

Mystic River Watershed Steering Committee

December 5th, 2012 - Minutes

Agreement Points:

- SSO memo will be submitted to MassDEP without further revision
- EK will work to set up a meeting with representatives to meet with the GE site developer
- The Water Quality and Open Space working groups will be formal Subcommittees, the Science Committee will remain its own entity. Municipal and Business Subcommittees will meet on an ad hoc basis when topics arise.
- Mission and Priorities were adopted, unchanged, for 2013

Follow-Up Actions:

- EPA will bring brownfields staff to the next water quality subcommittee meeting to demo the “Clean Ups in My Community” online database
- EK will set up a meeting with the GE site developer for himself and a few members of the Steering Committee
- Caitlyn will work to update the municipal representative email list
- EK, Caitlyn, and Lynne will work to send letters to Steering Committee members ensuring their interest in continuing to hold their seat on the Committee
- This summer EK, Caitlyn, and Lynne will begin to discuss the potential of hosting another Summit at EPA; Ivey will reach out to Vivian Li.
- Nihar will share MassDEP’s SSO form and request for comments over email

Updates:

Karen Pelto reported that the natural resource damages settlement for IndustriPlex along the Aberjona River is nearly final. A Motion to Enter the Consent Decree was filed in federal court just before Thanksgiving. She will let the group know when it has been approved by the court.

Tuft’s Rusty Russell introduced the Tufts graduate students and their work on the Lower Malden River building citizen involvement and advocacy in the repair and rehabilitation the river. Outreach and citizen engagement efforts are being carried out in Everett, Malden and Medford.

Water Quality Sub-Committee Report:

MyRWA’s Patrick Herron reviewed iterations of the final redraft of the letter proposing improvements to MassDEP’s SSO report document. After several Steering Committee discussions and two Municipal Committee reviews, the Water Quality Committee now asked for Steering Committee approval to forward the document to DEP, which is currently reviewing the MassDEP SSO document internally. MassDEP is accepting public comments until December 14th.

Winchester’s Matt Shuman expressed concern that the Committee under take thorough distribution of the reports to municipal staff in all relevant departments. This is a challenge because MassDEP and others do not have updated departmental lists of municipal personnel, as members change routinely. Lynne suggested municipal leaders should be asked to carry full distribution which will be aided now by a requirement that the form be distributed to local public health agencies.

MWRA's Lise Marx reported that MWRA supports the final draft intent for broader public notice, but said MWRA will submit a comment letter asking for a case specific basis for public notification.

EK noted the improved notification requested in the final draft will encourage the public to press for action on SSOs from municipal officials. Representative Denise Provost asked if a notification system is available for public citizens if and when they observe a particularly polluted condition in the watershed. Patrick responded that there was not. Lise Marx noted that public health agencies would be notified when a SSO report is filed using the revised SSO form.

EK moved to approve the letter for submittal to MassDEP; Ivey seconded, and after some discussion, unanimous approval was given.

Malden River activities:

Caitlyn reported that EPA has data on all EPA funded Brownfield sites for the Steering Committee's review, and they will bring Brownfield experts to the Steering Committee's next meeting.

Open Space Group Report:

EK brought the meeting up to date on Berkley Investments' office development at the former GE site on the Lower Malden River opposite the Tufts Boat House and John Preotle's Rivers Edge Development. Berkeley has received its Chap. 91 certificate and approval for conceptual plans but has not filled for building permits as yet. Timing in asking for a small meeting with the developer is on the mark. Steering Committee concern focuses on open space and access to the river. The portion of the parcel that is on the river is currently fenced off, and will remain that way in the future post development because of serious pollution in the shore marshes and river bed that will not be addressed as part of the development.

EK asked for authorization from the Steering Committee to arrange for a few representatives (Beth Debski from the Mystic Valley Commission, Jeff Nangle, the LSP involved at the site, Tony Rodolakis, Ivey and EK) to meet with the developer soon to begin explorations of ways we can work together to create a effective plan for more open public access to the river front.

A motion was proposed and approved, with 9 in favor, 3 abstentions, and zero opposed. Three public agencies abstained because of their statutory role in enforcement.

The City of Everett effort to create a landscaped/major boulevard design by Sasaki Dawson for Broadway was briefly mention in concert with the reference to Steve Winn and his interest in building a casino in this area on the Monsanto site located on the Mystic River.

Chris Mancini, & GroundworkSomerville's Draw 7 Park activities:

EPA's Todd Borci reported on concerns about the outfall located at Draw 7 Park and how that might impact the promotion of recreational uses. This area is under development by the Federal Realty Investment Trust's (FRIT) Assembly Square, and Todd indicated he would send Chris the contacts in Somerville. As GroundworkSomerville proceeds with its charettes, the agency needs to be aware of the pollution concerns adjacent to the Draw 7 site.

