



Department of Planning and Development

Monroe County, New York

Maggie Brooks
County Executive

Terrence G. Slaybaugh
Director

MINUTES **Black Creek Watershed Coalition** **Wednesday, June 26, 2006**

Present: Jennifer Balonek, Town of Riga Conservation Board; Rochelle Bell, Monroe County Department of Planning and Development; Dorothy Borgus, resident, Town of Chili; Joe Carr, Town of Chili; Joyce Fleming, resident, Town of Bethany; Don Hoyt, LeRoy CAC; Heath Miller, resident, Town of Chili; Caroline Myers, Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District; Robert Remillard, USDA NRCS Lakes Plains RC&D; Paul Richards, SUNY Brockport; Chérie Scudder, resident, Town of Bethany; George Squires, Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District; Jeff Van Skiver, resident, Town of Bergen; George Squires, Genesee County Soil and Water Conservation District; Lyle Warren, Churchville Zoning Board of Approvals; and Bob Wilkins, Chili citizen and Monroe County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board.

Betsy Johnson came by to return her copy of the State of the Basin report – she is moving outside of the Black Creek watershed. Best of luck to Betsy in her new watershed!

Action items are underlined throughout the minutes.

1) Introductions, assignment of roles, questions about minutes. Bob Wilkins managed, Dorothy Borgus kept time, Rochelle Bell scribed.

Minutes from the April 26, 2006 meeting were approved and will be posted on the website.

The Bergen Swamp hike led by Lee Blair in March was discussed: Lady slipper orchids were seen, shoes and socks were muddied in the “marl room,” everyone enjoyed jumping on the peat bog, even long-time Black Creek Watershed Coalition members were surprised to learn that for the most part the swamp feeds the creek, everyone would be happy to return to the Swamp in any season. Rochelle sent Lee Blair a thank you note on behalf of the Coalition.

2) Heath Miller, University of Buffalo Law School, Governance Methodologies
Heath distributed a map showing the Niagara Escarpment, ranging from NY, into Ontario, Canada, and back down into Michigan. He described the escarpment as the boundary of an ancient lakebed having unique microecosystems. In Canada the escarpment boasts vineyards and the headwaters of trout streams.

Heath described how land use decisions in Canada are made at the province level, while in the US they’re made at the village, town and county level. The question Heath and his colleagues has is about how to govern a natural feature like the escarpment in the United State. The Black Creek Watershed Coalition is a relevant case study because it is an

intergovernmental approach to influencing land use decisions and to encourage government to do things on behalf of the watershed.

Heath distributed a 1-page summary of the project he is working on with Dr. Margaret A. Shannon at the University of Buffalo and that listed questions he would like to ask the members of the Black Creek Watershed Coalition. He would like a list of phone numbers of people who would agree to being interviewed; the interview would be tape recorded. The content of all interviews would be kept confidential. There would be no way to tell who said what in the final report.

Rochelle will contact the membership, asking them to let her know if it is OK to give Heath their phone number. She will include a copy of the questions he will ask. She will give members two weeks to respond, and then she will forward the list to Heath.

Heath lives in Chili and is available to meet with people who would prefer to be interviewed that way.

Dr. Shannon has been working on this project for one year with two other professors, one of whom is in geology. Dr. Shannon worked on the Clinton Commission to look at the Spotted Owl/old growth forest issue.

Heath will present the report to us when it is finalized.

Lake Tahoe and the International Joint Commission are two bistate/bicountry organizations. No one else is studying “governance capacity” though.

Natural Resources Conservation Service is going to be reorganized by watershed: Heath will talk to Robert Remillard about the NRCS.

3) Churchville Charrette

Bob Wilkins attended the charrette and the Black Creek focus group. One issue brought up was dredging Black Creek above the dam. This idea has been talked about for years, at least as far back as the 1970s. There are questions about the dam’s integrity and whose responsibility it is. The dam was originally used for the mill. It was interesting to learn that some early dams were used to keep the water level up to keep the sewage odor down!

