

**Lower Passaic & Saddle River Alliance
Education & Outreach Committee
October 19, 2005**

Present: Tom Pietrykoski, Chair, PVSC; Ashley Pengitore, PVSC; Gina Mongiello, Americorps; Jerry Willis, NPS; Michele Bakacs, DEP; Peyton Baker, Passaic County Dept of Health; Nancy Zimmerman, Friends of Clarks Pont/Third River; Elyse Conde, NJCWW; Elyssa Serrilli, NJYC-Newark; Barbara O'Brien, LWV Ridgewood; Ellie Gruber, LWV Ridgewood

Gina Mongiello was welcomed as the new Americorps Ambassador. Her email is gmongiello@pvsc.com

Minutes approved as distributed; Tom will incorporate all email lists, so we don't have duplicate mailings. Fall newsletter is ready for distribution.

Environmental Endowment Grant: Michele summarized all suggestions, either emailed to her or stated at last meeting. Those are: 1. (Jerry W.) a public boat launch, hand powered; no specific location yet. 2. CWRP (Russ F.) Corporate Watershed Restoration Partnership; 3. Volunteer Monitoring Program (Tara C and Elyssa S). Tom said he Tara, and Elyssa would write application, with agency being the International Youth Organization; and 4. Mapping of Lower Passaic (Ellie G.)

Long discussion on two: 1. Find a location, maybe Riverbank Park or the Essex County center? But committee feels we should encourage people to go on the river where they don't normally have access. Peyton B. said maybe we should do the map first, we might find alternative location for the launch; we still would like to reach out to PRC.

Re: 4. mapping, committee felt we should start with the Passaic, not enough room on map for all tributaries, etc.; Nancy Z suggested using symbols to make map more readable and include more waterways. It's important to let residents know all parts of watershed. Might ask for \$20,000; and then see if Dr. Pardi can work with Horizon Fdn for \$20,000 additionally, to hire interns, etc.

Michele asked for more specific applications by next meeting, so we don't miss deadline.

2006 Passaic Paddle

Date is set for May 13, Saturday

Subcommittee: Tom, Michele, Ashley, Jerry met before last PAC meeting; they assigned tasks: Tom will oversee the committee and work on canoes, Michele will

work on financing with LWV and Ironbound; Jerry and Elyssa will work on grants; Peyton-Tara will do media; Ashley will do insurance, and Kym work on donations.

Route: Jerry W. did a g.i.s. of area and presented several maps to group. We could begin at the Nereid Boat Club area in Rutherford (contact McPhearson, a Mayor/Freeholder). . Second, we go to N. Arlington Fire House (2.93 miles from Nereid); then to Riverbank Park in Kearny, they have a boat launch; then finish at Riverbank Park in Newark (8.49 miles). We can park at the Blue Cross/Blue Shield building across the street, it will be Saturday and empty. Will contact Ken Snapp of the Passaic River Rowing Assn. Jerry suggests we need maximum visual impact and good media coverage. Riverbank Park in Newark has lot of boats going out anyway, will incorporate that with the race.

Action items: contact Parks Dept, correspond with towns, fire departments, Nereid, ask for Floating dock at Riverbank. Are going through many different areas in our WMA.

DEP

Michele send letter to the EPA stating that we want them to come to our meeting. Cooperating parties want to see our comments.

There will be an urban design competition for the Great Falls Historic District. Whoever wins this will probably look for some forum to involve residents, etc.; we should make our presence known.

Friends of Clarks Pond

Nancy reported that they had the cleanup on the Third River, but there was lots of rain. No trash, must have been pushed down the Passaic. Gina was there with some from Montclair State. They planted the 1st phase of thickets, cut down knotweed , planted American Plums, Elderberry. Very small turnout, very muddy.

PVSC

The River Restoration Dept. cleaned up a huge slick of trash caught in boom just East of the Jackson St. Bridge on the Passaic River; lots of trash, mass of bottles, with trash being nearly three feet deep in some sections; 6-8 30-yard dumpsters we filled in three days. This was the trash which got washed down from the heavy rains. Went back to clean more.

Waterwatch

Clean up at Great Falls; 48 people on Oct 1, lots of trash. Next cleanup was at North Arlington, less trash there, as most got washed away towards the site described above.

Americorps

Gina is doing visual assessment in Molly Ann Brook, and will go back for biological. Found a giant snapping turtle in Molly Ann, below Franklin Lakes border. She is training Kym and students next week in visual assessment. Michele and Tom attended biological assessment workshop; met teacher from B.F. Jr. High School

Passaic County Health Department

Spoke with Garret Mtn group, tanks from latrines bubble up and go into pond; is in four towns, esp Paterson. Wrote a letter to the County Administrator, can't send Notice of Violation unless Peyton sees it. Next Spring, when more people use it. Need to replace the tank.

Peyton checked on Dr. Pardi's complaint in Greenwood Lake, students took sample, lots of fecal, exact location. Hard to tell, but sewage lines are right on Goffle Road, will contact Hawthornes DPW, pull out line, put dye and follow it.

There is someone in each county, should list. If Dr. Pardi hadn't contacted her boss, she wouldn't be able to check on it.

Michele: we are training all these people; who should they call if they see something. Depends on County, but Peyton would go and check. Calling DEP hotline is good, but also call Environmental Health Specialist for Water.

IYO

Elyssa wrote her grant, several parts: one, for coordinating volunteering monitoring effort in effort to find out what's going on in the watershed, which would lead to more cooperation. The other part is "Adopt a River", maybe Second River, one year water quality monitoring. Also, leading 4 community clean ups; they are a G.E.D. community service program. Wants to work with "Three Doctors" in Newark, don't know if they are nonprofit; want to bring people to river, write physical fitness prescriptions to get people involved. Teaching yoga to elderly at riverside. Was original a 5 Star Grant, but now for the Corp.Watershed Restoration Partnership. Need to use Branch Brook Park more often, beautiful place, but have no luck with Alliance at park.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM

Respectfully submitted,
Ellie Gruber