

Press Advisory

Endicott College Students to Present on Lawrence Canals

Lawrence (April 26, 2023) – Lawrence’s canals are currently receiving attention due to the expected hydroelectric permit application by Patriot Hydro – a permit that will allow the company to continue generating power from the Merrimack River at the Great Stone Dam and possibly the canals. Endicott College students have researched the possibility of utilizing hydroelectric power at the defunct Merrimac Paper site at the South Canal and will present their findings to government leaders, community leaders, and the public.

When: May 3 (Wednesday)

Time: 7-8pm

Where: Lawrence Public Library (Robert Frost Room), 51 Lawrence St

The students will present their conceptual design to a national audience at National Water Power Week in Washington D.C. in early May.

“We researched the parcel going back to the original building and waterpower infrastructure designs of the Essex Company at the Lawrence History Center. We also learned about the current Hydroelectric facility that Central Rivers Power (now Patriot Hydro) operates as well as historic river flow data to determine what excess waterpower is available that the hydro plant is not using,” said Professor John Duggan, Associate Dean, School of Science & Technology.

“We learned about fish passage, FERC permitting and other issues about zoning, infrastructure, housing issues, etc. We have talked to the hydro industry, USGS, ISO New England, Groundwork Lawrence, Lawrence Heritage State Park and other professionals in the power, electricity distribution, river quality, etc fields. We have come up with a design concept that considers regulatory, environmental, energy, the community, and other issues,” Dean Duggan added.

"I applaud the initiative by Endicott College students to explore the potential uses of hydroelectric power generated in the Merrimack Valley in order to maximize benefits to the City of Lawrence," said Lawrence Mayor Brian A. DePena. "This project aligns well with my **Zero by Thirty-five** vision that I recently proposed to the City Council - and that was unanimously approved."

"I am delighted that Endicott College students identified our canals as a place to apply their newly developed skills," said City Council President Marc Laplante. "While I am sure that their research provided a 'real world' learning opportunity outside the classroom, their work will be mutually beneficial to Lawrence leaders and the public as we re-imagine what the canals, and their hydropower potential, could be in this new century."

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