Stormwater Mitigation and Implementation Committee
Minutes from 9/9/26

Meeting convened at 7:05 pm
In attendance: Jennifer Wallace, Greg Day, James Moore, Bob Douglas; Steve Sulllivan joined at 8:27. Kate Pfordesher, LWA liaison, also attended.

Guests, Tamsin Flanders FRCOG & Rosalie Starvish GZA

General Summary
Tamsin Flanders from FRCOG discussed potential DEP grant opportunities, including a 604B Nonpoint Source Pollution Planning Grant that could fund work around Lake Wyola, including water quality monitoring, conceptual design development, and amendment of the watershed-based plan.

The committee then heard detailed presentations from GZA's engineering team about proposed Best Management Practices (BMPs) across four main areas around the lake: North and South Laurel roads, Randall Road to the boat ramp, Shore Drive/Pine Drive, and Great Pines Drive/Lake Drive. The GZA team presented concept designs involving swales, turnouts, sediment traps, and check dams to address road erosion and sediment runoff into the lake. Committee members raised concerns about maintenance responsibilities, property boundary surveys, and the need to address upstream sources of sediment.

The conversation ended with discussions about potential conflicts between stormwater mitigation goals and highway department requirements for snow plowing on 17 roads, including eight roads currently involved in stormwater management projects.

Next steps
Greg D. asked if SMIC wants to Staff a table for ECAC at the town birthday event on October 4th, and coordinate with Town for potential adjacent table for stormwater advocacy. No decision yet.

Kate P. will coordinate with Tamsin to draft and submit a letter of support from the Lake Wyola Association for the FRCOG grant, ideally by October 7th.

Rosalie S.
- Develop more detailed concept designs for the BMPs presented, integrating the multiple drainage areas into the four major areas discussed.
- Look into the areas of concern raised during the meeting, including Watson Straits, the area around 66 Lake Drive, and the potential for subsurface stormwater capture along Lake Drive.
- Mention to the geomorphologist the scenario of potential sediment release if the beaver dams breach, to see if they have any feedback.
- Geomorphic study report from the sub-consultant, expected by the end of the month.

Jennifer W.

- Work with Kate to reach out to the library to set up a public education event on watershed advocacy, potentially using FRCOG's materials.
- Communicate with the Town Administrator to arrange a meeting between the Stormwater Committee and the Highway Department to discuss conflicting priorities regarding road alterations and stormwater mitigation.
- Articulate and document specific examples of where the Highway Department's road alteration requirements conflict with stormwater mitigation goals, to be shared with the Select Board and relevant parties in time for the September 22nd meeting.

Meeting adjourned 9:15 pm

DETAILED COMMENTS & DISCUSSION

Summary

DEP Grants Discussion Meeting

The meeting began with Town greeting Rosalie and mentioning that other team members would be joining. Town indicated they would have a brief interlude to discuss DEP grants related to Tamsin Flanders of FERCOG.

DEP Grant for Stormwater Mitigation

The meeting focused on discussing potential DEP grant opportunities through FERCOG for stormwater mitigation projects in the Lake Wyola watershed. Tamsen Flanders from FERCOG presented a 604B Nonpoint Source Pollution Planning Grant application that could include work around Lake Wyola, potentially involving water quality monitoring and assessment of conceptual best management practice designs. The committee discussed the timeline and requirements for the grant application, with a deadline of October 7th, and agreed to provide support letters from both the Stormwater Committee and Lake Wyola Association. The group clarified that water quality monitoring would be concurrent with BMP design work rather than required before implementation.

Lake Wyola BMP Design Presentation

Rosalie Starvish and her team from GZA presented concept designs for Best Management Practices (BMPs) to address stormwater and sediment issues around Lake Wyola. The team grouped the original 11 prioritized drainage areas into 3-4 major areas around the lake and proposed solutions including grade breaks, turnouts, swales, and sediment traps similar to successful implementations at South Laurel. Key discussion points centered on maintenance responsibilities, with concerns raised about who would handle ongoing maintenance of the proposed BMPs, though the Lake Wyola Association indicated they currently handle some basin maintenance and expressed willingness to cooperate on future maintenance. The team also clarified that the sediment issue involves not just sand but also pollutants like phosphorus that contribute to the lake's water quality degradation.

