

## **Portage/Arcadia Creek 319 Watershed Planning Steering Committee Meeting Summary: October 19, 2001**

Meeting was held at the WMU Fetzer Center

**Attendees:** Don Brown, Kathy Buckham, Bruce Callen, Mickey Cook, Pat Holton, George Jonas, Mark Kieser, Pat Krause, Pete Maas, Paul Manstrom, Jenny Molloy, John Olech, Paul Olexia, John Paquin, Bill Reed, Jeff Reicherts, Tom Small, Mike Tenenbaum, Barbara Wygant.

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Dr. Pat Holton, our host representing WMU, provided a brief welcome. Bill Reed responded with a thank you on behalf of the committee for hosting the meeting. In his opening general remarks, Bill noted that, with this meeting, we were starting our revised schedule of meeting every second Wednesday of the month. He noted that the next two meetings are as follows:

November 14, 2001 meeting at Portage City Hall, Conference Room 1, 9-11 a.m.

December 12, 2001 meeting at WMU Fetzer Center, 9-11 a.m.

Copies of the meeting summary from September 22, 2001 were distributed for review and comment. There were no suggested alterations.

1. Today's agenda was distributed and no changes or additions were identified. Introductions and affiliations of all present were made following acceptance of the agenda.
2. M. Kieser provided a review and update of the website being used for this project, [www.kalamazooriver.net](http://www.kalamazooriver.net), which included the types of materials currently found and aspirations for future additions. The use of this site as a communications vehicle for this project was stressed. Participants are encouraged to follow the directions at the site and register for the discussion section. Also, much of the project information, including most materials handed out at meetings and meeting summaries, will be posted. A suggestion was made that documents/information should be "coded", as to the type of information and numbered sequentially, so that an individual could ensure where the information is within the larger process and that they have not missed anything generated..

The group determined that smaller documents and communications would be sent by direct email to members of the listserve. Emails will also be sent to those on our listserve whenever anything new is posted to the site. In most cases, a hotlink to either this information or the site will be part of the email notice. This will allow for large amounts of information to be maintained on the website, readily accessible and downloadable by all, without the expensive, burdensome and time-consuming task of sending information to each participant. Your continued feed-back as users will play a significant role in adjustments that are to be made.

A discussion ensued with regard to how people are finding out about the existence of the website. B. Reed noted his attempts to work with Bob Allison at the Gazette, had not yet produced results. A plethora of potential information sources for distribution of the website included but were not limited to: the Western Herald, neighborhood newsletters, newsletters of environmental groups, city and township newsletters, meeting minutes of related groups, radio and TV stations (including Cable Access), and other websites (such as [www.wmich.edu/watershedinfo](http://www.wmich.edu/watershedinfo)).

NOTE: The original Media Release should soon be available at the project website in a pdf format, allowing anyone to copy and circulate this. Please notify Bill Reed if you do use this release so that the project can track where this information has been provided.

3. Participant discussion next focused on Educational Component for the Project. It was generally agreed that educational efforts were to be an ongoing aspect of the project. Periodically, these may take on a “sub-watershed specific” character in their focus. Kathy Buckham noted that her agency is partially funded from the grant component addressing children’s education. Kathy presented her existing on-going activities, such as Conservorama, which reaches 1,200 5<sup>th</sup> graders over a three-day period, with tours and speakers and hands-on activities. Kathy is also working with the Girl Scouts, at Camp Merriwood to evaluate, with a district agent, what conservation techniques and plantings they can implement on-site. Kathy also alluded to erosion problems at the Rota-Kwan Boy Scout Reservation, especially around the cabins in Camp Madron. This could be another opportunity for youth involvement and education.

The interaction of the WMU Science Education Department with local high school programs was mentioned. Other possible resources include: KRESA, the Kalamazoo Public Schools website, the KAMSC Math and Science Center, science coordinators at each school (a list should be available) and the Edison School Environmental Academy.

Resources for possible assistance included mentions of the Friends of the Rouge River, Mr. Jim Murray, Dept. of Environment at Washtenaw County. They appear to have involved students at almost every level possible in their efforts, which have been underway for many years and are, admittedly, well-financed. The City of Toronto was recommended as a model to explore. Programs at the Vicksburg Public Schools that were developed for a focus in water education may be of assistance. It was noted that the cities of Battle Creek and Portage both have approved watershed plans containing educational components similar to what we must develop. While we need to create a plan that mirrors our own local needs, these can serve as great resources too. Mention was made of John Byrnes, Kalamazoo County Road Commission, and his offer to produce and locate standardized signs of identification on tributaries to the Kalamazoo River.

