal attacks
- Keep comments to no more than 2 minutes

Mari Weinberg, 26 Hillside Ave.

People do not know the history and research of the pond. In the 1980s, citizens put together a fantastic long range plan for West Concord, which included use of all the waterways around Concord. After that, Gerow was part of the original Warner's Pond Stewardship Committee. After that we paid a consultant and had the first West Concord Advisory Task Force, which recommended keeping and using the waterways. In 2020, there was a survey with 3,602 responses.

Some people say you can always go to White Pond if you lose Warner's Pond. You have to pay to get to White Pond, and this summer in the White Pond Newsletter it discussed traffic, mayhem, and people trying to get in but being turned away. We have a lot of very wealthy people in Concord, but Gerow is for everybody. After 46 years in this town, the only thing I have is this beautiful park where you can sit and watch the pond, the birds, and the sunset. Medical research that was shared with the Recreation Commission, and that is available online, shows the effects of a pond on the well being of people in the community. I'm going to be 80 in three weeks and I thought I would have this asset forever. The possibility of losing it is breaking my heart.

Anna Feldweg, 343 Commonwealth Ave.

In a previous meeting, the Task Force discussed the survey that had been done, and people commented that they didn't know the details. I wanted to offer some information. In September 2023, we opened a survey for about a month. We got 817 signatures, of which there were 593 Concord residents of voting age. Then we also had an online survey. There were 500 signatures on that, which was the maximum we could accept before the survey closed automatically. Some signatures came in after we submitted our paperwork to the Select Board and after the Select Board meeting. Altogether, we think there were at least 900 signatures asking the Town to slow down and reconsider saving the pond. 600 of those were from Concord residents.

There has been Task Force discussion about recreation on frozen rivers and brooks. I went out this Saturday and took a picture of the Assabet River where everybody walks their dogs and it is still not frozen over even though the pond has been frozen for 6 weeks.

Denise Gilbert, Concord Green

If you live on the other side of Town, you have never seen Warner's Pond, and you think about costs and practicality, I understand being worried about the pond. I want to save the pond, but I'm also sensitive to the other side. I want to thank everyone here for all of the time that you're putting into understanding the practical aspects of the issue. There are many people who are very attached emotionally to this pond. That is why we're here. So I simply want to say, please continue this work and please help to save this pond.

After Bill noted that there were no additional members of the public seeking to comment, Toby expressed thanks to members of the public for commenting and moved the group to the next agenda item.

Proposal Document Discussion

Toby offered some context and guidance for the discussion on the draft proposal document. He noted that the hope was to leave the meeting with every Task Force member agreeing that they can at least live with the document, and not oppose sharing it with the public, even if it is not perfect. He also reminded people how the draft was developed. A small drafting group worked through feedback on the draft and their own differences. In the last Task Force meeting, members emphasized the importance of trusting that the small group would carry forward addressing the different interests within the large group. After lots of back and forth, the small group agreed that they could all live with the updated draft, despite their differences, and an updated draft was sent out to the Task Force in redline.

During the upcoming discussion, members should identify any questions that they would need answers to in order to decide if they can live with the draft. They should also identify any issues with the draft that they cannot live with, and specify what would need to change in order for them to be able to live with it. There also might be smaller factual or other issues that should be raised and addressed.

Bill suggested the group keep in mind that the proposals represent the best ideas each group could come up with, and they each had been asked to put forward the best case for their proposal. It's fine if members may not in the end support a specific proposal. Chris noted that there was a lot of to and fro in the small group meetings, and people were willing to negotiate and work with each other. There are still some some issues that haven't been fully agreed to, for example regarding the costs, but overall it was a very successful small group.

Jeff Collins expressed gratitude to the other small group members Keith, Chris and Bill, and to the facilitators for all their work. He added that he did not see himself as speaking on behalf of members of the Dam Removal Work Group during the small group meetings, so they should feel free to share their reactions to the draft.

