

Mystic River Watershed Steering Committee
Meeting Notes
July 15, 2009

Ground Rules:

- Everyone is encouraged to speak
- Please raise your hand to speak
- All ideas should be treated with respect
- One person should speak at a time
- Try not to use acronyms or abbreviations
- Ideas should be written as the speaker intends
- Audience member should state their name and affiliation before they speak

Agreement Points:

- The Steering Committee agrees that the Business Subcommittee should have two seats on the Committee.
- The Steering Committee will begin working on majority vote priorities at the next meeting in September.

Business Discussion:

- EPA drafted a Business Subcommittee Guidance that was presented at the meeting and used as a starting point for discussion. Businesses will have an opportunity to comment on this guidance before it is made final.
- Steering Committee members agree that there is a place at the table for Businesses and also agree that the Subcommittee should hold two seats on the Committee.
- The businesses in attendance agree that they would like to be part of the initiative and would be able to organize with Ivey's help to reach out to additional businesses as well as elect representation.
- Businesses are interested in knowing about new and proposed regulations as well as regional development plans. Businesses would like to be informed about the next Science Subcommittee meeting.
- EPA will work with Ivey to distribute background materials to the businesses in attendance.
- All agree that additional outreach is needed to involve a wider variety of business types.
- Once the Business Subcommittee is able to organize, it will send nominations to the Steering Committee. Committee members will be able to voice an opinion about the nominations at that time.
- It is clear that participation in this Initiative will not offer private entities immunity from current, ongoing, or future enforcement action by any regulatory agency.
- Chelsea Creek Action Group has quarterly business round table meetings. Ivey St. John will be invited to the next meeting to present the work of the Steering Committee and recruit additional business interests.
- Other ideas raised are the Chambers of Commerce, Assoc. Industries of Mass. Construction Industry.

2009 Updated Priorities for Action:

- The Steering Committee engaged in a multi-voting exercise and clear groups of priorities were evident from the results shown here.
- The Steering Committee will discuss the priorities and actions with the most votes at the next meeting in September.

Mystic River Steering Committee; Priorities

Yellow = high, Orange = medium, **Green** = Low, *Italics* = no votes

General Strategic Approach

9	Establish and select priorities for next three years to improve water quality in the Mystic River, lakes, and streams in the watershed
2	Create metrics/measurement to track progress and determine success
1	ID funding for scientific investigation
1	Visioning session to create a strategic plan for ten year goals for a healthy urban watershed.
1	What are the initial steps to improve water quality throughout the watershed? Develop a plan.

Mystic River Watershed Planning

11	Improve coordination of planning and development activities in the Mystic River watershed and look at cumulative impact of development decisions
9	Create a comprehensive plan for the Mystic River Watershed (e.g. land use, development, flooding, others)
	<i>Create an environmental atlas for the Mystic River Watershed (e.g. resources, other issues historical and present)</i>
	<i>Create a standardized bylaw/models for use in the Mystic River watershed</i>
	<i>Flood Plain Management Plan. (Better and more coordinated planning.)</i>
	<i>Goals that are targeted to include wildlife. Habitat restoration and protection.</i>

Water Quality & Sediment Actions/ Enforcement/ Cleanup

11	Increase level of environmental compliance in Mystic River Watershed with measurable results
7	Establish TMDLs for nutrients and other pollutants of concern (e.g. phosphorus)
4	Reduce frequency of SSO, CSO events
3	Increase the level of EPA and state enforcement activity in the Mystic River watershed

1	Establish a Mystic River cleanup boat (like the Charles River cleanup boat)
1	Landscaping ordinances – nutrient free zones
	<i>Include wildlife criteria in water quality goals</i>
	<i>Compile and evaluate existing sediment data, and fill in gaps.</i>
	<i>Monitor remedial efforts and promote redevelopment of hazardous waste sites.</i>

Access

11	Public pathways across the watershed (walkways, bike trails)
4	Increase safe, public access to the Mystic River
1	Waterfront access and redevelopment in DPAs
	<i>Prioritize access for EJ communities</i>
	<i>Distinguish and focus on both efforts directed at navigable bike path access and leisure paths along the river.</i>
	<i>Connect pathways between the river and its tributaries</i>

Outreach –Outreach Tools for achieving the goals outlined above.

13	Increase public awareness, understanding and access to information about the Mystic River Watershed, Create newsletter capturing work of the Steering Committee in the Mystic River Watershed. Communicate Priorities in a highly visible way. Increase media attention on the Mystic.
6	Identify and secure resources including funding for needed activities/projects in the Mystic River watershed
6	Create a clearinghouse/central location for past and present research and projects throughout the Mystic River Watershed.
4	Create opportunities to listen to community needs and concerns (e.g. listening session)
2	Address pollution from multiple sources and change behavior and practice on key issues (e.g. lawn care, pesticides, residential landscaping techniques, etc.)
1	Report Card event should also include information on positive accomplishments in addition to the grade
	<i>Conduct briefings for funders to attract attention and larger resources for projects</i>
	<i>Create a strategy to engage and involve youth on a range of environment and public health issues (e.g. lawn care, pesticides, etc.)</i>
	<i>Organize and coordinate cleanup events along the Mystic River</i>
	<i>Improve communication/coordination between agencies and departments that normally do not work collaboratively</i>

Existing plans:

- EPA distributed summaries of the MAPC Mystic plan, the MA EEA Mystic plan, and the Chelsea Creek Action Group Mystic plan. Those summaries are available upon request. EPA is working on summarizing the remaining plans – DCR, MyRWA, etc.
- It is worth looking at where these plans overlap. Rather than creating “new” plans, the group should look into these plans and pick some priority actions to start working on.
- Look at waterfront access and redevelopment in DPAs.
- Need to look at community plans and make sure connections are made on priorities we select.
- Look at open space plans under a regional lens.
- Look at long-term control plans for communities doing CSO work.
- Look at Metro-futures plan.

Roles of Steering Committee Members:

- Steering Committee meetings are not an appropriate venue for lobbying, requesting funds, vending, advertizing, or petitioning.
- Steering Committee members should understand that their roles as advocates and lobbyists cannot interfere with the workings of the Committee, and that their roles as members should not be confused with their roles relating to the organizations they represent.

Follow up Actions:

- EPA will work with Ivey St. John to distribute background materials to interested business entities.
- The Steering Committee will have briefings and/or distribute materials on state and federal water quality standards and regulations (CWA, TMDLs, etc.)
- EPA will continue to gather and distribute existing Mystic River Watershed plans from DCR, MyRWA, MAPC, and Chelsea Creek and look at how they relate to the list above.
- Members will read comment and make suggestions on the Business Subcommittee guidance within two weeks of the meeting date.
- Steering Committee members should submit their ideas for additional business entities to include in an outreach effort.
- EPA will continue to outreach to and involve additional municipalities in this effort.
- The next Meeting will be on September 16, 2009 in Woburn. Specific location TBD
- Joan to present summary of metro-futures plan
- Will be working on a municipality subcommittee
- Primer on watershed systems, how they operate and plans for improvement. Get communities together and get a workshop on this.

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