

**TOMPKINS COUNTY
WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL**

Monday, July 16, 2012 4:15pm
Ithaca Tompkins Transit Center, 737 Willow Avenue, Ithaca

AGENDA

Please turn off your cell phones during the meeting.

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|------|---|--------|
| I. | Agenda Review and Approval of Minutes | 4:15pm |
| II. | Finger Lakes Museum -- <i>John Adamski</i> | 4:20 |
| III. | Fall Recruiting Round Planning – <i>Nominating/Membership Committee</i> | 5:00 |
| IV. | Committee Reports | 5:10 |
| | Streams | |
| | Water Quality Strategy Update | |
| | Wetlands | |
| | Aquifer | |
| | Education | |
| | Executive | |
| | Grants | |
| V. | Hydrilla Task Force Update | 5:25 |
| VI. | Chair & Staff Reports | 5:30 |
| V. | Announcements/Other Business | 5:35 |
| VI. | Adjournment | 5:45pm |

Upcoming Meeting Dates: September 24, October 15

**Members: If you cannot attend a meeting,
please contact the Planning Department:
274-5560 or
kwilsea@tompkins-co.org**

**TOMPKINS COUNTY
WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL**

**June 18, 2012
Draft Meeting Minutes**

Voting Members Present (12): Sharon Anderson, Liz Cameron, Bill George, Barry Goodrich, Roxy Johnston, Darby Kiley, Lynn Leopold, Frank Proto, Elaine Quaroni, Marjory Rinaldo-Lee, Craig Schutt, Mary Shelley

Voting Members Excused (6): Ed Bugliosi, Joan Jurkowich, Dan Karig, Rick Manning, Gregg McConnell, Jim McGarry

Voting Members Absent (1): Fay Benson

Non-Voting Members Present (3): John Andersson, Scott Carpenter, Todd Miller

Guest Present: Jon Negley, Amy Risen

Staff Present: Kathy Wilsea

Chairman Frank Proto called the meeting to order at 4:22 PM

Agenda Review and Approval of Minutes – A draft response to a Guest Viewpoint article in the Ithaca Journal will be discussed under Executive Committee. Guest Amy Risen asked to talk about the proposed waste transfer station in Newfield, and that was added under Other Business. Draft minutes were moved by Darby Kiley, seconded by Lynn Leopold and amended in line 95 to read “DEC is not discussing State money, which is separate from the large \$800,000 grant that is funded **but not released.**” Final minutes are available on the WRC website: <http://www.tompkins-co.org/planning/committees/WRC/WRCagendaminutes.htm>. New associate member Scott Carpenter was introduced. He is a State Emergency Management Office employee, involved with storm damage assessment and reimbursement.

2011 Storm Damage Report – Jon Nagley was present from Soil & Water Conservation District. Regionally, there was a lot of damage from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. T S Lee dumped over 6” of rain from September 6-8, 2011, with most of the Tompkins County damage in the towns of Caroline, Danby and Newfield. FEMA declared a state of emergency after T S Lee, which released some funding. Jon shared a slide show of debris and erosion. It is difficult to get FEMA money unless the damage is a public assistance issue, such as road or gas line. FEMA only allows restoration to the original condition. But Jon pointed out these sites failed because they were inadequate before the storm, so applications were also done for mitigation funds for some of the sites.

Goals are to direct flow velocities away from vulnerable areas by using structures, and achieving flexible and strong rooted vegetation along the streambanks. Many agencies – Tompkins County Planning, SWCD, municipal highway departments, USGS, NRCR, US Fish & Wildlife Service, municipalities, Community Science Institute, Trout Unlimited, Finger Lakes Land Trust, Cornell, Ithaca College and State Parks -- work on varied and splintered projects.

Jon’s take home message is that streams need to be treated as infrastructure. Streams interact with other infrastructure and we need to allow space for streams. Pre-disaster maintenance is a lot cheaper than post-

45 disaster fixes. And putting back what failed without accounting for stream dynamics is a waste of time and
46 money.

47
48 In the discussion period, Jon said Upper Susquehanna Coalition wants to create a “Stream Team” monitoring
49 group. SWCDs are members of USC. SWCDs in Delaware and Green counties get some funding from the
50 New York City watershed, which has money because it is a drinking water provider. Kathy Wilsea
51 commented that the east side of the scoured area by South Street Extension was in the same condition as the
52 west side, which is eroding very near the road now and was part of Jon’s slide show. Frank said this area is
53 very close to bedrock, and suggested looking over old studies of the area and obtaining bedrock measures
54 from USGS. Todd Miller acknowledged areas downstream on Taughannock Creek are down to bedrock.
55 Frank said we need to return to comprehensive work with the Flood Hazard Mitigation Program and stop
56 hopping all over the place. He suggested Streams or Executive committees look at the overall mitigation
57 plan. Craig Schutt said Jon has put together a proposal of what a “Stream Team” might look like in
58 Tompkins County.

59
60 **Hydrilla Task Force** – Roxy Johnston reported the most recent good news is GLRI funds of \$380,000 have
61 been secured and the contract is signed. This will provide for herbicide treatment and follow-up testing.
62 Unfortunately, it was learned at a meeting with DEC that the State budget of \$375,00 is for invasives
63 statewide. DEC doesn’t have the power to dispense those funds without direction, so is looking to the State
64 Legislature for specifics. DEC anticipates approval of that money for Hydrilla in Cayuga Inlet, and is
65 moving forward with planning phase, but Roxy doesn’t expect to be able to access those funds until the end
66 of the year. But it would be used to reimburse costs incurred since April 1, 2012, so monitoring costs would
67 be covered. If Hydrilla is found in Cayuga Lake, we will need front money for divers and weed barriers.

