

## Black Creek Watershed Coalition

### Minutes from Meeting

September 28, 2011

**Location:** Riga Town Hall

**Attendance:** Dorothy Borgus (Chili resident), Tom Klafehn (Riga Hwy Department, MCSWCD), Brian Ostling (Town of Chili Hwy Dept), George Squires (Genesee County SWCD), Peter Lent (member at large), Judy Spring (Genesee County SWCD), Pat Tindale (Chili Conservation Board), Larry VerWeire (Riga citizen), Tom Ryther (Genesee Land Trust), Lyle Warren (Churchville ZBA), Peggy Grayson (Town of Stafford, GLOW), Fran Reese (Town of Ogden resident)

**Old Business:** Judy asked if \$60 was approved for the banner that was discussed previously. She questioned whether the price was going up due to its size. The \$60 was approved.

**Change to minutes of August 29:** Under paragraph 3 of Watershed Planning Progress, insert the word “to” after the word “respect”. Minutes were accepted with the referenced change.

#### Watershed Planning Progress

Brian is using an audit form to collect information on local laws of communities within the watershed. The audit form was designed by another agency and cannot be changed easily.

The most current version of the report draft can be found at:

<http://www.gflrpc.org/Publications/BlackOatka/Characterization/BlackCreekWatershed/index.htm>

The next Project Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for October 11 at the Riga Town Hall.

**Banner:** George Squires has not heard from Tim. He thought Rochelle Bell was going to contact him.

#### Grant Ideas:

1. Buffers along the creek. Tom Ryther would like to see a study that defines what a buffer is and how it should be used. The limitation is that the BCWC is not a 501(c)(3) organization. The 501(c)(3) status enables an organization to apply for grants as a non-profit organization. The ideas were somewhat nebulous, so a better definition should be made before a grant is sought for this purpose.
  - a. One idea is to summarize what's out there in a database.
  - b. Nature Conservancy defines the “buffer area” as the active stream area. Brian may have a .shp file from the Nature Conservancy. Discussions are ongoing to determine the feasibility of pursuing a grant application.
2. Green Infrastructure Retrofitting – The village of Churchville is working with the Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (Brian Slack) on opportunities to retrofit areas of the Village with green infrastructure. It is likely that a rain garden will be constructed near the Village Hall. They are also considering a filter swale near the DPW garden.
3. Black Creek Trail Feasibility Study – Pat Tindale mentioned that this study is now underway. Bergmann Associates was selected as the consultant for this project.
4. Potential Funding Sources

River Network maintains a list of potential funding sources for river projects. It was suggested that this connection be followed up.

### **Wetland Conservation Reserve Program Projects**

George Squires reported on a Wetlands Restoration Project (WRP) project that is underway in Genesee County. This program allows private landowners to restore or create wetlands from marginal farmland. It is funded through USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Pat mentioned that a WRP project is currently under construction in Chili near the corner of Archer and Ballantyne Roads. The committee requested to invite Anwar Karim, the NRCS – District Conservationist of Monroe County, to come in and talk about this project at a future meeting.

George's project is located off NY Route 237 at Cole Road near the right hand turn of Black Creek in the Town of Byron. They want to build a wetland complex consisting of emergent wetlands and potholes. The wetlands will be constructed separately from the channel of Black Creek. The idea is to create open water potholes 6-18 in. deep, with a maximum depth of 6 feet. Shallow, submerged islands within the ponds will create a variety of aquatic habitats. These will be completed in a very active floodplain, with the idea that spring flooding will put water in the ponds and will be maintained by groundwater inflow.

The project design requires the contractor to maintain a 50 foot separation distance between any work area and the bank of Black Creek. Easements have been obtained to assure maintenance and guarantee habitat preservation at this site. The land was previously used as pasture. Al Burkhart is the property owner. Diehl Development is the contractor for the project.

Dorothy Borgus was interested in how the projects are monitored and what happens if the project doesn't turn into wetland. The minimum monitoring requirement for these projects is once every 3 years. The way these projects are designed, the likelihood of project failure is practically nil. The lands are specifically selected and monitored pre-construction to be sure that an adequate water supply will ensure the conversion to wetlands. The property owner still pays taxes on the land, but at a reduced rate.

George mentioned that if any BCWC members know of property owners who would like to create wetlands under this program, funding is available and they are looking for project partners.

**TMDL Meeting:** Lyell Warren reported that the Center for Environmental Information is holding a public information meeting to present the draft Water Quality Restoration Strategy (WQRS) for Upper and Lower Black Creek on October 25 at 7:00 PM at the Churchville Village Hall. This 2-year investigation has modeled sources of phosphorus to the stream and recommends the most cost-effective watershed changes to remove the current impairment and restore water quality. The draft WQRS can be found at: <http://www.ceinfo.org/loci/index.php>. Members of the public will be invited to comment and ask questions.

### **Related to the TMDL issue:**

Melissa Winslow is working on a SWAT model for Black Creek. She is currently looking at CAFOs in the Black Creek watershed.

CEI is currently doing a model for Black Creek using a different modeling technique: the Generalized Watershed Loading Function developed for use with ESRI's Arcview software (AVGWLF).

**Next BCWC Meeting:** The next BCWC meeting is scheduled for October 27, 2011. Pat Tindale and Brian Ostling are investigating the possibility of holding the meeting at the Chili Public Library or at the Chili Highway Garage. They will let George know the location.