Keith likewise expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work in the group, and noted that it was a productive dialogue with good back and forth.

Toby then opened the discussion up to members to ask questions and offer comments on the draft.

Sven commented on the cost section on page 4, under cost, there should be a simple table comparing the costs of the different scenarios at a high level. Having the costs tables in the appendix made him feel unable to compare costs across the proposals.

Keith shared that the small group had intentionally put the detailed cost information in the appendix out of a concern that some people might not read the rest of the proposal if they put that information too early in the document.

Sven suggested that the current draft reads like we're hiding the costs.

Bill added that the small group wanted the text in the body of the draft to indicate the complexity of costs, and then to make the cost figures very clear in the appendix. In addition, he noted that most people will not go through the full draft and will look at a simpler slide deck that will give them the information they need. He agreed a briefer table could be helpful.

Sven added that having multiple scenarios compounds the challenge to readers of understanding costs.

Malcolm added that few people read appendices, so there should at least be something in the body of the text that does not need to be overly specific.

Toby requested that Task Force members offer specific proposals to address their concerns.

Sven suggested adding simple information in the introduction explaining a low and a high range of estimated costs for each proposal. It could be a simple three-line table.

Paul expressed agreement with sharing simple cost information. He added that it is important to convey other items beyond just cost, including the benefits. He wants to downplay costs, naming the highest and lowest costs and suggesting that is enough at this stage.

Keith noted it is challenging because some are annual costs or recurring costs and others are one-time. Sven suggested you could include one time costs plus recurring costs for 10 years.

Vickie expressed concern that once you publish the cost people will never forget it, and will not read the rest of the proposal. None of our costs are solid or directly comparable, so it's hard for the public to understand them without an explanation. We can send people who are interested to the appendix, while noting all the different criteria that matter. She suggested that this approach follows the Envision Concord outline,

Liz suggested that way to provide clarity to readers while not putting costs too early would be to put it as a single line item within the separate proposals text, and then referring people to the appendices. She also supported the idea of using 10 year costs plus one-time costs to develop a single number.

Paul noted that the enhanced management proposal doesn't articulate what comes next after five years, so it would be better to stay within that five-year timeline. Bill added that the recurring management calculated both five- and ten-year total costs. He note that it would be simple to add a single line item of costs to the text, like Liz had suggested.

Mark noted that each proposal has a base proposal plus options that could be added to that base proposal. Also, the town uses capital plus operating costs, so the cost tables in the proposal could do the same. The tables could include capital and operating costs per year for each base proposal and option for each proposal. That would give people a sense of the order of magnitude of expenses and when they would likely occur.

Sven agreed with not being too granular in the introduction. We could add another, simplified appendix with a summary table of high-level costs, without all the detail in the existing appendices.

Toby tried to summarize what the group had suggested. First, it seemed like the group agreed it did not want to include all the detailed cost information in the introduction. Instead, the draft should include in some place a high-level summary of the costs. This could include a base proposal plus potential added elements, with figures for fixed and annual costs, with annual costs also added up for a five-year total.

In terms of where to include this summary data, one option would be to have a single summary costs table as one of the first appendices, followed by separate appendices with more detailed cost data. Another option would be to include these summary costs within the cost section of each proposal, which might also link to a summary table in the appendices comparing high-level costs across the proposals.

Sven added his suggestion for a simple range of costs table in the introduction, that refers to more detailed data in the appendices.

Bill suggested the group look at how the recurring management group had developed its tables as a potential model, noting that these tables included a base proposal, potential additions to it, and fixed costs, annual costs, and a five-year total for each.

Vickie commented that all the proposals should use the same basic cost template, and Bill agreed. Toby suggested the group had offered a pretty clear set of suggestions around what should be in the template: a base proposal plus options with one-time, recurring, and 5-year costs for each. Vickie added the town does capital and operating costs, and we should do it the same way. Bill added that the introduction should include base cost plus five-year costs.