The Luster Coat cleanup and redevelopment was also discussed. NYS DEC is remediating the 3+ acre site.

There was a land use workshop two weeks before the charette facilitated by the Town/Village comprehensive plan consultant, John Steinmetz. It lasted six hours and the attendees broke into groups. It was considered a worthwhile effort.

Nancy Steedman, Vice Mayor and Village of Churchville Trustee will attend a future Black Creek Watershed Coalition meeting to discuss the charrette.

4) Black Creek Park Wetland Project: There is a hiatus in activity until late summer. There is ponded water in the emergent wetland areas – cattails are sprouting up. The

wetland seed mix has little germination yet. It's been dry and others said they are having the same problem. Also, many types of seeds won't germinate until spring.

Rochelle will contact Dorothy about including McQuaid in the public planting day in the fall.

5) Grant Updates:

- Great Lakes Basin Program in Erosion and Sediment Control

Rochelle described the comments she and Bob Wilkins made to Brian Slack on the Municipal Law Review and Analysis and the Water Resource Issue Identification Report. Although other members had not submitted official comments, they had perused the documents and shared their thoughts with the group. There is no more opportunity for the Coalition to comment on these documents – the work must be submitted by the end of June. Next month Rochelle will have a report on Task 5 of the grant: Assistance to Municipalities in Revising Local Laws.

- Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network

We were not awarded the grant for the Map Guide.

- Environmental Protection Fund

Dave Zorn, G/FLRPC updated the grant application from last year and submitted it again.

- Laura Jane Musser Fund grant application due September 5. It might be able to be used as matching funds.
- Saving the best news for last: Caroline Myers and Joe Carr's grant application to the Great Lakes Commission for a stream bank stabilization project in Chili was successful. They will receive approximately \$60,000 towards an \$84,000 project.

6) Map Guide

Rochelle passed out 11x17" maps for everyone to use to collect their ideas about the Map Guide. Robert offered to use the Lake Plains website as a place for us to work on the Map Guide. Rochelle will ask Carol to create a link from www.blackcreekwatershed.org to www.lakeplainsrcd.org.

7) Display Boards

Rochelle displayed the big board (and a small board) at the FL-LOWPA conference. As a result she met Ken Smith, NYS Dept. of State, Division of Coastal Resources. DOS is developing a watershed planning guide and wants to use the Black Creek Watershed as an example of watershed planning around a stream that flows into Lake Ontario. George took both boards after the meeting

ChiliFest is Saturday, July 22nd and there may be a place to display a board there.

Dorothy explained that the Chili library will have a spot for the board again in three months or so.

Rochelle reported that Pat Tindale had said that Wegman's wouldn't display our board because they are not involved in a project with us. So, the group began brainstorming

about a project we could work on with Wegmans. Someone recalled that Colleen Wegman is interested in organic and locally grown food.

8) Other Items

Rochelle received a letter on behalf of Larry Verweir from Congressman Randy Kuhl about the 2007 Farm Bill hearing in Canandaigua on June 26th. This is the only Farm Bill hearing scheduled in the Northeast. Thoughts can be submitted for the record by writing to Randy or the Agriculture Committee at this address:

House Agriculture Committee
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

9) Review action items and plan next meeting

Action items are underlined throughout the minutes.

The July meeting will begin at the Chili Town Hall. Everyone should meet at the flagpole. *N.B.* Joe will schedule a meeting room for us so that we can have a one-half hour “business” meeting. Joe will provide a van and chauffeur us to the trailhead for the Genesee Valley Greenway. There is only room for two vehicles at the parking spot. We will hike the Greenway to the arched bridge over Black Creek. Rochelle will include detailed directions to the Chili Town Hall with the next mailing.

10) Report by Paul Richards

The Oatka Creek Watershed Committee joined us for a short informal presentation by Paul Richards about his topographically based phosphorus transport path model. Paul will give the entire presentation at the August BCWC meeting. Rochelle will bring a projector and possibly a screen to that meeting.