

Intermunicipal Planning for Black & Oatka Creek Watersheds

08/24/09 Joint Project Advisory Committee Meeting – Town of Wheatland, NY

In Attendance

Felipe Oltremari, Genesee Co. Planning
Bob Kiley, Monroe County SWCD
George Squires, Genesee Co. SWCD
Tom Ryther, Black Creek W.C.
Rick VenVertloh, Oatka Creek Watershed
Ray Cipriano, Bethany Planning Board
Maureen Leupold, GCC/Oatka Creek W.C.
Greg McKurth, Wyoming SWCD
Larry VerWeire, Black Creek W.C.
Lisa M. Compton, Oatka Creek Watershed

Esther Leadley, Genesee Co. Legislature
Judy Spring, Genesee County SWCD
Peggy Grayson, Black Creek Watershed

Karen Cox, Monroe County DOT

Staff

Brian Slack, G/FLRPC
David Zorn, G/FLRPC

Meeting Summary

The meeting did not begin at the scheduled time due to a problem entering the facility.

The meeting began with a brief review of the agenda items by Brian Slack. Items for discussion included a review of the draft Community Outreach Plans for both watersheds followed by a discussion on the need for a 3rd party contractor to assist with project tasks. Slack noted that while the first primary project component for each watershed – the watershed Characterization reports – is an important topic for discussion, other procedural items related to the contract will need to be addressed first, which may take several meetings.

Community Outreach Plans

The draft Community Outreach Plans for both watersheds was circulated at the last meeting on August 10th. Members were asked to review and provide comments. Those comments would then be incorporated into the document and sent to the Department of State (DOS) for review and approval. Slack reiterated that the Community Outreach Plans are a requirement by the DOS; however, DOS has provided assurances that the Plans may be general in scope and can be adjusted as needed as the projects evolve. Slack also noted that one of the benefits of the Community Outreach Plan is that it promotes transparency in the watershed planning processes. While the committees are encouraged to be as detailed as they chose in describing the methods and processes for participation, it is important to bear in mind that we want to maintain flexibility regarding specifics in the plans.

Discussion ensued. An attendee asked how we plan on informing the public regarding public meetings. Slack explained that the draft Community Outreach Plan addresses this need under Section V of the draft. He further emphasized that the Project Advisory Committees need to take a close look at their respective Plans and discuss whether the parameters described therein are satisfactory. A wide variety of issues and methods related to involving the public were discussed. Mr. Slack noted that we will indeed strive for inclusiveness when the need for public meetings arises, but those points in time are well into the future. As a possible solution, Slack recommended entering a statement under Section V. stating to the effect that “the committee will discuss and approve the methods for public notice prior to each public event.” All were in general agreement.

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Tom Ryther inquired as to the format of the Project Advisory Committee meetings. Specifically, would there be minutes submitted and approved prior to each meeting? Slack apologized for not doing so at this meeting. He again noted that this is up to the discretion of the Committees. It was then recommended that minutes be submitted, and agenda is created and followed, and Roberts Rules of Order be followed. This will both help committee members to stay organized and will also have the added benefit of lending a sense of credibility to meeting/project proceedings. All were generally in favor of this.

George Squires raised the point that the overall format of this current meeting is somewhat confusing, considering that there are essentially two committees meeting at the same time, discussing the same issues. Slack noted that this meeting is, in fact, a joint meeting of the two committees, and should have made this clearer at the beginning of the meeting. He further noted that while the Community Outreach Plans are essentially identical and that both committees seem to be generally agreed to each others' comments and revisions, each committee is expected to pass its own separate Community Outreach Plan. An attendee noted that meeting jointly and working together jointly will be very beneficial in that it will hopefully promote the cross-pollination of ideas between the two committees. Mr. Slack closed the conversation by noting that there is room for further clarification and organization of the meeting format.

It was finally noted by Mr. Ryther that while he has no problem with expediting the review and approval process of this particular draft, future project products should have full review and final committee approval. Dave Zorn and Slack noted that this was a very important consideration.

Given no further comments, Mr. Slack reviewed the schedule for revisions and final Project Advisory Committee approval of the Community Outreach Plans. Project Advisory Committee members are expected to have final comments on the draft Community Outreach Plans by August 28th; Slack will then make those revisions to the document (which will be highlighted to facilitate review) and email/post online the Final Draft of the Community Outreach Plan. The Project Advisory Committees may then note any further necessary revisions and move to approve the plans at the next meeting.

Address RFP for third party contractor

Slack noted that there were a number of components to the watershed management project that G/FLRPC would likely require assistance with. Specifically, the interpretation of scientific data and other types of scientific monitoring or engineering assessments would require outside assistance. Lisa Compton noted that, given the multitude of information that has been produced for the watersheds, the committees really require a checklist of some sort in order to make an informed decision as to what precisely it is that we'll need completed for this project (and consequently included in any RFP).

Slack agreed to prepare such a checklist in order to facilitate discussion at the next Project Advisory Committee meeting. He will also attempt to get a draft model RFP from DOS for the sake of discussion.

Other issues for discussion

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It was noted that it would be helpful if materials that were circulated and any power point presentations used at previous meetings were all put on the project website. Slack noted that he will work on improving the project website and will attempt to post all necessary items online. A project scope will also be provided to members of the Project Advisory Committee. Slack further noted that he will strive to improve the overall format and organization of future Project Advisory Committee meetings and encouraged members to provide him with feedback and other comments/recommendations as we move forward.

It was asked when Chairs for either committee will be selected; Slack recommended that we do that immediately following approval of the Community Outreach Plans.

Action Items

- *Final comments on the Community Outreach Plan to Slack by 8/28; revisions will be circulated by 9/2.*
- *Slack to create a 'checklist' of reports and other past monitoring efforts in order to inform the discussion regarding 3rd party assistance at the next meeting*
- *Slack to perform updates to the Project Website(s) and circulate notice of these changes upon completion*

Next meeting

Next meeting has been scheduled for September 21st at 6:30. Possible meeting locations mentioned include the Riga Town Hall, Village of LeRoy Village Hall or possibly GCC. Slack will look into these locations and forward it to committee members in advance of the next meeting.

~bcs