Bill noted that we will be preparing this document, and we need the details even if most people will just see a slide deck.

Toby noted the group seemed to be suggesting a single table with summary information on each proposals. Bill added there should be a common template. Toby echoed the suggestion that there be a template. He then asked if the issue of where the costs were reported — whether in the body of the document or the appendices — was such a critical issue for any member that they could not live with the document if it were not to align with their preferences on this issue.

No members indicated that the location of the cost data was a “deal breaker” for them. Toby then commented that based on this response, this was just a question of member preferences on putting the data in the appendix, the introduction, with proposals sections, or some combination that should not hold us up from moving forward. He suggested the group take a straw poll on a set of options and move forward with whichever one has the most support. Regardless of which option garnered the most support, the group would move forward with a common costs template for each proposal as had been discussed. The options were as follows:

- Naming of highest level range of costs in the text of the introduction

- Naming the highest level range of costs in the text of the individual proposals
- Including a summary table of costs in the appendix but not including it in the body

Bill noted that the introduction includes general statements on costs, wildlife and recreation. Paul noted that including costs in the introduction before clarifying the different proposals felt jarring to him. Mark noted he would be comfortable with the first option in paragraph form, without a lot of detail. Keith added an additional option: each proposal would include a high-level range of costs towards the end of the proposal, there would be an additional appendix at the end that summarizes all the costs side by side, and there would still be detailed appendices with all the cost information for each proposal.

The group agreed that this additional option was a good compromise that addressed the range of interests that had been expressed, and decided collectively to move forward with it. The group then decided to move forward to discussing other issues.

Paul noted that the dredging proposal includes three options but doesn't explain why. He suggested there should be a sentence early on in the proposal noting that if you dredge more you get more open water and potentially longer duration of benefits, but there are higher costs.

Paul added that on page 7, the enhanced management proposal should clarify the impact of potential future developments on the pond. Vickie added that they will result in more density. Paul suggested adding specific explanations into the text around increased density and use.

Delia brought up statements about fish passage on page 11, and suggested they be updated based on the newly-received fish passage memo, noting that we now have conceptual costs for fish passage. She also asked about text on page 29 noting funding for a boardwalk. Liz noted that references to the boardwalk need to be taken out, and she, Delia, and Sven helped the group identify the specific references for removal.

Bill suggested the picture of geotubes should be included in the appendix, and Delia noted that both SumCo and Charter bids could be included.

Vickie asked about why there are two phases for dam removal. Jeff Collins noted that the two phases come from SumCo's response to their request for information, and they could tell us more.

Malcolm suggested it would be helpful to include more information about how much a deeper dredge will reduce the expected dredge areas for the different dredge volumes as depicted in the conceptual image of proposed dredge areas on page 20, which are based on a 9-foot as opposed to a 12-foot dredge. Malcolm would like to know if it will make a minimal difference or a significant difference on the dredge area. Keith commented that this is a very complex calculation.

Malcolm noted that the fish passage technical memo discussed how fish are subject to false attraction, and bypass channels are prone to attraction problems due to competing flow attraction

from the main spillway. Both the recurring management and the dredging proposals have nonetheless suggested the bypass channel option in their proposals. Malcolm suggested the text specify the preference for a stepped pool, while acknowledging that a different fish passage method might be necessary if future analysis shows fish will not be able to use the bypass channel. Paul suggested this could be added to the risks section.

Vickie suggested that in general it is important to clarify the uncertainties and risks in each of the various elements of each proposal. Toby noted that there are sections in each proposal that try to lay out the risks and uncertainties, and asked if there are any specific risks members think are not being adequately addressed in these sections. Paul noted that all the proposals have uncertainties.

Delia noted that the available funding on page 4 should include capital funding, and suggested specific revisions to the dollar figures that were captured in redline.