EK reminded us that FRIT has contributed \$500,000 for refurbishment of the lower portion of DCR's Draw 7 Park. Chris then presented a short power point presentation about the first charette held at the Park on a very cold and windy October Saturday.

Municipal Group Meeting:

Caitlyn reported on the group's November 11th meeting, saying the members had reviewed the draft SSO memo and approved its content. In addition, they were presented with a slide show by EPA's representative on the porous pavement experiment in an Arlington park department parking area. He reviewed the technical details and complemented Arlington on a very fine coordination effort.

There was a discussion of the group's 22 community members and the difficulty in keeping up with the correct names, as public staff tend to come and go. Caitlyn agreed to update the list, as there was agreement that it is very useful for notification purposes.

Review of Steering Committee Membership, its Mission and Priorities:

EK addressed year end issues with the Steering Committee, its mission and priorities, its attendance and all the sub-committees and groups. He suggested that we continue with our current mission and priorities for 2013, but look more closely at our sub-groups. As Caitlyn suggested, the Water Quality group and the Science Committee have substantial overlap in membership and current interests, although there has been only one large science forum.

In order to give more clarity about roles and to recognize current conditions, EK recommended that Open Space and Water Quality groups become formal sub-committees of the Steering Committee, while the Science Committee remain a separate standing committee. Both the business and municipal teams should be sub-committees, but they will meet only when topics of keen interest come up, such as the long awaited draft MS4 permit documents, now due out in March, 2013.

On a motion proposed and seconded, his recommendations on committees, mission and priorities were accepted unanimously.

Because attendance has been uneven, the Steering Committee on occasion has not had a quorum of 50% from non-profit groups, and has therefore worked on a "consensus" basis. EK asked Caitlyn and Lynne to send out letters to the non-profits asking for representative to attend Steering Committee meetings, but acknowledged that state and foundation budget cuts have caused elimination of staff, making joining the meetings difficult and often impossible. EK suggested we address the quorum issue after we hear from the non-profits.

Ellen Mass of Friends of Alewife Reservation urged the Steering Committee and EPA sponsor another summit on the Mystic Watershed. EK said this coming June would be five years since the previous one, but Andy strongly recommended waiting to host another Mystic River Summit until after the MS4 Permit document is released. He pointed out that the MS4 permit is an important issue and was what encouraged him to participate in 2008.

In the general discussion, global climate change and Super Storm Sandy were mentioned, as was the Army Corps 10 year analysis of the storm surge map. Paul Kirshen's name came up as a key note speaker. EK asked Lynne and Caitlyn to investigate further the prospect of US EPA hosting another of another summit, although we agreed a two year time frame from this coming June made sense, considering the level of energy and work required to put such a forum together. Ivey suggested reaching out to Vivien Li at the Boston Harbor Ass., and she agreed to do so.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Ivey St John

During the week after the Steering Committee meeting, Nihar forwarded the MassDEP SSO draft to all members. Here is his message. The document is attached.

Hello all,

Please find the proposed sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) form and instructions which were circulated earlier at the Mystic Steering Committee meetings and the Mystic Municipal Subcommittee meeting. Based on our discussion at the last meeting, you may distribute this to others as necessary and provide comments to MassDEP by December 14, 2012. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks

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Mystic River Watershed Steering Committee
Sign In Sheet
December 5, 2012

| Name | Organization |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Caitlyn Whittle | EPA |
| Lynne Hamjian | EPA |
| Andrew B. DeSantis | City of Chelsea |
| Stephen Perkins | EPA |
| Ekongkat Singh Khalsa | MyRWA |
| Matthew Shuman | Town of Winchester |
| Karen Pelto | MassDEP/EEA |
| Nihar Mohanty | MassDEP |
| Chris Mancini | Groundwork Somerville |
| Lise Marx | MWRA |
| Jan Dolan | Friends of Upper Mystic Lake |
| Ivey St. John | CWC |
| Tony Rodolakis | AMEC/Business Subcommittee |
| Wayne Chouinard | Town of Arlington |
| Todd Borci | EPA |
| Denise Provost | State Rep |
| Nolan Nicaise | Tufts University |
| Monica Mejia | Tufts University |
| Josh Peters | Tufts University |
| Matthew Capone | Tufts University |
| Michael Coty | Tufts University |

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|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Andrew Petit de Mange | Tufts University |
| Rusty Russell | Tufts University |
| Joey Solomon | MyRWA |
| Arn Franzen | City of Somerville |
| David Pavlik | Town of Lexington |
| Roger Frymire | - |