

**Mystic River Watershed Steering Committee  
Draft Water Quality Meeting Notes  
September 29, 2010**

**10:00 am US EPA New England, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
Mount Madison Room 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA**

**Agreement Points**

- The group would like to add an LID or sustainability component to the overall goal of the water quality sub-committee
- EPA will talk to individuals separately and plan to meet with the group before the next Steering Committee Meeting on November 17
- Include a component about a “healthy water cycle”
  - Include water quantity
  - Address high and low flow problems

**Discussion of Mission and Priorities**

- Suggestion to include water quality standards in the priorities in order to make sure they are met
  - Add a section that acknowledges that the standards exist
- The committee will think about some interim goals – every 5 years?
- Address “improvement” versus “overall attainment” goals
- Definitions of “swimmable”, “boatable” and “fishable” is important along with setting a realistic date
- Which SSO’s are unacceptable for under a certain size storm?
- Not all watershed infrastructure is created equal
  - It’s pieced together
  - Background information requires more than just knowing the size of the storm
- Perhaps add more LID in areas where certain pipes exist
- For I/I problems, we need expertise
- Gene suggested that we investigate contaminated sediments further to see if we can fine CERCLA liability at certain sites.
- Are contaminated sediment reports enough? Do they address sediment contamination within the river?
  - These assessments usually stop at a property line so many studies are missing the entire sediments piece
  - The original Mystic River Summit workgroup has chosen 10 sites previously
    - Mill Creek, Chelsea
    - Urban Wild, Chelsea
    - Admirals Hill, Chelsea
    - Spy Pond, Arlington
    - Sandy Beach, Winchester
    - Cross St. Swimming Area, Winchester
    - Blessing of the Bay Boathouse, Somerville

- Constitution Beach, East Boston
- Tufts University Boathouse, Malden
- Horn Pond, Woburn

### **Discussion of Priorities Chart**

- Change “Miscellaneous” category to “All Pollutants”, serves as a communication toolbox
- Add a column which identifies who is responsible for carrying out the strategy (municipalities, private businesses, etc.)
- Cyanobacteria
  - Make public aware of issues
  - Characterizing toxins?
    - Toxin research is in short supply
      - Research only tests for microcystins which is one of about 20 different kinds of toxins
      - Roger suggests testing for multiple strains but it is expensive
  - Characterizing risks to humans. Do we need to provide information of which toxins are present in the water?
  - Important in knowing what to do if a human comes in contact with a cyanobacteria bloom
- Nutrients
  - There is a high content of Phosphorus in the sediments
  - This builds up in ponds and in the front of dams
  - Legacy contamination gets recycled into the system
  - Removal of phosphorus by:
    - dredging
    - chemical sequestration – binds phosphorus so that it cannot be recycled (controversial)
  - Nitrogen is a deciding factor for whether or not eelgrass will survive
    - Estuary specific but also plays a role in freshwater cyanobacteria
- Divide the chart and have individuals share their expertise and input on a certain section
  - Roger: cyanobacteria
  - Lise: ?
  - Karen: Legacy pollutants
  - Rafael: Structure of overall chart
  - ??
- Any missing items?
  - We will know more later as the chart progresses
  - LID
  - Adequate flow
    - Already in the mission, but should we add it to the priorities section?

- Should we include a page for other environmental conditions?
  - Habitat
  - Hydrology
- Should we include a list of target audiences?
  - Children
  - Educators
  - Homeowners/landlords

**Follow-up Actions**

- Each individual will draft a sentence or two to add to the mission and priorities statement which includes LID/sustainability component.
- Look at 10 previously chosen priority sites (these sites were chosen at the Mystic River Summit)
- Think about a brief plan to unveil to the public (interactive meetings)
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**Workgroup Attendance**

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