

**MYSTIC RIVER PRE-SUMMIT MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2008**

ATTENDEES:

Name	Organization
Mary Beth Dechant	MyRWA
Cyndi Veit	EPA
Eloise Lawrence	CLF
Todd Borci	EPA
Peter Weiskel	USGS
Roger Frymire	
Tom Faber	EPA
Bill Hinkley	MA EEA
John Clarkeson	MA EEA
Stacey Chacker	NOAH / CCAG
Roseann Bongiovanni	Chelsea Green Space
Daniel Driscoll	MA DCR
Kevin Brander	MA DEP
Jenny Birnbaum	MA DEP
Cindy Delpapa	MA Riverways
Nancy Hammett	
Rusty Russell	Tufts University
Minka vanBeuzekom	MyRWA
Ivey St. John	CWC / EMWA
Todd Callaghan	MA CZM
Bill Walsh-Rogalski	EPA
Patrick Johnston	MyRWA
Rob Breault	USGS
Lynne Hamjian	EPA
Kristi Rea	EPA
Kwabena Kyei-Aboagye	EPA
Caitlyn Hunt	EPA

SUMMARY OF NOTES:

EPA goals and Focus – Focus on water quality, including uses, land adjacent to water, and water activities. To bring all interested parties “up to speed” on activities and projects ongoing in the watershed and to not duplicate efforts thru effective coordination.

EPA initiative will focus on the river as a whole and will encompass the entire watershed. Will look into particular topical areas such as water quality, CSOs, and SSOs.

What activities are groups currently involved in?

Todd Callaghan – MA Coastal Zone Management

Ivey St. John – Eastern Mystic Watershed Alliance

Working in North End of Charlestown Shipyard

Has been able to portray the lower Mystic River as a commuter-way and looking into getting commuter boats on to the river

Nancy Hammett – herself

Interested in flood mapping and flood control thru working with Army Corps and FEMA

Cindy Delpapa – Mass Riverways

Has “Stream Team” program that allows a team to pick a focus with

Riverways guidance to do river cleanups. Helps with MyRWA’s Find It and Fix It program.

Rusty Russell – Tufts University, Urban Environmental Policy and Planning

Has done study of urban rivers in multiple jurisdictions for restoration and repair. Has Best Practices for Urban Areas report on the website.

Jenny Birnbaum / Kevin Brander – MA DEP Northeast Regional Office

Focuses on bacteria source tracking in Belmont, Arlington, and Somerville
DEP has issued some enforcement orders.

Dan Driscoll – MA DCR

Has worked in the Alewife Master Plan which included a parking lot restoration in Cambridge, MA

MWRA Cambridge CSO separation is important to restoration of the river, but a community group has appealed – they don’t want the reservation used for stormwater

Working on projects to connect Alewife Brook to the Minuteman Bikeway and to the Mystic River.

Ongoing river bank restoration and invasive removal projects

Mentioned 1960 H&H Study

Comprehensive Mystic River Master Plan which focuses from Alewife Brook to Assembly Square area in Somerville. Planned to be completed by summer

2008 for \$250 K. Looked at water quality issues and focused on recreational use. Trying to CONNECT neighborhoods to the river.

In the Assembly Square area, looked into getting pedestrian footbridge over the Amelia Earhart thru an EPA SEP (Steve Vigiani), but a separate bridge is the better solution, but not possible at this time. Working closely with Assembly Sq. development – Ikea – to build a pedestrian underpass at Route 28 bridge.

Roseann Bongiovanni – Chelsea Green Space

Salt Marsh restoration at Mill Creek. Developing a 1-acre park on a brownfield site there. Putting in waterfront walkways and focusing on combating air and water pollution/polluters trying to come in along Chelsea Creek such as oil tank farms, salt piles, power plants. In this area, bigger focus on air quality.

Stacey Chacker – Neighborhood of Affordable Housing / Chelsea Creek

Working in the East Boston side of Chelsea Creek. Focusing on oil spills, and raw sewage problem with BWSC in E. Boston.

