

Lower Passaic & Saddle River Alliance
Watershed Management Area 4

Minutes – 10 Nov 05

Attendees: Mark Newell-Verona Environmental Commission/Ramapo College, Ashley Pengitore-PVSC, Jerry Mitchell-BBL, Tom Pietrykoski-PVSC, Russ Furnari-PSEG, Elyssa Serrilli-IYO/NJYC, Jerry Willis-National Park Service, Dave Yennior-Sierra Club, Gina Mongiello-NJ Watershed Ambassador Area 4, Laura Knutelsky-Jaffe Communications for the Lower Passaic Cooperating Parties

Meeting called to order at 6:42pm

Minutes reviewed and accepted with no corrections.

Motion to accept minutes by Russ Furnari; Second by Elyssa Serrilli.

EOC Report – Tom Pietrykoski, Chair:

1 – Paddle Relay – Saturday May 13, 2006. 9 mile stretch of the Passaic River from Nereid Boat Club in Rutherford to Riverbank Park in Newark. 2 transition zones to break it into 3 legs of about 3 miles each.
2 – Environmental Endowment Grant – Due by January 15, 2006. Ellie Gruber and the League of Women Voters-Ridgewood will submit a proposal for a map and guide of the Lower Passaic including points of interest. Jerry Willis will not pursue grant money to improve boat launch at Essex Co Env Center, since it is located in WMA 6. Tara Casella and the Essex Co Env Center may want to apply for that project on their own. Tom Pietrykoski, Tara Casella and Elyssa Serrilli met to discuss applying for a grant to begin a Volunteer Biological Monitoring Program in the area. They haven't come to a mutual agreement as to how the program will be run and will have to meet again before submitting a proposal.

TAC Report – Russ Furnari, Chair:

1 – Preakness Brook 319(h) Project – Kick-off meeting w/ WPU & Wayne Twp will be on Thursday November 17 at 2pm at the WPU Oldham Pond Alumni Center in North Haledon. The Regional Stormwater Management Plan meeting will take place sometime in January 2006. List of stakeholders to be invited was compiled at last meeting. 8 sample sites were chosen along Preakness Brook.
2 – Diamond Brook 319(h) Project – was not approved for this year's funding cycle.
3 – Molly Ann Brook – money originally slated for a project on Goffle Brook is now going to be used for a new project on Molly Ann Brook with Passaic Co.
The TAC will not meet in November. Next TAC Mtg will be on Thursday, December 15. The US Army Corps of Engineers will give a presentation on existing projects on the Peckman and Saddle Rivers, including flood management and streambank restorations.

NJDEP Report – Tom Pietrykoski for Michele Bakacs:

1 – Michele is writing article about the Alliance for Watershed Focus newsletter. Article will focus on partnerships within the Alliance, our mission, the Paddle Relay, and Jerry Willis's work with the Alliance. Ashley Pengitore suggested mentioning 319(h) funding for Preakness Brook Project. Russ Furnari suggested mentioning the Priority Stream Segment work being done by Dr. Pardi. Jerry Mitchell suggested including our plans for the Open Space Map. Elyssa Serrilli suggested mentioning our interest in starting a Volunteer Monitoring Program. Mark Newell suggested mentioning some of the new groups that have recently become involved with the Alliance.
2 – Changes have been proposed for the Surface Water Quality Standards. Any comments are due by November 18. Russ Furnari said that the anti-degradation portion of the proposed changes was dropped as of November 7. That aside, no comments were suggested by the Alliance.

National Park Service Report – Jerry Willis:

Jerry will officially be working with the Alliance in 2006. He will focus on organizational development, pursuing 501(c)(3) status with the Executive Committee, and the plan for the water trail including access points, a guide map, and signage. He would like to meet with Ella Fillipone to possibly coordinate with the Passaic River Coalition. He would also like to incorporate the Open Space Map into the water trail plan, pointing out possible restoration projects. Priority would be given to those projects that are small in scale, have a high likelihood of success, that are supported by strong partnerships, involve public land, are visibly accessible to the public, and that have a commitment to the long-term maintenance of the projects by the groups involved. He would like to see the Open Space Committee become active again, and possibly rename/reorganize the committee as the “Conservation & Recreation Committee”. This committee would include previous OSC work as well as build upon Jerry’s work plan.

Executive Committee Report – Mark Newell:

The Executive Committee of the Alliance is considering pursuing 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

The next Executive Committee Mtg will be on November 17. Tom will ask Dr. Pardi about the availability of the WPU Oldham Pond Alumni Center for this meeting.

New Business:

Dave Yennior – Sierra Club: Dave took pictures of the floatables in the tidal portion of the Passaic River near the Kearny HS boat house. The Rowing Club later did a cleanup in that area. Dave recently participated in three cleanups on the Passaic River with NJ Waterwatch and PVSC. He also went on the river with Debbie Manns of the NY/NJ Baykeeper and Steve Gruber, who has interest in becoming the Passaic Riverkeeper. Dave noticed that most of the floatables are recyclables. Currently, there is no bottle bill in NJ, which might reduce the litter problem by offering an incentive in the form of a deposit for these bottles. He doesn’t think that volunteer recycling programs are effective in that regard. He also feels that inmate cleanups don’t solve the problem, are demeaning to the inmates, and do not provide them with real-world skills. He points out that PVSC collects floatables on the river, including these bottles, but it all winds up in landfills. He thinks a better solution should be found for this problem. He spoke to Jon Corzine and the NJDEP, wrote to local legislators, environmental commission chairs, and State Congressmen and Senators. Jerry Willis said that Ellie Gruber of the League of Women Voters-Ridgewood and Al Kent of the Morris Co Parks Commission worked on a bottle bill before, and suggested Dave talk to them about it.

Future Meetings:

Mark Newell will look into the possibility of meeting at either Montclair State University, Bloomfield College or the Verona Boat House for the December, January and February Alliance meetings. The March, April and May meetings will be held at Lester Stables in Ridgewood.

Future meetings will be as follows: EOC – November 16
Alliance – December 8
TAC – December 15

Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Pengitore