

MINUTES
Black Creek Watershed Coalition
Tuesday, April 29, 2003
Lennon Hall, SUNY at Brockport

Present: Whitney Autin, Jim Zollweg, Mark Noll, SUNY Brockport; Rochelle Bell, Monroe County Department of Planning and Development; Dorothy Borgus, Town of Chili; Robert Remillard, Lake Plains RC&D; George Squires, Genesee County SWCD; Pat Tindale, Town of Chili Conservation Board; Matt Britt, Batavia; Bob Patterson, Bergen; David Mundie, Churchville/Riga; Donna Alder, Roberts Wesleyan College; Bob Eichenberger, Town of Byron; Charlie Knauf, Monroe County Health Department.

Action items are underlined throughout the minutes.

Introductions, assignment of roles, questions about minutes

- Dorothy Borgus was chair, Charlie Knauf was scribe, and Pat Tindale was timekeeper, Rochelle Bell was facilitator.

The minutes were accepted as presented. Dorothy distributed copies of the press release form the Suburban news announcing the meeting, and of the editorial that appeared in the Gates-Chili Post. She also indicated that she had sent notice of the meeting to all local TV stations for inclusion in their Community Calendars, but she didn't know if they had appeared or not.

Prior to the actual opening of the meeting, Dr. Zollweg presented a quick overview of GIS for the benefit of Committee members who were unfamiliar with how the tool works and what uses can be made of the tool other than generation of maps. He explained that a map is basically a momentary "snapshot" of some aspect of a geographic area that is in reality dynamic, and that the greater strength, and higher priority output of the GIS aspect of this project, is the collection of datasets that form the basis for the maps. He explained that from the perspective of analysis, it is better to be able to query a dataset to answer questions about the area than to simply view the map, which is a representation of a fixed system. He presented an example that focused on Railroads. He started with the map included as part of the draft report, which represents a static, fixed representation of the state of the Railroads in the Watershed, discontinuous because some of the segments are not active. He then showed the attribute table, which contained many fields of data associated with the map. He said that all of the datasets are documented by a set of metadata, which defines how the data was collected, the source of the data, and the meaning of all the fields of data. He explained that the attribute table sets the stage for the future, for study and analysis of the watershed, to provide answers to questions. As an example he demonstrated using 2 datasets to generate an intersection of where the railroad lines crossed the stream channel, which produced a second map with the intersections highlighted, and a filtered table of the data on just those segments where the crossings occur, which allowed for evaluation of who owned the majority of crossings, whether the crossing points were active, and other data. He then went on to demonstrate

that the dataset could also be buffered to include all segments that were within some range of the stream

Consultants' Report: Dr. Whitney Autin reported that he has been collecting comments on the draft. Community Water Watch description will be added to the appropriate section of the report. He has received about 9 pages of comments on the text and 3 pages of comments on the maps. He also received a copy of a report on Bridge Scour from Bergman Associates, and the NYSDEC Priority Waterbodies List (PWL) pages from George Squires. He would like everyone to get any further comments or re-written sections to him within 7-10 days for inclusion in the 2nd draft. W. Autin still has questions about drainage committees, section 1.5.6. G. Squires indicated that he had sent the information about a recently formed Drainage Committee in Genesee County, and D. Borgus indicated that Chili has one. Whitney requested that if anyone knows of other Drainage Committees, they send him a description of the Committee makeup, what they do, what part of the county or town in which they function. B. Patterson asked about Drainage laws, which Bergen has. This kind of information would also be useful. W. Autin indicated that he is looking for a “filter” for the History section and P. Tindale and D. Borgus agreed to try to edit this. There was some discussion of the name Black Creek, which was indicated to originate from the Iroquois term for Black water. There was also some discussion about the creek going dry, with some people indicating that they didn’t think that this was accurate, and others indicating places where it occurs. Consensus is that in dry years there may be places where it is going underground, and the low minimum flows recorded in some years support the stagnant nature of many sections. W. Autin asked that if anyone had further information on any areas that were ignored in the History section they get them to him soon.

In the goals and objectives section, there was a question about notes included in the November version of this section that Objective 12 (“Where appropriate, work with municipal utilities to maximize, through proper management, the available capacity of the sanitary sewer transmission system for future development needs.”) should be reviewed as the report nears completion. Consensus was reached to leave Objective 12 in the report without the note was reached. It was decided to remove Objective 1, as it will be accomplished when the SOB is published, and to leave Objective 3 as it will only be completed in part. There was then a discussion as to whether recreation should be re-added as a goal, and some discussion of access for canoes. B. Patterson indicated that there is canoe access to the stream at any road crossing as long as the individual stays within the roadway ROW, and R. Remillard indicated that Object 22 includes improved access as an objective. R. Bell asked if it wouldn’t be useful to have a guide to access on the stream, or something that a visitor could use that indicated all of this. R. Remillard said that he thought further discussion of recreation should be in the SOB, and that if the objective is in, then it can be tracked. C. Knauf indicated that recreation as a goal had been removed at a recent meeting, and as no one had wording that everyone could accept and the prior consensus had been to remove, it was appropriate to leave it out of the goals. The second goal included in the Parking lot suggested adding “rural character” and “natural beauty” to Goal 8, which deals with water quality and quantity. C. Knauf suggested that while water quality and quantity could be measured and quantified, these others were subjective. R. Bell said that there are ways to quantify rural character and

