

## **Portage/Arcadia Creek 319 Watershed Management Plan Steering Committee Meeting Summary: July 8, 2002**

This meeting was held at Western Michigan University, Fetzer Center.

The following summary corresponds to the Agenda order of the meeting.

- 1) B. Reed directed the greeting, introductions and agenda review. No substantive alterations were made to the agenda.
- 2) Bill provided copies of the Administrative Report for May to all present. There were no questions asked or changes made.
- 3) Kathy Buckham provided copies and presented the Public Education Component of the watershed management plan. This piece was a revised version of an earlier effort compiled by Mike McCarville. Discussion comments included the following points.
  - Headwaters should be defined and italicized; in fact, any italicized words should be defined first and then italicized and linked to the definition.
  - WMP needs to be defined within each section of the document the first time it is encountered and then use the acronym thereafter.
  - K. Buckham will add the agricultural education component to this section to include the manure management program for horses at Pretty Lake (Farm-A-Syst) and the program for one greenhouse (Greenhouse-A-Syst).
  - It is agreed that there should be a sustainable approach to the education component too. Since there are several entities (City of Kalamazoo, City of Portage, WMU, Stormwater Working Group, TMDL Implementation Plan, etc.) developing educational programs, jointly or alone, there should be an effort to bring all together for at least one joint educational meeting for the synergy that might be established. Each participant will need to ask “What can we do cooperatively and jointly?” and work toward that goal.
  - One set of storm drain marker samples were presented for discussion. There is agreement that this should become one of the first steps to be implemented because it has such a visible and powerful message and is adaptable to so many communities. Suggested language for titles of markers included: storm sewer, river inlet, storm water drain, drains to river, drains to waterbody and others. Other samples and costs are being assembled.
  - Storm sewer vs. stormwater drain. These different names should be clarified and contrasted early and often. Each concept is important and should not be diluted in meaning even if it is a hard term to use
  - Agreement was reached on the use of the water droplet logo to be used on multiple types of signs and perhaps on markers too. (Links to websites for the markers were subsequently sent to all SC members.)

- J. Molloy indicated that for ordering purposes we do not need to limit sales to just within the watershed bounds of this project. Opens up greater numbers and potentially more cost savings per unit.
  - A desired element is to create a video that illustrates differences in stream bottom substrates and habitats in the types of streams in these sub-watersheds. Current inquiries and research will first determine if there is an existing piece that can fulfill these needs. If none is found, estimates for producing such a piece will be obtained.
  - An educational focus should be on the “What can I do?” approach, geared to expand participation from “organized groups”, neighborhood associations and so forth.
  - The WMP should clearly denote the notion of a “living document” that will be altered as current concerns are acted upon and new needs arise.
  - A sustainability component will provide “linking factors” to help accomplish this living document approach.
  - Educational efforts need to have a consistent focus on **water quality improvement needs** and **actions to accomplish them** rather than specifics of Phase II stormwater, Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control and other related regulations.
- 4) M. Tenenbaum distributed copies of a proposed format for Selection of Sites for Action; the example used for this review was Arcadia Creek. Pending agreement on the format and content approach used, the other three subwatersheds will then be completed in similar fashion. In the feedback that followed, suggestions included:
- Use bullet points for action items so they are more prominent.
  - Phrase ideas to be less engineer-sounding for the plan (e.g., “...off-line engineered storage capacity ....”, may not make sense to a lay person).
  - An *a la carte* approach to recommendations for each stretch may be pursued and the SC would then prioritize them.

The difficulty in prioritization of actions was pointed to since all of the techniques will be geared to provide water quality improvements. Softer approaches that include swales, rain gardens, buffer strips and so forth should also receive attention in addition to “engineered approaches”.

- 5) M. Kieser presented a brief update on the Technical subcommittee activities.
- 6) Remaining timeline elements and needs were presented by B. Reed and M. Kieser. Upcoming meeting schedules were reviewed. Needs included:
- Additional supplemental information for the education component
  - Site Selection for Action materials for three streams.
  - BMP options and implementation costs.

- Summary of Public Participation
  - Compilation of References
  - The evaluation process to be used to determine effectiveness of the plan in achieving its goals.
- 7) Open time discussion revolved around land use and relationships to water. T. Small noted the crucial relationship of land use issues to water quality issues that are already identified and taking place, and the reality that these will only become more interdependent in the future. J. Paquin asked if the Steering Committee might be willing to serve as a sounding board for “land use/development” issues (similar to the Henco site on Stadium Drive) that impact water quality in the watersheds. M. Tenenbaum noted that discussions are now underway within the Chamber of Commerce to explore a concept such as this.

John would like to see the group stay together and remain active, given the positive dynamics that have developed. This should become an on-going aspect of the sustainable approach contained within the watershed management plan. Again, points were made stressing that the WMP will have more meaning if it has “life” in the form of:

- Vested interests in the watershed who will refer to rather than ignore it (the plan) when appropriate.
- A program to maintain and update the website to reflect on-going activities and needs.
- Performance monitoring and analyses to determine if the BMPs undertaken are proving to be viable in terms of water quality improvements (especially P load and sediment reductions).
- Recommendations made to both governmental and nongovernmental agencies consistent with goals of the plan.
- Tracking of what components have been implemented and rescored stretches to move others “further up the list” of what needs to be done.
- Maintaining a viable list of projects needing funding/implementation.

There being no further work items for the committee, the meeting was adjourned.

Compiled and prepared by Michael Tenenbaum, KIESER & ASSOCIATES.