Underground landfill is a problem

Old Hess site a problem – old oil in the port area

Boston DPW yard – salt pile – within 200 yards of the river

Want to put in a walking path on old rail line, owned by MBTA with 99 year lease to Guilford RR.

Biggest problems: sewage, salt, oil.

John Clarkeson – MA EOE

Last year state gave money to support volunteer monitoring.

Worked on Watershed Action Plan with MyRWA and sediment study with USGS and Tufts University

4-5 years ago funded Chelsea Creek Action Plan

Bill Hinkley – MA Environmental Trust

Looking into local projects to fund thru license plate program. Perhaps should focus on connecting people back to the river.

Find it and Fix It Program with MyRWA

Tom Faber – US EPA New England Chelmsford Laboratory

Analytical support for bacteria sampling

Roger Frymire – MyRWA volunteer, bacteria source tracker

Suggests holding report card event at the summit to encourage folks to work together

Army Corps working on restoration of the Malden River soon

He's very interested in NPDES permits and thinks we can use permitting to our advantage

BWSC – phase 1 stormwater permit expiring and coming up on renewal

Phase 2 stormwater permits expiring also – can use the renewal as well.

Upper Mystic Lake sediments study – John Durant

Arlington, Belmont, Cambridge – tri-community flooding group interested in Alewife Brook. USGS put a gauge at Broadway Bridge and EOE funded a gauge at the Earhart dam.

Superfund sites near the Aberjona leading to arsenic in the sediments.

Nutrient loading and algal blooms. Microcystis in Spy Pond. Two months ago posted against human contact.

Upper/Lower Mystic Lake dam could be rebuilt to include a fish ladder. Herring can't get into the upper lake and the Aberjona to spawn. They get to Little Pond in Belmont. Could get the herring back into Spy Pond.

Peter Weiskel – USGS

USGS did sediment study of the entire Mystic River in cooperation with MA state and Tufts University

Put new gauges at the Earhart dam and at Alewife. Gauge also at Aberjona in Winchester, MA

Chris Waldron did an emerging contaminants study that investigated toxins at low levels and detection of sewage.

Rich Vogel at Tufts did a watershed modeling study in the Aberjona which looked at runoff modeling and NPS loading.

Blackstone – continuous water quality monitoring for nutrients and metals may be able to be applicable to the Mystic.

Todd Borci – US EPA New England

Enforcement in the Boston Harbor area, Revere SSO order, pre-enforcement information from Everett, Chelsea, Malden, Medford, Revere. (DEP handles Belmont, Arlington, and Somerville.)

Eloise Lawrence – CLF

Missing parties: BWSC and MWRA

Concerned about industrial stormwater runoff and EJ issues (Chelsea)

Mary Beth Dechant – Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA)

Mary Beth leads the monitoring program. Has 10 baseline sites that are monitored monthly, with 3 additional sites that EPA just added as baseline (making 13). Also has the "Hotspot" program there EPA can monitor monthly. MA CZM funded a micro lab at Tufts University where they can look at samples in wet weather.

Has seen bacteria in beach sand at Sandy Beach in the Upper Mystic Lake in Winchester, MA.

Working on oil and grease issues.

Nutrients, chlorophyll-A, lakes and ponds

Expanding monitoring to include optical brighteners, ammonia, etc.

MA Environmental Trust and MA EOE funded the shoreline monitoring program, which looks at non-point source pollution and outfall pipes.

MyRWA is interested in finding bacteria and sewage.

They rely heavily on volunteers and citizen-based stewardship, and want to make their data more accessible and understandable to the public. They've recently done a web update

Have good communication with the municipalities in the watershed.

Rob Breault – USGS

Did water depth studies from the lower lake to the Earhart dam.
 Has investigated upper watershed arsenic contamination.
 Designed new continuous sampling stations that give real-time data for wet and dry weather monitoring and nutrients and base metals.