Vickie noted that the dredging cost table includes design costs from 2018. There are similar design costs associated with dam removal testing and design that are not in that proposal's cost table. Bill commented that the point was to include only future costs, so the 2018 design costs should be removed from the dredging costs table and no past costs should be included in any of the costs information. Toby put the question to the group: for consistency, should the costs data for all proposals exclude all already-incurred costs? Bill suggested he believed this would make sense.

Keith suggested that the 30% design costs for dam removal are a current cost and should be included. Mark commented that if something that would be necessary to advance a project has already been done and paid for, it could be helpful to name for public awareness, but when we compare the tables it should be about the decision point we are at now, and include only future costs. The 30% design is a sunk cost. If the design is not used we don't get that money back. Moving forward for the final report, it could be helpful to share what was spent on Warner's Pond regardless of what option we recommend.

Keith noted that if things had progressed differently, the 30% design could lead to a 60% then 100% design. The 30% design jumped the gun, and that money needs to be spent to get to 100% design. We shouldn't categorize it as a sunk cost just because it has already been spent. Keith noted he is fine taking out the 2018 dredging feasibility study and the alternatives analysis report costs.

Sven commented that if you include the 30% design costs for dam removal, then you would need to include sunk costs for dredging as well, including past design costs. Keith noted that we don't have 30% design costs for dredging. Delia noted that we do have costs for preliminary design, permitting, and 100% design for the 2022 dredging project.

Malcolm asked the group why this matters, and Toby similarly asked if the issue is worth holding up their conversation. Toby shared his understanding that the group had intended to put itself in the present moment and compare the proposals based on costs that could be incurred moving forward. He also noted the suggestion that already-incurred costs could be important to share with the public, potentially in the Task Force's final report. In the interim report, the

document would clearly specify that we are including only forward-looking costs, and not costs associated with previous design work. Toby asked if this would be acceptable to the group, and members indicated their agreement. Keith said he just wanted to clarify that you cannot have 30% designs for the 50,000 CY and 100,000 CY dredging proposals. Bill acknowledged this. Toby asked Keith if he was okay moving forward with the approach being proposed, and Keith said he was okay with it, he just wanted to clarify the facts.

Paul asked about where the costs in the dredging cost tables marked as “additional costs paid by others” came from. Delia noted that they came from the SumCo and Charter estimates. Paul suggested those costs should not be specifically attributed to Starmet. Mark suggested the costs still be specified, but they should just not reference Starmet.

Toby raised the issue of escalation costs, and asked Chris to explain the small group’s thinking on it. Chris recounted the history of how 10% escalation costs had initially been added to all the proposals for consistency, but after further discussion the small group decided it would be better to remove all the escalation costs for simplicity and consistency, and specify that the proposals are in 2025 dollars.

Vickie noted that in her area of work you either see estimates in current dollars, without any escalation, or you note that you were asked to start the project in a future year, note the market escalation rate, and calculate and specify how much of an overall escalation this results in.

Delia noted that escalation costs are different from contingency costs. Contingency costs differ among different stages of design. When a project is very conceptual, you have a very high contingency, because there are so many unknowns. That high contingency is reduced over the phases of the development until you get to 100% bid documents, where you still have a contingency of 5% to 10%.

Vickie noted that we are still at a stage of high contingencies and Delia agreed. Keith suggested these contingencies are already baked into some of the estimates. Delia expressed doubt about this. Keith suggested that even if contingencies are not called out in line items, the dredging estimates have built in cost buffers. Toby summarized his understanding of the group’s position: we would back out the 10% escalators wherever relevant and specify that all proposal costs are in 2025 dollars, but we would not try to include any contingency costs. Members expressed agreement with this approach.

Delia suggested revisions on pages 22 and 23 related to naming a specific state-listed species. Members identified additional references to the state-listed species that needed similar revisions. Delia specified some additional suggested revision related to the document’s explanation for why it is difficult to predict the pace of eutrophication at the pond. These revisions were made in redline and accepted by the Task Force.

