



Sustainability Committee
Monday, March 8, 2021
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

Minutes

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/9603491554>

1. Introductions
 - a. Dan had all attendees introduce themselves.
2. RCPP Project Updates
 - a. EQIP
 - i. Story Map/videos – Courtney explained that the Story Map is completed but more sites will be added as contracts are signed.
 - ii. Sign ups - Matt S. provided information about the 14 applications that have been submitted. Practices include several fields signed up for reduced tillage, which is a shift in acceptance of these practices. New signup also includes several forestry practices. For implementation, a culvert is being replaced on White Creek between mid and lower Lakes in Solon Township using Aquatic Organism Passage BMP.
 - iii. Virtual/school field days – Kent Conservation District is conducting a farm field day at H&R Farm in Kent City on June 22.
 - iv. Monitoring Sites and Results – Marty Holtgren presented an update of the monitoring that has been conducted in the Rogue River and Indian Mill Creek watersheds. Several practices have been completed along Ball Creek, so monitoring efforts have been concentrated in that area. The presentation is attached.
 - b. Role of Committee
 - i. The Committee members can help promote community outreach, host field days, and engage in farm-based education collaboration.
 - ii. Committee members are already providing match for time as part of the RCPP project, which is much appreciated.
3. Water Trail
 - a. Funding updates - Wendy
 - i. The Frey Foundation & Meijer are supporting this effort. The National Park Service is also providing Technical Assistance to start in April, a new regional staff member was just hired.
 - b. Review draft outline – Wendy shared the draft outline of the Water Trail Development Plan. A copy is attached to these minutes. The plan is modeled after those of the Upper and Middle Grand River Water Trail Plans that have been completed.

- c. Public Comments – Wendy asked Committee members about efforts that have worked in the past before and during the pandemic to gain public input on plans. The Middle Grand used partnerships with the Parks & Greenways Commissions and local Paddle Clubs. The City of GR has been working with Friends of Grand Rapids Parks to help with bringing diverse audiences to the table. We need to also reach non-paddlers to see what would entice them to become paddlers. New launch at Riverside could be an opportunity to reach people. We also need to think about ways to engage folks from Ionia County.
 - d. Role of Committee
 - i. Review plan and provide input, offer Community Recreational Plans for review and inclusion of Water Trail in addition to their land trails. LGROW’s application for State designation will be awarded extra points if the Water Trail is included in community recreation and regional plans.
 - ii. Nurya Parish, Plainsong Farm, stated that she has one connection in Ionia through a pastor with whom she could connect us. She also suggested reaching out to the Community Food Club to make connections with under resourced folks in Grand Rapids. <https://communityfoodclubgr.org/>
 - iii. Identify locations for additional access points.
 - iv. Help secure resolutions of support from riverfront communities.
4. Watershed Resilience Plan - Wendy
- a. Wege Foundation & River Network support
 - i. Indian Mill Creek and Coldbrook Creek Planning Teams are meeting in March to guide direction of community meetings to hear from neighbors about impacts from climate change they are experiencing.
 - ii. Community meetings will be held in April – July, with the goal to have a draft of the plan done by the end of September.
 - b. Goals of project
 - i. Wendy explained the goal of the project is to create Action plans for each of the subwatersheds in the Lower Grand River Watershed to address impacts of climate change and be able to be more resilience and healthy.
 - c. Community-Led Research (CLR) Tools – LGROW is partnering with River Network to develop process using CLR to identify issues. Methods include person-to-person surveys, community mapping, and crowdsourcing.
 - d. LGROW will work in coordination with other municipal and government Resilience Plans, including Emergency Management Plans and Master Plans.
 - e. Role of Committee
 - i. Serve on Planning Team, attend workshops, participate virtually – Wendy mentioned all these opportunities to be involved and providing feedback to the methods that will be proposed.
5. 2021 meeting schedule - @ GVMC 1:30 – 2:30 PM
- i. May 10
 - ii. July 12
 - iii. Sept 13
 - iv. Nov 8