natural beauty as planning tools and that they have been used by communities as a means of preserving a particular style of architecture in new developments. W. Autin thought that they were appropriate goals, but that they should not be included with water quality and quantity. B. Patterson thought that they may not need to be included as a separate goal, and W. Autin thought they might be covered elsewhere. C. Knauf will draft a goal statement and submit with the minutes for consideration at the next meeting. **Goal 11: Attempts will be made to preserve natural beauty and rural character in new development in the watershed.**

Members should review all of the goals and objectives and send their comments to Rochelle who will then communicate them to WA.

There was then a discussion of what steps need to be taken next, such as presentation to planning boards, field trips, efforts to “sell” the document to the local municipalities. It was agreed that the sentence indicating that a second newsletter had been mailed in July of 2003 should be removed.

W. Autin indicated that much of Chapter 2 had been taken from Plans prepared for other areas, such as Conesus Lake, and that while the technical references are not currently included, they would be part of the final document. He also indicated that he and J. Zollweg would develop a nomenclature for the maps that follows the text. W. Autin had a question about the County Agricultural Districts Program, for which J. Zollweg indicated he was getting information. There was then a discussion on the use of the word “sprawl” in the discussion. Monroe County staff objected to inclusion of the word because it has become politically charged and has negative connotations associated with it. It was suggested that suburban development be substituted. There was also discussion of a comment received from Bergmann Associates that the City of Batavia has not experienced significant growth. G. Squires and R. Bell indicated that although the population hasn’t changed much, the number of housing units, and associated infrastructure has increased. It was also indicated that most of the growth in Batavia has occurred in the Tonawanda Creek watershed.

J. Zollweg **indicated** that the Land Use data in Section 3 is the most recent USGS data. R. Remillard asked if it was possible to differentiate between agricultural land and idle land. J. Zollweg said not with the data that he has. W. Autin asked that if anyone has information that differs significantly from what is presented, please get it to them. B. Patterson asked if boundaries for agricultural districts would help, and G. Squires indicated that even the parcel data might not help with this. G. Squires also indicated that the test should reflect that Byron and Bergen have significant acreage in vegetable crops, and that these differ from the filed crop classification used in the document.

At this point, as time for the review had elapsed, the remainder of the meeting was held, and then the report work was resumed. In these minutes, the remainder of the meeting is at the end.

After the reminder of the agenda, Pat and Dorothy indicated that they would review the Chili drainage and history sections of the report for consistency, and do any necessary edits. They also asked about the industrial classification on the maps, indicating that there is a large amount of industry, especially along Paul Road and Union Street in the Town. R. Bell said MC Planning has more up to date data, but J. Zollweg indicates that if it is only a one county data set, there could be problems with consistency in the resulting map.

Whitney requested that people get him any additional information about:

- Section 3.3 Scenic resources from Roads
- Section 3.6 Water Uses - are there any more?
- Section 3.7 Recreational Opportunities - He will add the Greenway Trail - Any others?
- Section 4.2 Water Discharge Management- M. Noll will be fleshing out, but if anyone has information it will be appreciated.

New data on water quality will be included as an appendix, rather than in the main body of the report. D. Borgus asked about industrial discharges, sanitary discharges. Mark mentioned that he has contacted NYSDEC for a listing of all dischargers in the watershed, CAFO's, SPDES permits, etc. They are also looking for information for 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 on stormwater management. C. Knauf will contact Paula Smith about these. W. Autin was concerned about some of the language in 6.1.4 in that if particular property owners are singled out for mention, there could be some legal implications unless there is data to back up the statements. We will need to review this section at the next meeting to insure accuracy of the language.

Field Trips: The Bergen Swamp Trip is still scheduled for May 17 and Pat Tindale indicates that 2 weeks prior space was filling fast.

The Canoe trip has been scheduled for 5/31. There was a discussion on log jams in the area of W. Sweden Road, and that it might be better to launch at the Bergen Rod and Gun Club, which results in an approximately 3-mile trip downstream to the park. Let G. Squires know ASAP if you plan to attend.

Publicity: Dorothy had done PR report at the beginning of the meeting, but indicated at this point that she will be re-contacting the Batavia paper, although G. Squires said that the reporter who had done the good job before was no longer with that paper. M. Noll had spoken with Channel 8, and they may use his information. D. Borgus asked about the schools contact, and M. Noll said he had not received a lot of response.

COMMENTS ON DRAFT: Please get any further comments on the first draft to Rochelle Bell ASAP, at the latest by 5/13. W. Autin will assemble Version II and it will go out by 5/28.

Next Meeting: Thursday June 5, 2003, 7:00 PM, Bergen Town Hall. B. Patterson will confirm that the meeting room is available and let R. Bell know.