Malcolm asked how to refer to Pied-billed grebes, which is also a state-listed species. Delia noted that this species is not mapped at Warner’s Pond by the state, so it is probably okay to name it. Bill noted that the concern is around people collecting the species. The group agreed to leave the text as is.

Paul noted that various bullets in the text call out PFAS, while not specifying other hazardous chemicals. He suggested the document should be consistent and just name that we need to measure hazardous chemical concentrations. Members agreed with this revision and pointed out other specific instances of the issue that needed to be revised.

Keith suggested the group talk about the greenhouse gases reference on page 24. Toby noted his understanding that the group had agreed to add the term “marginal” in the last Task Force meeting. Keith suggested the issue is too complicated and confusing, and it shouldn’t be included. Liz explained that the dam removal included the GHG issue because it was included in the *Envision Concord* criteria, as well as other specific things like dependence on synthetics. Keith commented that *Envision Concord* was about planning at the town level, and there are many other emissions sources that are much more significant than the Warner’s Pond dam. Malcolm suggested that the group should not revise the evaluation criteria at this stage, and he would not be comfortable reexamining the criteria. Toby noted that when we evaluate the options we can treat certain criteria as marginal, and asked the group if the document is good enough. Bill suggested that if the group thinks it belongs, we should move on. Paul suggested that the group leave it as is since they had talked about it and agreed at the previous meeting. Malcolm suggested that it deserves a broader discussion in the future.

Toby asked the group if there was anyone who could not live with the document with the changes suggested. No one objected. Bill then suggested a formal vote. Paul moved to accept the document as amended for purposes of moving forward. Mark seconded the motion. The Task Force took a roll call vote and the voting members unanimously approved the motion.

Toby suggested the group take a minute and recognize that they just did something really hard. Redlining in a group is necessary, but not fun. Now they will be able to go to the public with the document and get the valuable feedback they need.

Discussion on Fish Passage

Toby suggested and Task Force members agreed that it would be better to postpone the discussion on EA’s fish passage memo, to make sure the Task Force had enough time to discuss the upcoming community meeting/public forum.

Public Forum Scheduling and Format

Toby noted that the planning team had put together a proposed approach for the upcoming public meeting, and they wanted the Task Force to review the approach and agree on how to move forward. He noted the following about the proposed approach:

- It would take place on March 13 at the Town House from 7-9pm
- It would be in person, plus a live stream where people joining online can participate.
- Outreach would include a town wide postcard with a QR code linking to the website, library, social media, and the Task Force website. Members are also invited to advertise the meeting with their constituencies to get the word out.
- The meeting format would involve the chairs leading off the meeting, then presentations on each alternative from designated task force members summarizing your proposal.

- We would then take questions on that proposal and then move on to the next.
- Each proposal would have around 25 minutes to present and do Q&A, or roughly 10 minutes presenting then 15 minutes Q&A.
- After 90 minutes in the large group with presentations and Q&A, there would likely be more people who still have questions or feedback than we can give a chance to speak in front of the room, so we would shift to an open house.
- During the open house, we would set up the work groups in different areas of the room.
- We would also have posters that include bullet summaries of each proposal and one or two pictures.
- Task Force members would be stationed around the room and members of the public could go and ask them about their proposal.
- We would also have posters or flipcharts up around the room with basic prompts on them, and space for people to leave comments using sticky notes. The prompts would be simple, like, “What do you like about this?” “What concerns do you have?” “What else would you like to know about it?” People can leave their feedback.
- The open house would last for about a half hour then we would adjourn the meeting.
- We would write up the feedback we heard, compile the sticky notes, and share it all back with the Task Force for discussion at our next meeting.

Toby then shared proposed roles:

- The co-chairs would be meeting hosts.
- CBI would be available to facilitate the large group dialogue.
- Work groups would develop presentation slides and poster bullets, and would clarify who will present and answer questions in the large group.
- EA could be available to answer technical questions related to their analysis that work group members are unable to answer.