Stormwater BMP Funding Discussion

The team discussed funding options for stormwater BMP maintenance, with Rosalie noting that while examples exist in other parts of the country, such funding is less common in Massachusetts. Leslie presented details about proposed BMPs for Randall Road, including swales, turnouts, check dams, and a stabilized boat ramp surface with a water bar to divert water away from the lake. Mark explained that BMP implementation would start at the most upland locations and work down, with grade breaks further up the roadway to direct water to grass rather than channeling it within the road. The team addressed questions about water bar clearance for boat trailers and discussed material options for the parking lot and boat ramp, with Mark recommending concrete for the water bar and dense grade gravel for the parking lot.

Shore Drive Drainage Improvement Plan

Leslie presented a comprehensive plan for addressing drainage issues along Shore Drive, proposing to regrade roads to direct water properly into upstream swales rather than having it puddle on the road. The plan includes maintaining and standardizing existing swales, ensuring proper sizing of driveway culverts, and implementing sediment traps and check dams on Pine Drive. The discussion covered both immediate solutions like adding staff gauges to measure sediment accumulation and longer-term maintenance requirements for the proposed infrastructure.

Shore Drive Drainage Issues Discussion

The team discussed drainage issues at Shore Drive, focusing on a property at 52 Shore Drive where water flows through a rock channel. They addressed questions about prioritizing drainage areas, with Rosalie clarifying that flow data would still be useful for sizing BMPs but wasn't the sole criterion for previous prioritization. Mark explained that rather than removing berms, they proposed raising the roadway grade to allow water to flow through vegetation into swales, noting this would require periodic maintenance to clean berms and reseed areas. Rosalie recommended conducting outreach with property owners and performing a boundary survey to identify private versus public property, which would also help with establishing drainage easements for future maintenance.

Water Management Road Issues

The group discussed water management issues on several roads, with particular focus on Watson Street and Great Pines Drive. James raised concerns about water flow and potential interventions to divert water further uphill, while Leslie explained that Watson Street culverts currently disperse water into the woods rather than directly toward homes. The team noted that Watson Street and areas east of Shore Drive may require further consideration in future iterations of the project. Rosalie confirmed that surveying costs could potentially be covered through grants if it contributes to improving water quality in the watershed, though this would need to be confirmed with the funding source.

Road Drainage and Erosion Solutions

Leslie discussed various drainage and erosion control solutions for roads, focusing on V-shaped concrete aprons, sediment traps, and check dams to prevent road gullies and manage water flow. They identified specific areas along Great Pines Road and other routes where improvements were needed, including proper grading, swales, and the use of materials like concrete blocks to direct water effectively. Leslie noted that Great Pines Road presented the most complex challenges and emphasized the importance of considering space constraints, property lines, and watershed data for effective implementation.

Drainage Solutions for Upstream Areas

Leslie and Mark discussed drainage solutions for upstream areas, including vegetated swales and sediment traps before roadside swales and culverts. They addressed concerns about area 5 at 66 Lake Drive, where Mark suggested replacing the existing catch basin with a deep sump catch basin and potentially directing water away from the area. Tom highlighted issues with water flow and erosion along Lake Drive between 56 and 76, particularly around a garage with drainage pipes. Mark and Rosalie proposed exploring surface BMPs and potentially capturing and routing stormwater subsurface, though they noted this would be expensive and require careful outlet control.

Lake Drainage and Erosion Solutions

The team discussed drainage and erosion issues around a lake, focusing on water flow from roads and potential solutions like bioretention systems and catch basins. Mark explained that implementing infiltration practices would require soil exploration and testing to confirm groundwater locations, as well as considering separation distances from septic systems. Rosalie confirmed that detailed concept designs for the project should move forward, with integration of multiple drainage areas into an integrated system being a key next step. The geomorphic study report was expected by the end of the month, though it may not address potential impacts from breached beaver dams.

Stormwater Management Committee Discussion

The committee discussed GZA's stormwater management recommendations, with members expressing concerns about missing areas like 66 Lake and the need to address upland areas. Town announced that Shutesbury did not receive an MVP grant for public education but noted that FERCOG's stream tables and materials are available for potential watershed advocacy events. A significant discussion emerged regarding conflicts between highway department road modifications and stormwater mitigation goals, with Town planning to organize a meeting between the highway department and committee to address competing priorities before the September 22nd Select Board meeting. The committee also discussed participating in a town birthday event on October 4th, with Greg offering space at an ECAC table for watershed advocacy materials.