68
69 Endothall herbicide application is anticipated for 6/26, with the contractor asking for a 2-day window.
70 Official public notice goes out 1-2 days before. Tomorrow night there will be a public meeting on Hydrilla
71 at Ithaca Youth Bureau, sponsored by CCE, Hydrilla Task Force and WRC. Frank asked what can be done
72 to help release DEC funding. Roxy said staff members for Nozolio, Seward and O’Mara are working with
73 the DEC budget staff. Of the \$800,000 amount that has been tossed about, \$775,000 would come from that
74 direction and \$25,000 from Aid to Localities (which is more easily accessed). SWCD can accept the
75 \$25,000 and Roxy will let them know if there are any barriers. Funding specifics:

- 76 \$ 380,000GLRI federal money through FLOWPA to SWCD (contract signed)
- 77 775,000NYS Conservation Fund
- 78 25,000 Aid to Localities
- 79 60,000 State Parks
- 80 50,000 Office of Invasive Species if needed for divers, benthic mats
- 81 29,000 for plant monitoring, probably contracted directly to Bob Johnson

82
83 The Floating Classroom is in the worst situation, as they have been unable to secure funds for monitoring
84 trips. Cayuga Lake Watershed Network is in the second worst situation, as they do not have adequate
85 funding for identification workshops throughout the watershed. Bob Johnson is operating on a shoestring,
86 too. Roxy expects we will need to respond to RFPs to obtain 2013 funding. She pointed out there are 1,900
87 monitoring points, and the Floating Classroom costs are \$850/trip plus lab costs. Permit applications for
88 Fluridone are at DEC and notification letters to property owners have been mailed. That second-phase
89 herbicide is planned for mid-July. Frank said the local law on aquatic invasive species is on the County
90 Legislature agenda for tomorrow (6/19) and Sharon Anderson asked to be informed if it passes, as she would
91 like to announce it at the public meeting.

92
93 **Committees – Grants:** Craig said work plans passed DEC so FLOWPA funds will be released. **Streams:**
94 Roxy announced the Cayuga Inlet gage got moved to the fish ladder, and extended thanks to USGS and
95 DEC. **Water Quality Strategy:** Bill George said they are working on scheduling a meeting. **Wetlands:**
96 Darby Kiley spoke at TCCOG to a pretty full house. **Aquifer:** Todd Miller said they met and continued

97 work on their fact sheet. He will do a presentation at the Town of Lansing to try to interest them in pursuing
98 an aquifer study. Executive: Frank said the Ithaca Journal published a Guest Viewpoint letter that stated the
99 writer’s opinion that herbicides should not be used on Hydrilla and included some inaccuracies. A response
100 has been drafted by Roxy and the Task Force, then circulated to the Executive Committee. Frank will be
101 wrapping that up so it can be sent to the Ithaca Journal.
102

103 **Chair and Staff Reports** – Frank announced the Planning Department has a public meeting tonight in Varna
104 on conservation initiatives. Kathy Wilsea said it is at 6:30, and meetings on the same topics will take place
105 Tuesday at PRI and Wednesday at the public library. Frank pointed out there was an article in today’s Ithaca
106 Journal on the low risk of earthquakes from gas drilling. The August WRC meeting was canceled by
107 consensus. The September WRC meeting was moved from 9/17 to 9/24 by consensus. Notes on the topic of
108 regional efforts to monitor streams, from Tom Evans of Southern Tier East Regional Planning &
109 Development Board, were distributed. Kathy said members were welcome to extra copies of documents that
110 were on the table.
111

112 **Announcements/Other Business** – Bill said Discover Magazine’s *Top 100 stories of 2011* listed gas
113 hydrofracturing as #21. Guest Amy Risen said she was present today to open conversation about the
114 proposed trash transfer station in Newfield. This project is proposed in her neighborhood, and the business
115 owner expects about 20 trucks per day to dump trash, which will be sorted and redirected. This is a quiet
116 community, many residents farm for their own food, and is near Robert Treman State Park. The neighbors
117 feel it is an awful idea for all, and also have concerns about their drinking water that comes from shallow
118 wells. They have asked the business owner’s engineers if they are familiar with this type of business, and the
119 response is “not really”. So the neighbors are looking into what they can do. They seek support, and have
120 been verbal in opposing the DEC permit that this business would need. Because this type of business needs a
121 water capture system, a cement tank would be used and that raises quantity issues, too. It is unknown at this
122 point if the station would also process solids from gas drilling. Amy said DEC is not sure if an
123 Environmental Impact Statement will be needed. John Andersson pointed out that decision will be made
124 when DEC reviews the Environmental Assessment Form. Amy said this facility is already being
125 constructed, as the owner doesn’t think he will be stopped. Roxy suggested CSI for baseline water testing.
126 Todd suggested WRC members would help review the EAF/EIS. Amy can be reached at
127 amyjoyrise@gmail.com
128

129 **Adjournment** -- The meeting was adjourned at 6:04 PM.
130

131 Respectfully submitted,
132 Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
133 Tompkins County Planning Department.
134

135 Adopted by the Council on _____, 2012.