

Mystic River Watershed Steering Committee Report March 28th, 2013 at River's Edge, Medford

Agreement points:

- Notes from December meeting were tentatively approved (quorum not obtained)

Follow-Up Actions:

- Post Urban Waters Academic Forum notes on EPA website
- Caitlyn will schedule a WQ conference call
- Caitlyn will schedule a conference call for interested parties to identify a way for the Steering Committee or members to become involved in the casino issues at both Monsanto and Suffolk Downs.

Carry-Over Follow-Ups

- 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.

A. The report from Wednesday, December 5th, 2012's meeting was approved unanimously after introductions of those present were completed.

B. Member Updates:

Urban Waters Academic Forum: Anamarija reported on an EPA initiated forum bringing together three executive directors from watershed associations and academic representatives from local universities, along with representation from regulators, to discuss how best to address stormwater, nutrients and preparation for climate change and rising water levels in rivers and the sea. The advocacy group executives expressed disappointment about the lack of engagement by universities, and suggested that they need to be more aware of shorter time frames for research projects and greater involvement in solving real time issues. Anamarija and Lynne will follow up in order to improve participation and collaboration among the disparate representatives. Caitlyn reported minutes from the meeting will be ready shortly and posted on the EPA web site.

Mystic Community Earth Day -<http://mysticriver.org/watershed-clean-ups/MyRWA>'s Beth Meserve MacBlane reported several organizations are joining together for the fourth consecutive year to coordinate numerous events for Earth Day in the Mystic River Watershed in Arlington, Medford, Somerville, Cambridge, Malden, Everett, and East Boston. Comprising the "Mystic Community Earth Day," most of the events will take place on Saturday, April 20 and Saturday, April 27 in honor of Earth Day (April 22) and will focus on improving areas along the river, while drawing attention to the needs of the watershed as a whole. All events are free and open to the public. Volunteers are needed to complete this important work!

17th annual Mystic River Herring Run and Paddle - <http://mysticriver.org/herring-run-paddle/> Beth also reported on the annual Herring Run and Paddle, which will include a 5K run/walk race, three paddling races (3, 9, and 12 miles), educational booths, children's activities, and more. All events are held at the DCR Blessing of the Bay Boathouse in Somerville. Register by May 1st for your organic t-shirt!

Aberjona River Settlement: DEP's IndustriPlex NRD Settlement: MassDEP's Karen Pelto reported that the IndustriPlex natural resource damages (NRD) settlement, a very long time in negotiation, has been approved by the Federal Court, and a \$4.25 million dollar payment has been made to the natural resource Trustees, who include the state's EEA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to restore ecological resources that were injured by the release of contaminants from the IndustriPlex Superfund Site. These resources include the Aberjona River, wetlands and floodplain and their biota. The next step is a public process to develop a restoration plan to identify preferred approaches. A public meeting will be held to provide an overview and then it is likely that a Request for Responses (RFR) will be issued to solicit restoration proposals from the public. The restoration plan will also be subject to public review and comment.

New Hampshire Draft MS4 Permit Regulations: Caitlyn reported that the draft NH MS4 Permit regulations had been released; comments have been received and are now being reviewed. She indicated there will be a public hearing on the draft and the comments on March 14th.

MAPC's Walking Routes Along Various Waterways: Joan Blaustein reported signs are now up along the Malden River, from Oak Grove to Malden Center. The next installations will be in Medford along the Clipper Ship Path on the Mystic. MAPC is currently considering organizing a forum to inform surrounding communities about the pathways.

DCR & the State Budget Negotiations: EK asked members to contact their representatives and senators to support two budget amendments for DCR filed by Senator Jehlen and Representative Provost: \$75K to DCR to fund the mechanical harvesting and removal of water chestnuts from the Mystic River, and \$500K for DCR to fund creation of construction drawings for implementing the Mystic River Master Plan, published in November, 2009. Once DCR has completed construction drawings and the project is shovel ready, DCR's Dan Driscoll has an amazing history of finding construction funds.....somewhere!

EK reviewed previous water chestnut removal activities: by GroundworkSomerville, which received \$150K for the work; another \$50 to \$70K funded a hand pulling efforts; and finally last year, about \$45K was spent using the mechanical harvester. Removal is a constant and annual requirement.

Craddock Dam and Bridge Removal: Medford's Cassandra Koutiladis announced the removal of the dam to expedite water flow will require construction of a substitute bridge, currently in the planning stage. The temporary bridge is required in order to expedite equipment access and traffic flow.

Ethanol Transport to Logan: Gene Benson reported on the advocacy efforts opposing a private vender's proposal to transport ethanol through Everett, Chelsea and Revere for delivery by train to Logan fuel terminals. The three towns have formed a coalition to oppose the route, while various fire departments have said they will need special training to handle any emergency

resulting from a spill or accident. An alternate route through Somerville and Cambridge is under consideration as well.

Wellington Station Greenway: Beth Debski reported preparations are moving forward for the completion of the Wellington Greenway, the new path that will connect the Mystic River paths at Station Landing to the Malden River from the Orange Line crossing of the Mystic to Wellington Station and beyond. Mass DOT will be rebuilding the Rt. 16 Bridge, with pathways constructed under it to connect to the Greenway to the Cabot Business Center and Rivers Edge.

