

**Norwalk River Watershed Initiative Advisory Committee
Regular Meeting of May 21st, 2014
Wilton Town Hall, Main Building Conference Room**

Minutes

Members Present: Alexis Cherichetti (Norwalk), Casey Cordes (SNEW), Dick Harris (Harbor Watch), Kathleen Holland (New Canaan), Cindy Ingersoll (Coordinator), Chris Malik (CT DEEP), Mike Law (Co-Chair, TU), Cathy Minter (Weston Conservation), Dave Pattee (Redding)

Welcome and Introductions

Mike Law called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. and attendees introduced themselves.

On-Going and Old Business

a. Approval of Minutes for March 26th, 2014

March 26, 2014 minutes were approved.

New Business

a. Merwin Meadows LID Implementation Project Update

Ingersoll reported that the required documentation including scope and workplan for the grant award had been submitted on April 11th. A meeting was held with NRWA representatives, NRWI coordinator, and Wilton Town officials including Pat Sesto, Tom Thurkettle, and Steven Peirce, to discuss the project and changes needed to the scope. Since the project was submitted two years ago, the practicality of the LID measures to be implemented has changed. The impact on the project from the potential installation of a gas line through the community parking lot and plans for the Wilton Loop section of the Norwalk River Valley Trail project were discussed and the following changes were agreed upon.

The previously proposed grass swale to replace the current asphalt ditch will be replaced with an open grid pervious pathway between the river and the parking lot. The tree boxes will be eliminated and stream bank restoration will be done along the west side of the river between the proposed pathway and the water. The rain garden infiltration parking lot island will remain as originally proposed. Further detail regarding length and width of pathway with regards to cost and feasibility is to be discussed with the engineer at a later time. Pat Sesto will discuss with McCord Engineering, the possibility of reconfiguring the parking lot to allow for more space between the river and the lot. Timing with Yankee Gas construction schedule and disruption of seasonal park usage will need to be considered.

Chris Malik stated that the changes in scope are fine and that we will have 2 years to complete the project. He emphasized the importance of ensuring that the restored stream bank will be properly maintained by the town and added that excavation and planting of the rain garden can be done in different seasons if need be. Ingersoll also discussed options for placement of educational signage as preferred by the town.

In answer to a request on the status of the contract for the Silvermine Residential Rain Garden project, Malik will look into it.

b. NRWI Press Release on Water Quality

After discussion it was agreed that the first press release will include a summary of the current health of the watershed, about NRWI, and will announce the launch of the new website. Ingersoll will draft a release and circulate for review.

c. New NRWI Website

Discussions on the website included the following suggestions-

- Include info on storm water practices or/and link to other sources – NRWA, CT DEEP, EPA for stormwater management practices.
- Include list of NRWI accomplishments. Chris Malik has compiled a recent list that we could use.
- Include names and contact information for each municipality, Trout Unlimited and for general inquiries. The group agreed that we should contact Ridgefield First Selectman regarding a new appointed person to represent Ridgefield on the Initiative.

Ingersoll distributed and discussed the Harbor Watch reports, water quality data charts, and site map to be added to the website.

Member's Implementation Activities

a. Water Quality Report

Dick Harris reported on the winter data with most mainstem sites doing well with the exception of Ridgefield headwaters and WWT plant effluent. E. coli readings for the plant effluent (NR23) were near zero for the months of October and November 2013 indicating that the UV lights were on during those test dates. However, with readings over 6500 cfus/100mL in April 2014, the UV lights may not have been turned on a month earlier than required as Ridgefield has done in prior years. Dave Pattee said that the Redding WWT plant does not need to have all UV lights on to achieve disinfection during winter months and that the incremental cost is not substantial. Unlike the Redding plant where lights are housed inside, cleaning the lights at the Ridgefield plant is problematic during the winter months.

Harris discussed projects, funding, interns and other preparations for summer testing. Harbor Watch will be moving downstairs at Earthplace to a larger area with improved labs and the ability to support more interns.

Lower Norwalk stormdrain systems, particularly, Moody's Lane and School Street, continue to be a problem but progress is being made with the use of the City's camera to observe inside pipes.

Harbor Watch interns had completed a study this winter on Ridgefield test sites and will forward the report to Ingersoll. Rudy Marconi has been invited to attend the presentation of their findings.

Ingersoll informed Harris of a Silvermine resident that had contacted the NRWA regarding Silvermine River water quality concerns and will forward contact information.

Chris Malik said that he has had conversations with people in State stormwater permitting regarding the Ridgefield Storm Drain Study and the persistent bacteria issues in Steep Brook. Chris Stone, from the

Water Permitting and Enforcement Division, has agreed to initiate a conversation with Ridgefield Public Works regarding the Ridgefield Storm Drain Study and what can be done to locate the probable sources and Ridgefield's obligations under MS4 permitting. That department has been busy but Malik will continue to follow-up on this.

b. Other Member Implementation Activities

Chris Malik reported that the draft for the 2014 Integrated Water Quality Report and listing of impaired water bodies should be available in June. The Norwalk River looks good with the probability that additional segments may be de-listed.

New Canaan continues to have success oiling eggs to control the goose population, and has produced a video on the process, Kathleen Holland said. Norwalk has not been able to move forward with culling adult herds. A registration is all that is needed in order to be able to oil eggs but a round-up of adult geese requires additional permitting and a show of previous activities or efforts to control populations by other means.

Alexis Cherichetti talked briefly about the progress on the Flock Process Dam removal project. Efforts have been made to meet with and discuss concerns of local stakeholders while work continues with engineering and design and attainment of easements. The City of Norwalk will also be installing several tree filters using funding previously awarded to Southwest Conservation District of Connecticut.

Dave Pattee reported that the Zenon filter failure late last summer at the Redding WWT plant has been resolved and new higher quality units were installed. The plant is operating well and the quality of the effluent is notably improved over the previous system.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 in Wilton.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Ingersoll – Coordinator Norwalk River Watershed Initiative