Toby then displayed a slide with suggested headers for the work group presentation template, which mirror the headers in the proposal document:

- What are you proposing?
- Rationale/benefits
- Costs
- Risks and uncertainties
- Ideas considered but not proposed

The posters would include just the top bullets related to the proposal, the costs, and risks and uncertainties, plus 1-2 images. Work groups would need to prepare by developing their slides and poster language. They you would need to meet, and most likely would want to designate one person to lead on developing these things. Work groups should share their materials with the Planning Team by March 3rd, so they can take a look and make sure that the groups are aligned. The materials would need to go to printing by March 10th.

Toby then asked the group if the proposal looks good to them and whether the Planning Team hit the mark.

Paul asked for clarity that the benefits of each proposal is what is meant by “rationale.” Toby confirmed this is the case. Liz suggested that the work groups use the same streamlined cost template in their proposal that is being developed.

Vickie noted that there are other experts besides EA who spoke with the Task Force, and there might be technical questions on these issues as well. Given that we only have about 30 minutes per work group, she suggested it should just be the Task Force members at this meeting. Mark suggested the chairs could note experts who the Task Force has consulted with in their introduction. Delia noted that there have been many questions around channel geometry and location and the selection of the reference reach that EA used. These are questions EA can best answer. While we have consulted with other experts as well and we may not be able to address technical questions on their issues, EA is involved in many of the technical questions people have the most concern around so it could be helpful to have them there.

Paul noted that we could log those questions and answer them afterwards. All questions deserve answers and we won't be able to address them all. Vickie noted that there would only be a half hour for people to get their questions answered in the open house. Toby clarified that if EA joins they would only be there for the large group portion of the meeting, not the open house, since they will be joining online.

Toby suggested that if he were a member of the public coming to the meeting with a technical question, and he knew that there was someone who could answer it but they weren't at the meeting, then he would wonder why they weren't invited. At the same time, he noted that there have been dynamics between the public and EA at past meetings that we do not want to happen at this meeting. We want the Task Force members to be front and center. As a best practice, Toby suggested it is helpful to have your main technical experts at the meeting available to address questions. As a facilitator, he could be there to help direct questions to the Task Force and step in if there's a bad dynamic emerging with members of the public and EA.

Vickie asked for clarity on the agenda and how the Q&A would happen. Toby clarified that people would come to the microphone to offer comments or ask questions. He would direct questions first to the Task Force members, but if it is highly technical he would ask if it's something they prefer the consultants to address. If an unproductive dynamic emerges with a member of the public, he could step in to ensure people are being respectful.

Paul noted that this is a really important chance to engage with the public, and we need to capture all the questions if we can't answer them. Vickie suggested it would be more helpful for members of the public to hear about the issues the Task Force considered and wrestled with when developing the proposals, rather than just being given an answer from the technical expert, especially when some of them don't like the experts.

Liz expressed agreement, but also noted that we needed to push certain issues in the proposal to EA, and if EA is there to explain their conclusions that is most helpful to the public. Toby suggested that in the way CBI facilitates the meeting, they could encourage people to engage with Task Force members, and bring in EA only when appropriate and necessary.

Bill expressed ambivalence, noting that he doesn't want EA to be a lightning rod and dominate the meeting. He suggested he liked Paul's proposal but could go either way.

Mark noted that our overall objective is to communicate a level of information to the community about all three of these options, so that they can begin to communicate back to us about what their preferences are. If the comments are that they don't understand that option well enough to decide, then we need to take that as a sign that there is more work that needs to be done.

Toby took a straw poll around the issue of including EA in the meeting. The initial vote was roughly split, with several members willing to go in either direction. Toby observed that a number of dam removal work group members seemed to have an interest in EA attending. Bill suggested that in light of this, he could live with it and we should have EA there in the background. Other members agreed.

After observing that the group seemed ready to support the meeting plan as discussed, Toby suggested that they move to public comment.