This last point lead into a discussion of the existing logos developed by the SW MI Clean Water Conservancy and the GEM Center. The Conservancy logo, recently discussed in a stormwater group meeting attended by many present, was shown to all in a

black and white, 8 1/2 x 11-inch version.. This generic sign could be placed wherever actions are being implemented. Most present liked this logo. It was agreed that too many logos would “water down” effective efforts intended by use of logos. Mention was made of benefits that could be derived if businesses, government and public agencies, schools and so forth, located within a watershed, could display this logo/signage for all to see in an effort to better have existing stakeholders reach other stakeholders. The efforts of Hannah McKinney’s project to identify sites within the County worthy of protection, preservation etc., was mentioned too.

These discussions culminated in the recognition that an **Educational Subcommittee** appeared to be in order. This group will need to become aware of what other groups (TMDL, Phase II storm water, and so forth) are proposing/doing. **Volunteers** for this subcommittee include: **Mike Tenenbaum, Kathy Buckham, Barb Wygant and Don Brown.** M. Tenenbaum will convene the group shortly. It was suggested that the Portage WMP be as good a starting point as any.

4. M. Kieser provided insight into the current status of the Work Plan Tasks. Access for flow monitoring and automatic sampling for Portage Creek has been obtained for a location close to the mouth of the Creek. The ISCO sampler should be placed either this week or early next week, as weather and water levels permit. The Arcadia Creek site should be finalized today when John Paquin joins K&A for site visits.

First sampling should occur in late October to early November. Additional sampling stations may also be included on Portage Creek in light of some recent developments with the City of Portage. These would be separate from, but consistent and in conjunction with, this project.

Natural Features Inventory fieldwork and evaluation of materials continue. This task will also include evaluation of additional materials and information obtained from the interviews with participants that are to be conducted within the coming 4-6 weeks. At this point Bill asked Mark to review and update the Timeline prepared for the project. Elements have shifted since approval of funding forced the start date to be later than indicated on the timeline submitted (initially handed out to attendees and provided to those in need today).

Further discussion included the request from some attendees that monthly reports and the original proposal be included on the website.

5. M. Kieser next introduced the interview information request sheets provided to all in attendance. M. Tenenbaum reviewed the content of the request form and the procedure to be followed to obtain responses. Individual interviews will serve to obtain most of the responses sought. In some cases, one or two participants from the same organization may meet jointly with the interviewer. Mike Tenenbaum, Nichole Ott and Mark Kieser will conduct these interviews. In providing the format and types of materials sought ahead of time it is anticipated that the gathering of this material will be easier and more comfortable for all. We again stress that without this type of participation, projects of this sort cannot proceed as intended or desired. In response to a

question, it was noted that groundwater concerns/information, wetlands and uplands are all possible for inclusion. The questionnaire was reviewed for general approach and content. Several attendees scheduled appointments for interviews prior to leaving the meeting site.

6. Next Steps were addressed in the context of the elements presented above and not discussed as a separate agenda item.

7. During the Open Comments, the question was asked as to how many subcommittees will be created. At this point, there was no specific answer, but efforts will be made to provide a list of the types of subcommittees that are likely to come out of this effort for the next meeting. The question was prompted because people who want to spend their time and energy also want to make sure it is spent wisely, in an area of their choosing. Knowing what the possibilities are, a person can avoid volunteering for a subcommittee not of their primary choosing.

The question, "Will it be possible to place references to other watershed plans on the website?" was asked. The answer was, "YES". J. Molloy noted that the group is coming together nicely and has excellent, broad representation. Jenny also will make available "Developing a Watershed Plan for Water Quality, An Introductory Guide", to anyone that requests a copy. This process is not one that occurs in one or two months, and all participants will require a degree of patience as the appropriate data are obtained and used. The plan needs to develop a sense of community engagement and acceptance toward active management.

8. Next meeting dates were noted at the start of the meeting.

9. Meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:10 a.m.