

Quassaick Creek Watershed Alliance Monthly Meeting

MSMC, Aquinas Hall, Room 252

Monday, September 30, 2019, 5:00 PM

<http://waterauthority.orangecountygov.com/quassaick.html>

Present: Marcel Barrick, Jack Caldwell, Ashley Collazo, Bill Fetter, John Gebhards, Simon Gruber, Lance Haug, Ted Kohlman, Lynn Maelia, Kelly Morris, Naomi Hersson-Ringskog, Erin Roth, Ron Zorrillo, Megan Lung

Meeting Notes – 10/14/19

Presentation

1. Dept. of Small Interventions Work on the Lake Street Improvements: Naomi Hersson-Ringskog - Dept. of Small Interventions

Naomi discussed a one day planning session held earlier this year where all interested citizens and a wealth of experienced planners, architects, engineers and other visionaries gathered regarding revitalizing the Lake Street corridor in the City of Newburgh from Broadway south to the City Line in the area of Heights Lumber. (<http://timeshudsonvalley.com/stories/lake-street-corridor-reimagined.6942>). The process included an introductory orientation, guided site walk and finally focused discussion groups with informal presentations and open audience participation to end the day. All the visions and comments are being organized and fleshed out by Naomi and the Dept. of Small Interventions. A report is currently being drafted.

One thought that developed at the work session is the idea of opening up the view from the east side of Muchattoes Lake near the Williams Street Intersection. Toward that end, The Dept. of Small Interventions is organizing a community volunteer clean up behind the stores in the strip malls on the west side of Lake Street to be held on Sunday October 20th.

In light of some coordination after the meeting, the QCWA Board of Directors elected to limit assistance focused on advisors regarding invasive species. Due to the presence of poison ivy, QCWA does not want to expose well-meaning volunteers to the possibility of getting infected. Ted & John are in contact with Naomi as things come into form. Updates will be available.

Reports

2. QCWA Board of Directors' report: Jack

A)-Jack and the entire BOD thanked both Kelly and Lynn for the coordination on their respective ends with the development of a Certificate of Insurance covering the QCWA, under the Orange County Water Authority umbrella, at the monthly meetings on the Mt. St. Mary College for the next year.

B)-Jack noted that the BOD will improve their meeting focus to policy and administrative issues. Field and volunteer topics will be addressed at the general monthly meetings.

C)-There was general discussion about the current activities regarding the lower Quassaick Trail. Jack is representing the QCWA at coordination meetings with Scenic Hudson Newburgh

Green Space Plan committee regarding potential improvements/projects throughout the City of Newburgh. This committee has asked for a walking tour of the lower Quassaick. The QCWA BOD will meet to work on details of a potential site visit hopefully prior to the end of October. Kelly discussed the potential availability of some property now in the hands of the Kessler estate and funds in hand from the NYSDEC. She also noted that the County is aware the SH Trail Feasibility Study is underway.

D)-Kelly discussed the idea that a partial breach of the Holden Dam is being considered as a means of limiting outwash of sediment currently retained behind the dam. Marcel was curious how much of the dam would be removed. A site visit for this project is being coordinated by Ali Church, the City of Newburgh Planner. John mentioned that a QC trail bridge location should be considered when planning the Holden Dam work.

3. "Outdoor Promise": Ashley Collazo & Ron Zorrillo

Ashley and Ron explained that they are working on educational projects that involve young students in outdoor activities primarily in NYC currently with the goal of working more in the Newburgh and surrounding areas. They are currently working with Naomi's group on a project. A few attendees at this meeting including Simon and Jack had an interest in pairing up with them for potential collaborations.

4. Orange Lake and Upper Bushfield Creek: Bill Fetter

A)-Bill reported in addition to the routine field testing, a round of laboratory testing was performed at select locations in the Upper Bushfield at the end of August. Results are currently being evaluated. Once finalized, the results to date will be drafted into a letter requesting NYSDEC investigation of the facilities in question. John recommended that the members of the Orange Lake HOA who are involved with the NYSDEC Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP) be included as signatories on the correspondence.

There was discussion that the Town of Newburgh continues to actively assess the feasibility of municipal sewer/water on the west side of Orange Lake. Kelly stated the County has provided funding for performance of a water supply study by qualified consultants.