Vickie commented that we want input on each of the proposals and the direction people want to go. Bill suggested that we're just getting people to tell us what their concerns are, and hear reactions to the three proposals. We're not asking people to vote. Mark added that we want to get something documented that people can then download and watch. This is an opportunity to introduce the concepts to the people who are there, and anybody else who may become interested, so that once we make a recommendation they can understand it.

Public Comment (limited to 2 minutes per person)

Bill asked if anyone was interested in providing public comment and named ground rules:

- Be respectful in your comments
- Avoid personal attacks
- Keep comments to no more than 2 minutes

Connie Levine, Stow St.

You've done all the work and I have confidence you can make your presentations and answer questions in the public meeting. That's more effective than having people wandering around looking at exhibits. That's not what happens in a public hearing. Sometimes people want to wander around after the fact and look at your exhibits. That's great, but one is not a substitute for the other. You need feedback from the people, and they need to be able to ask you questions.

Delia commented that there is a timeline on the Warner's Pond website summarizing things that have been done.

Anna Feldweg, 343 Commonwealth Ave.

You should have 15-20 minutes at the beginning describing what we've learned around that current state of the pond, the effect of the dam on flooding, and other issues. These questions came up at the beginning. Otherwise, people will ask them again and be frustrated.

Mari Weinberg, Hillside Ave.

I had a very interesting conversation with one gentleman who works in West Concord. He's a member of the Creek Nation. I told him about the issues with the pond, and asked him about the pond going back to the way Indigenous people used it. He told me that's not the important thing. He said what's important is that their history not be forgotten, and that instead it be written down, taught, and maybe posted there. The important thing is that our story be told. I hope that as a town we can begin to do that.

Cynthia Katz, 20 Conant St.

I'm surprised that there's only going to be one public forum. With EA we had multiple meetings. I really hope that you're going to have more than one. A lot of people have been waiting for the Task Force to do a public presentation, and I really hope you're going to do more than one. There's a lot of interest out there.

Bill expressed thanks, pointed out that every Task Force meeting is public, and commented that we'll do what we can.

Dan Stapleton, 20 Conant St.

The dam removal alternative is the most definitive, because there's no turning back after you decide to do it. With the other two alternatives there are still options. It's important to communicate the expectations on dam removal with clarity and confidence. In the last few years, EA presented detailed conceptual drawings. Many people left those meetings with the perception that what they showed is a done deal. I think there's a legitimate question as to whether that will happen, specifically the recreational components including a 4.5 acre pond and a reasonably navigable stream, with the proposed method of construction. The uncertainties of dredging and recurring management are not of the same magnitude as these uncertainties associated with dam removal. We might not know how these recreational issues will turn out for 2 to 5 years after dam removal, based on the proposed method of construction. I'm hoping that gets communicated. I would encourage you in advance to consider getting a statement from EA explicitly laying out what their expectation is,

I also want to know whether the town is committed to providing those amenities, regardless of what happens 2 to 5 years after dam removal. If we do not have a 4.5 acre pond, will the town commit to constructing that at some time? Will this report indicate what alternatives might be available should that outcome not be achieved?

In addition, this type of construction project is going to require a modification of FEMA's flood hazard zone. The analyses that have been done to date are not the analyses that would be required to evaluate changes to the FEMA flood hazard zone. There's a FEMA process for doing this, and there may also be a municipal requirement. Those are big unknowns. There are a number of homes that are within the existing FEMA flood hazard zone, and the flooding is extremely complicated because of the backwater effects from the Assabet. Would at least a draft

of that letter of map revision be available before the Task Force makes its decision, so people would know if their insurance is going to get affected?

In addition, the report shows continued erosion down in front of Nashoba Brook bakery. The wall is a very sensitive structure. I don't know if the town will be liable if there is an issue associated with that after the dam is removed. I'd suggest that issue should be confronted earlier rather than later. Thank you.

With no further business, Chris adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.