



TOWN OF DURHAM
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RESOLUTION #2013-20 OF DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

EXPRESSING THE TOWN COUNCIL'S SUPPORT FOR RETAINING THE MILL POND DAM FOR THE DURATION OF ITS USEFUL LIFE

This resolution documents the historical and cultural significance of the Mill Pond Dam, the many benefits it offers to the Durham community, notes that the dam is structurally in good condition, and supports the continuation of the Mill Pond Dam.

WHEREAS, the current site of the Mill Pond Dam has had an existing dam on it since the 1640s; and

WHEREAS, the current dam was a generous gift of Edith Angela Congreve Onderdonk to the Town of Durham in honor of her step-father, Hamilton Smith, a respected Durham resident, owner of the "Red Tower" estate, who, along with the Andrew Carnegie Corporation, donated funds to build the University of New Hampshire's first library building, Hamilton Smith Hall; and

WHEREAS, the present dam at the Mill Pond is a patented Ambursen design which in 1913 incorporated state-of-the-art design (buttress) and new materials (Portland cement and rebar) and is the oldest of only five Ambursen-style dams and the only one that is still intact in New Hampshire; and

WHEREAS, the dam has a strong connection with UNH as Charles Elbert Hewitt, the Chair of the first Electrical Engineering Department, was the engineer for the dam; and

WHEREAS, Daniel Chesley, a resident and local quarryman who became adept in the use of reinforced concrete, built the Mill Pond Dam; and

WHEREAS, the Mill Pond Dam supports the Mill Pond, which is a Town landmark along our Historic District Gateway, marking the entrance to our Town; and

WHEREAS, the Mill Pond, created by the Mill Pond Dam, is home to the Durham swans, much beloved by residents, as well as geese, herons, cormorants, several varieties of ducks, turtles, muskrat, beaver, otters and other wildlife, and offers a quiet place to enjoy nature; and

WHEREAS, many interests of the community will be served by preserving the Mill Pond Dam and all the amenities associated with the dam, including recreation, scenic vistas, and the potential for a microturbine; and

WHEREAS, extensive research and testing in 2011 by Dr. David Gress, University of New Hampshire Professor Emeritus, Civil Engineering, asserts that the current spillway is expected to last another 10 to 20 years with little or no maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the only repairs cited by Professor Gress are the gates, which will need complete replacement in 5 to 10 years, and the right embankment, which will need repair in 5 to 10 years; and

WHEREAS, 2013 is the 100th anniversary of the construction of the Mill Pond Dam; and

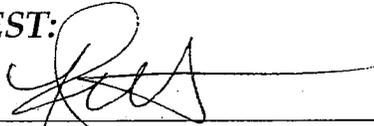
WHEREAS, there will be a community celebration on September 15, 2013 honoring this important anniversary;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Durham Town Council, the governing body of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire, does adopt Resolution 2013-20 and hereby concurs that the Mill Pond Dam adds immeasurably to the rich fabric of the community and that the Town shall take steps needed to preserve it for the duration of its useful life.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on this 1st day of July, 2013 by vote of the Durham Town Council with Nine (9) in favor, Zero (0) opposing, and Zero (0) abstentions.


Jay B. Gooze, Chair
Durham Town Council

ATTEST:



Lorrie L. Pitt, Town Clerk-Tax Collector