B)-Bill met with Stan Thomas and Kevin Sterling (OLHA) regarding the developing potential overall Orange Lake Study Plan. Bill explained the QCWA effort to date and plan to keep our focus on the Lake tributaries. Stan presented of an outline of efforts to date and a potential frame work for moving forward that would include west shore evaluation, aquatic maintenance, CSLAP, etc. This is generally in line with the DEC's 9 Element Plan. Kevin was contemplating task oriented volunteers and funding methods for further work related to the many contributors to the lake's overall quality.

5. Trees For Tribs Update: Ted Kohlmann

Ted summarized an inventory of TFT sites needing maintenance he and John compiled recently. The first and quite successful cleanup was held on the morning of September 19th at Cronomer Park in the Town of Newburgh. May thanks to Ed Helbig and his inspiring students from the Birch School! The next cleanup will also be in Cronomer Park in an adjacent project on Powder Mill Rd on Thursday October 10th from 9:00 to noon. Maybe lunch nearby afterward? (This outing was postponed due to poor weather conditions)

6. Newburgh Clean Water Project Update: Marcel Barrick

A)-Marcel announced the Restoration Advisory Committee (RAC) established for the continued investigation and ultimate restoration plan for the ongoing Air National Guard (ANG) Base drinking water contamination) is currently receiving application from the public for seats on the RAC.

This community based committee is intended to review technical documents, serve as a liaison between the ANG and the local community and provide feedback and advice to the Restoration Plan designers. Community Groups would be good conduits for local input. The QWCA resolve to discuss a potential application at the next BOD meeting. Information and applications are available on line at: www.orangecountygov.com/1768/PFOSPFOA-Resources.

Applications must be post marked by October 25th.

B)-during this item, the point was brought up that there is now a hard connection between the Catskill and Delaware Aqueducts allowing additional versatility to accessing water among communities during the ongoing tunneling and other upgrades in the NYC water supply network.

7. Potential Orange County WWTP in New Windsor: Simon Gruber

Simon wanted to inform everyone that Orange County is currently looking at the option of constructing a new WWTP in northern OC to defer overload from the existing plant in Harriman. With that in mind, we must weigh the cost, potential impacts from installing a transportation pipe, the potential damage from pipe leakage and likely direct discharge into the Moodna or Quassaick watershed and consequently into Newburgh Bay. Updates will be provided as we become aware of them.

8. General Discussion

A)-John noted the newly started refurbishment of two dams and the draining of the lakes in Algonquin Park. Some funding has come from FEMA for damage to the dams in past flooding from Hurricane Irene and from Orange County for invasive species control. There is conflicting information as to the possible cleanup of the trash that is visible now that the lakes are drained. It was suggested to contact the “Preserve Algonquin Park” community group or the Orange County Parks Commissioner for further details.

B)-Simon noted how quickly the Sediment in Beaver Dam Lake in the Salisbury Mills are stabilized and grew over with vegetation after it was drained for the ongoing dam repairs.

C)-Megan from the NYSDEC Estuary Program reminded us that if ever there is a question or issue with local flooding, culvert information, TFT, etc. that she is available for help and/or to steer us in the right direction. Megan.lung@dec.ny.gov

9. Upcoming Conferences/Events

A)-The Hudson River Watershed Alliance will hold its annual conference on Tuesday October 29 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Wallace Center on the grounds of the FDR Library in Hyde Park. Registration is available on the HRWA website.

B)-HRWA will be hosting its next Watershed Roundtable for representatives of watershed groups to provide updates in their area and for all to see what's going on in other regions of the Hudson Watershed. Marcel Barrick and Erin Roth are the current designees to attend this Roundtable for the QCWA on November 21st at Bard College. It was suggested that Simon work with Marcel and the HRWA to have the Newburgh Clean Water Project be accepted as a member of the HRWA and have its own representation at the Roundtable meetings. QCWA would then designate another of its members to attend the November 21st meeting.

C)-The HRWA will be holding a Watershed Workshop at SUNY New Paltz on Thursday December 5th. Details will be provided as they become available.

D)- The Cary Institute will be hosting a lecture on the "Cuyahoga River: 50 Years After the Infamous Fire" on Friday October 18th. www.caryinstitute.org

**THE NEXT QCWA MONTHLY MEETING WILL BE MONDAY OCTOBER 28TH, 2019
AT 5:00 PM IN RM. 252, AQUINAS HALL, MT. ST. MARY COLLEGE, NEWBURGH**

PLEASE JOIN US!