

June 13, 2006 Opequon Project Team meeting notes 6:00-8:00 p.m. Action items in RED

James Rumsey Technical Institute's Conference Room

(Times noted are approximate)

Facilitator: Alana Hartman, WV Department of Environmental Protection

Also present: Jared Bartley, Sandra Bernardi, Tanya Borisova, John Christensen, Richard Demoske, George Snider, Bonnie Stubblefield

Handouts: Sleepy Creek project notes, BMP breakdown by county and watershed, accomplishment list

6:00 –Introductions – John C. explained WV Environmental Council's mission and also discussed Blue Heron Env. Network. Richard mentioned 2 neighbors that work for a local builder. When it would be appropriate to bring someone like this in to our activities, they would be good contacts to showcase good building practices.

Upcoming activities, including June 17 SOS workshop with Blue Heron Environmental Network and Tim Craddock of WVDEP, June 21 and June 23 workdays for Sleepy Creek Project Team's \$5000 project, and 2006 Watershed Celebration Day and Conference November 3rd and 4th.

6:30 discussed next few meetings' dates and topics. Basically approved the schedule as appears in the meeting agenda. Bonnie elaborated on the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle's proposed participation in our Sept 12 meeting. This will be after our first prioritization meeting and before the second one, so should fit in nicely. Possibly hold it outside. **Update: Norwalk Pavilion at War Memorial Park costs \$60 to reserve, but we could use it for free if no one rents it – first come first serve. Do we want to risk that?**

7:00 Project updates

- We viewed Sandra's photos from June 3 float trip on the screen. We felt this was a success, but the day started off cloudy and we thought some folks might have stayed away because they feared rain.
- Judicial Center rain garden – has been getting good press lately (Bonnie supplied us with the latest of 3 entries in the Journal, this one from today). Opequon Project Team agreed we would like to be acknowledged on the sign because the rain garden idea originated with us (albeit separately from the way it originated at DEP). **Alana will communicate this to Sherry. Also, Alana needs to find out whether Bryan Seipp has advice/experience with planting a rain garden in September, when conditions are likely hot and dry. Update: Bryan said late September should be no problem. If conditions are still hot and dry, though, woody plants will need to be watered every other day for 2 weeks, then once a week thereafter until established. He confirmed that another solution is to plant hardy plants this fall and then complete the rain garden next April or other optimal time.**

Discussed who is responsible for maintaining various permanent stormwater practices. Perhaps OPT should recommend that the county hold homeowners' associations responsible for stormwater pond management. Otherwise they are often neglected. Discussed differences between different stormwater BMPs. Discussed the "wet pond" in the photo below, just outside James Rumsey. Some OPT members do not support this kind of practice if the result is like the pond in the photo, because this one is pretty dirty and allegedly replaced what was a natural wetland!



- War Memorial Park natural stream restoration and shrub planting – Steve Catlett responded to Alana recently to say he would like to see it proceed. Now awaiting the design from WVCA.
- Did not discuss the rain garden idea at Orchard View Intermediate
- Rain barrels pilot project: (came back to this item at 7:50) Richard is drafting a “test marketing” message to distribute to Berkeley County residents, and Sherry Wilkins has secured funding for the first batch of about 30 barrels. Now we are seeking funding or a cheap method to transport the barrels. Opequon Project Team agreed (I think this is right?) that a short-ish workshop on a weekday evening might attract the largest number of people, because it would capture working people and people whose weekends are busy. **Update: Sherry is drafting a flyer to use when asking local businesses to sponsor this pilot project by contributing \$200-\$500 or so. We still need a temp. storage location and a place to hold the workshop.** Richard mentioned Matt Grove’s idea of storage and workshop at Roundhouse. Richard has 2 ideas for centrally-located sites at properties of local person.
- Opequon Creek Assessment (by kayak, using TEAM method) is ongoing...George and Sandra did the 4th reach yesterday and it took 5 hours, so hats off to them! Seeing a lot of thick algae – areas with fewer trees seem to have more algae. **If anyone else wants to participate, please let Alana know.**

-Opequon Creek Survey (i.e. document summarizing what we know about the watershed) draft submitted to Ches. Bay Program May 31, 2006 but for our purposes it’s just a beginning. Let Alana know if you’d like a copy. It’s a bit awkward because of electronic appendices.

- Discussed a booth/tabletop display, specifically Carolyn Thomas’ request to partner with OPT on a Berkeley County Fair booth (\$200 split 50/50). **Decision tabled until next meeting**, but will likely have someone check out the fair this year to consider for next year. Should invite Rockymarsh Run to get in on the watershed group website idea. Look at opportunities in future to merge display. WVU could help with a poster for the fair. Do we want to develop a pamphlet about the group? **Will ask Mary Beth Bennett whether she thinks the fair is a good venue for this group. Need to find out whether we’d**

have to supply people to man the booth the entire time. Discussed website, but may be redundant because meeting notes and other items posted at www.wvnet.org already. Yahoo provides free websites? Domain name is about \$15/year? Mark Grove helped RC&D with Tuscarora Linear Park project by having details on his website – might help us too? **If anyone can follow up on the website idea and bring a couple of possibilities before the group, please do!**

-Jefferson County creekside landowner tax record search: will happen June 23. Alana, Tanya and 2 members of JCWC (Peter Vila and Dick Latterell) will participate.

7:30 new project ideas:

- Richard proposes developing a screensaver to market to the community and raise awareness about our group. It would have video of a riffle part of the creek and a kingfisher swooping down to fish. No decision was made – Richard, what are the steps and costs involved?
- Should we pursue watershed signs on the major roads in the area? Perhaps write it into a small watershed grant for next year (due early February)? Inspired by Rockymarsh Run's signs:



- July 29 trash cleanup with 2 DEP jon boats being planned. **Alana will contact Berkeley Community Pride about partnering with us on this. Update: done; Ron G. sent an e-mail to his list and Alana has begun to receive inquiries.**
- Mentioned NCTC presentation idea as outlined in agenda. **Will follow up with JCWC after their June meeting to find out how OPT and WVU can participate.**

Adjourn 8:00