Patrick Johnston – Everett, MA marine PD

Patrols the tributary between Chelsea and Everett on boat.
 Empact model attempts to get real-time data to predict bacteria based on rainfall, but can't keep it online because of funding shortages.
 Army Corps is doing Malden River Restoration Project that includes invasive removals, restoration, and spawning beds.
 Fish advisories have been updated to cover some of the Mystic waterbodies
 In the Island End River, a lot of contamination and sediment has been removed. There's a significant reduction in the sheen.
 Chapter 91 permit enforcement for tide gate in Everett that floods. There may be responsible parties.
 Interested in and Environmental Bond Bill to help communities with infrastructure costs.
 Interest in EJ as an "umbrella" topic in the watershed, should focus there.

Summary or Current and Future Activities/Topics

Current Activities	Future Topics
Bacteria tracking Water quality Environmental justice Collaboration with Tufts University - (Durant, Kirshen, Vogel) Amelia Earhart dam Flooding Stormwater NPS pollution Enforcement/permits MWRA BWSC Funding SEPs CSO/SSO Aberjona River Chelsea Creek Nutrients Metals Organics/inorganics	Effective coordination (not duplicating existing efforts) Water quality EJ Bacteria Flooding Advocacy Policy Sampling Technical/financial assistance Contaminated sediments Toxics in watershed Include commercial interests/developers

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN CREATING THE SUMMIT AND SETTING THE STAGE FOR POST-SUMMIT ACTIVITIES

Mystic is more complicated than the Charles/can't compare the two

- Port use
- EJ
- Poorer communities
- More stakeholder groups
- Intersection of lots of communities
- Education could go on indefinitely
- Charles has lots of open space
- Need realistic perspective – Mystic = pummeled watershed
- Land acquisition

More than one summit?

- This year on bacteria
- Next year on oil
- + next year on WQ
- Rotating sub-basins?
- Another Summit for “the public” after this one?

Coordination

- How will effort be coordinated?
- Which issues will be driver?
- Mutual reinforcement by groups
- Ongoing communication between groups
- Sustainable post-Summit group
- Watershed-wide but focused
- What will unify most of the watershed?

Phraseology

- Careful with terminology
- Avoid swimmable/fishable
- More comprehensive about ecosystem
- Each achievement will be success

SUMMIT

- How to start with base level of understanding?
 - Group/geography
 - WQ goal

- Who is target audience?
 - Who needs to be there?
 - Who will come?
 - What do they need to hear?

- What will follow-up be?
 - Goal of summit?
 - Long-term goal post-summit?

- Energize people
 - Long-term sustainable group
 - No duplication of efforts
 - Need real goal that affects them
 - How to start with base level of understanding?
 - Create sense of place
 - What is the highest value to public of the Mystic?

Funding

- Mystic needs to get targeted watershed grant
- Future SEPs
- Enforcement
- More comprehensive than just enforcement \$ - don't duplicate efforts

Environmental Justice Issues

- Umbrella for Summit?
- Under the WQ umbrella?

Role of EPA and report card

- EPA - technical assistance - increase efforts
- Report card - Will it provide measures of success or deficiencies?
 - 1 year goals? 5 year? 10 year?

Science Group

Planning studies to add to list?
Separate out studies?

Spreadsheets

*create prior to Summit so we can work together on it

- Land use
 - Flooding
 - Development
- Grant funding

Technical Support Group – discuss at Summit

Is a working group useful to work together after summit?

- If coordinating efforts (not duplicating) then yes

Other Summit-Related Activities

- Second meeting for public?
- Awakening of contact to Mystic
- Guided tours
 - Land
 - Walking
 - Bus – East Boston/Chelsea/Revere
 - Boat tours – water taxi, 30 ppl/boat, 3-4 hrs, \$300-400

Who is missing that should be here?

MWRA

MAPC – Joan Blaustein, lower Mystic effort

NOAA – Eric Hutchens

Commercial partners

BWSC

Send out 1/09/08 meeting summary in advance of Summit – have more topical areas – do not expect people to be 100% prepped on this info before Summit

- Recap this info briefly at Summit
- What will initiative mean to everyone?
- Have good environmental historians
- Link Mystic past-present
- Not all doom and gloom – positive examples