Winchester Mystic Improvements: Betsy Ware described plans to construct a fish ladder at the Central Falls Dam foundation to expedite the herring run, and to restore marshes and wetlands at Davison Park which is in the Aberjona River watershed.

Continuing Restoration of Alewife Reservation Urban Wild off the East End of Rt. 2: Ellen Mass announced installation of additional planting in the park.

Annual Mystic River Watershed Report Card: Caitlyn reported that there will be no press event to announce the Mystic River Watershed Report Card; EPA will publish a press release.

Casino Developments in Everett at the Monsanto Site & in East Boston at Suffolk Downs: Caitlyn reported there was a brief conversation during the Open Space Committee's conference call on March 6th about the Everett casino development. EK and Ivey attended a private presentation to advocacy groups by Caesars Entertainment. Concern was expressed that the Steering Committee should discuss what, if any, role it might have in the casino review process.

There was a lively discussion after Caitlin's opening remarks. EK said he was to meet with the Wynn people, followed by Anamarija, Ivey and Tuft's Rusty Russell suggesting a role for the Steering Committee in evaluating environmental commitments of both developers. EK reminded the group of the significant soil and likely ground water pollutants at Wynn's Monsanto site. It is a registered release site, and the investigation of ground water and subsurface conditions is still underway.. There is more work needed to characterize what is there and what risks are associated with existing conditions. Anamarija suggested that the gaming commission should establish environmental criteria in evaluating proposed projects in the Mystic watershed, and she reported her UMB colleagues had communicated with the Gaming Commission to that effect. She urged the Steering Committee to become an advocate for effective environmental improvements and commitments to restore local natural conditions by casino developers.

The consensus was the group needs to identify what role it can play – whether it be as a Steering Committee or as a group of individual organizations. EK will report on his meeting with Wynn at the next meeting, and further brainstorming will be on the June agenda. Joan reported that MAPC had offered to assist the Gaming Commission in setting up casino review meetings in the various communities affected.

Some questions the Steering Committee will be looking into are:

- Can committee speak with leverage on issues that are agreed upon?
- Can committee go back to host communities and suggest that they look at certain things?

Steering Committee Sub-groups Reports:

Water Quality: a small group met to refocus and re-energize the committee. They reviewed the four major objectives and agreed to survey members to narrow focus and identify priority actions to take on moving forward. There will be a conference call scheduled in the coming weeks.

Draw 7 Park Charettes: GroundworkSomerville's Chris Mancini described the agency's last of three public charette sessions on 3/25/13 in Somerville, at which about forty people contributed ideas and suggestions for a refurbished Draw 7 Park. Chris thanked EK, Ivey and MAPC for their contributions making the charettes possible, with an effort to prioritize more than 200 suggestions following, and finalized in a last public review meeting in May. A report is due DCR and MAPC, and will include input from Charlestown, Chelsea, Somerville, Malden, Medford and Everett representatives. These are all environmental justice communities with important racial and health equity issues present. The coming Orange Line stop under construction at FRIT's Assembly Square development will expedite use of a refurbished Draw 7 Park by these towns.

Monsanto Site: See above.

Former GE Site: project is currently on ice. The developers are pursuing interests in waterfront access and activation, so there has not been much activity in the past few months.

Water Quality Forum Hosted by EPA and MyRWA: EPA and MyRWA worked to co-host the fourth annual science forum for the Mystic River Watershed Initiative that was held in January at EPA's offices in Boston. The half-day meeting was a success with a variety of presentations from EPA, MyRWA, communities, and other stakeholders. Meeting notes and presentations can be found on EPA's website at www.epa.gov/mysticriver/meetingsandevents.html.

Presentation by Mellissa Cryan of the Division of Conservation Services Grant Program: Melissa's very thorough and professional presentation will be available on-line shortly at the MyWRA website.

Respectfully submitted: Ivey St John,
with much appreciated assistance from Beth MacBlane, Karen Pelto and Caitlyn Whittle.

Mystic River Watershed Steering Committee
Sign In Sheet
March 28, 2013

Name	Organization
Caitlyn Whittle	EPA
Ekongkat Singh Khalsa	MyRWA
Matthew Shuman	Town of Winchester
Karen Pelto	MassDEP/EEA
Chris Mancini	Groundwork Somerville
Lise Marx	MWRA
Ivey St. John	CWC
Tony Rodolakis	AMEC/Business Subcommittee
Wayne Chouinard	Town of Arlington

Eugene Benson	Alternatives for Community and Environment
Anamarija Frankic	UMass Boston
Brooke Davis	Tufts University
Rusty Russell	Tufts University
Nolan Nicaise	Tufts University
Beth MacBlane	MyRWA
Marzie Galazka	City of Everett
Beth Debski	MVDC
Melissa Cryan	Mass EEA
Joan Blaustein	MAPC
Alicia Hunt	City of Medford
Ellen Mass	Friends of Alewife Reservation
Cassandra Koutalidis	City of Medford
Betsy Ware	Winchester Planning