



GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

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SAND LAKE • TALLMADGE TOWNSHIP • WALKER • WAYLAND • WYOMING



Sustainability Committee
Monday, November 7, 2016
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. Attendees
 - i. Wendy Ogilvie
 - ii. Bonnie Broadwater
 - iii. Daniel Taber c/o C. Rivette
 - iv. Elaine Sterrett Iseley
 - v. Jamie Vaughan
 - vi. Dennis Cole, P.E.
 - vii. Rachell Nagorsen
 - viii. Russ Slater
 - ix. John Koches
 - x. Dan Schoonmaker
 - xi. Robert Pettit
 - xii. Audrey Tappenden
 - xiii. Rachel Foerch

2. Purpose of Committee
 - a. Setting focus and goals for 2017
 - i. Natural Connections – Regional Green Infrastructure for Sustainability (habitat, social interaction, or economic resource)
 1. Open Space Hubs and Corridors
Open discussion on the open space hubs and corridors. It was suggested that a partnership with Kent County parks is established in the future for land conservancy plans.
 2. Water Trails
Wendy discussed the current natural connections map and the requirement for an updated version. It was suggested that existing and proposed green infrastructure be included. The map will create connections between recreation, economics, and environmental activity. Elaine mentioned the partnership between WMEAC and a water trail in Saugatuck.
Wendy stated that the Grand River water trail is a partnership between the Lower, Middle, and Upper Grand watersheds. Kent and Ionia counties experience limited access to the water trail.
Wendy informed the group about the letters that have been being sent to the governor regarding the water trail and stated that from this point forward all letters should be sent to LGROW as to lessen the number of responses needed from the governor.

It was stated that it would be helpful to have a dedicated individual staff person from the MDNR to coordinate the water trail. It will be beneficial to gain municipality and regional support going forward with this project.

WMEAC – outreach and has received funding from the DEQ in the past.

Rails to trails was mentioned as a template for implementing recreational trails along the water trail that will increase awareness. Adequate signage was also mentioned.

WMEAC will provide information in the next meeting regarding the leadership activity for other Lake Michigan water trails.

3. Events

Suggested events to introduce water trail include paddling trip, bus tour, etc.

Two types of events were suggested, the first aimed towards businesses and corporations regarding their impact on the watershed they are located within and ways they can improve them.

ii. Natural Connections – Public/Private Partnerships

1. Engagement of Municipalities and Businesses

Potential businesses for the Indian Mill Creek watershed include Meijer and Bissell. Events such as “lunch n’ learns” and “green drinks” or “clean water coffee” were suggested to bring partners together and help them understand their watershed. The second type of event was aimed towards green infrastructure professions, likely a morning event. This will create an environment where the audience is already prepared for the information and will be able to receive more detailed information. It was suggested that there be more financial information available at events to increase interest. Specific goals for each subwatershed should be created stating different activities/implementations that will help their specific watershed, a list of achievable goals. Businesses already implementing GI practices should be highlighted. Dan will have most contact information.

2. Events

We will coordinate ideas, specific topics, sponsors, etc. Dates mentioned were February 24, April 15, August 25, and December 1. Potential venues were discussed, Rachell suggested Rockford Construction for the first meeting. Ways to encourage participation and attendance to meetings were discussed. It was suggested that 2-3 strategic partners are chosen for each subwatershed. These companies could go on watershed tours and learn targeted information about their watershed and why they should care.

iii. Sustainable Agriculture

Ran out of time, will cover next meeting.

1. Farmland Preservation

2. Farming Practices

3. Events

3. Information

- a. Single Source Map – Integrate transportation, land use, and environmental concerns
Regis is currently undertaking a map of West Michigan. Zoning maps are being updated to create a consistent format to link all maps. Committee of local zoning admins who indicate where there is agricultural/rural/residential/urban/etc. zones and where there is farm land. Three components were stated, first a committee to develop codes, second an

updated map, which is currently being worked on, and third, an environmental aspect explaining why the water body may be impaired, if it is a trout stream, brownfield, etc.

4. Next Steps

5. Adjourn

- a. Next meeting scheduled February 6, 2017
@ GVMC 1:30-2:30