

Schoharie Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting March 30, 2010, Windham Country Club

Voting members present: Janet Orlando (Gilboa), Dennis Lucas (Town of Hunter), Rebecca Wilburn (Chairwoman, Gilboa Alt.), Steve Walker (Town of Windham), John Valenti (Educator), Walt Keller (Fisheries Biologist), Eric Dahlberg (Conesville).

Agency support: Dan Zielinski (NYSDEC), Jeff Flack, Abbe Martin, Carrie Miles, Michelle Yost (GCSWCD & WAP), David Burns (NYCDEP), Joan Kutcher (Mountain Top Arboretum applicant)

1. Adopt Meeting Minutes

Chairwoman Wilburn opened the meeting with a motion to adopt previous meeting minutes. A motion was made by Steve Walker, seconded by Janet Orlando with all present in favor.

2. August 2009 Project Resolutions

Per GCSWCD contract standards, resolutions are needed when a project is approved. The Committee was asked to pass resolutions on projects approved under the first round and reviewed at the September 2009 meeting (see Resolutions Page). A motion was made by Dennis Lucas to accept the Resolutions Page outlining the projects approved at the September 23, 2009 meeting, seconded by Steve Walker with all present in favor.

3. Funding Proposals for Round 2 (refer to summary “Round 2 Projects with recommendations”)

Ten SWAC applications were submitted for the February 1, 2010 round. Nine projects were presented to the Committee for review and voting. One application (Dolan's Lake Footbridge Abutment restoration) was withdrawn by the Village Council because of design requirements associated with the abutment replacements.

As suggested by the Committee, voting will be done after each proposal in the respective category has been presented. Because the Committee did not have a quorum (minimum 8), a follow-up email will be sent to the entire Committee requesting all vote on the resolutions with staff recommendations with Chairwoman Wilburn handling the process. *Post Note: The minimum 8 votes were received authorizing funding for the projects with resolutions below.*

Landowner Streamside Assistance – Jeff F. presented the two LSA applications that were received and the rationale for not recommending them for funding.

➤ Brabazon Property Stream Restoration, Town of Windham. Amount requested: \$150,000

Proposal is not consistent with SMP or stream stewardship principles. Owner wants to dredge wetlands in stream channel, excavate property which would do more harm than good addressing eroding stream bank. The site ranked low using the scoring sheet (20/100), and from a water quality perspective there is limited benefit. Dan questioned whether removing the braided channel would result in a benefit, which it would not in this situation. The stream reach for the most part is stable, it has not moved laterally much over the years, and a small wetland has formed in between the braided channel. The sediment build up causing the braiding is a result of the stream's inability to transport the sediment material. Straightening the channel would affect the wetlands, potential habitat, and perhaps lead to more instability in the long run.

➤ Cascio Floodplain Restoration, Village of Hunter. Amount requested: \$75,000

Whereas “floodplain restoration” is consistent with the stream stewardship principles (removing obstruction from floodplain), the actual water quality benefit of this particular project is very minimal compared to the cost of the project, estimated around \$100,000. Moving the existing shed

~ 10' was not going to add a significant amount of restored floodplain. Therefore from a cost/benefit analysis, the project was not recommended. It ranked 47/100 on the scoring sheet.

No motions were offered to approve either proposal.

Education and Outreach – Michelle presented these proposals

- Mountain Top Arboretum Woodland Walk Outdoor Classroom, Tannersville. Amount requested: \$6,810

Joan Kutcher, Executive Director, was present to discuss the Mountain Top Arboretum's plans to create an accessible outdoor classroom that would accommodate approx. 40 people for outdoor educational programming on a range of watershed topics. Funding would cover designer costs to develop plans for the creation of the classroom including site and leveling work, seating arrangements, and plant species to highlight. The area proposed is well suited for hands-on experiential learning of headwater streams, wetlands and plant species associated with both. Questions: Will outdoor classroom site be near the Interpretive Kiosk approved during the last round? Joan responded yes, it will be within a few hundred yards.

- Rain Barrel Workshop, Watershed-wide. Amount requested: \$1,884

Greene County Cornell Cooperative Extension is proposing to lead a one day educational workshop for 15 families to build rain barrels as part of the Schoharie Watershed Week program (raising awareness about water quality stewardship). The Workshop will provide materials, instruction for approx. 15 families, the goal which is to introduce participants to methods of stormwater control, non-point source pollution prevention and conservation of water resources in a residential setting.

- Schoharie Watershed Week activities and events, Watershed-wide. Amount requested: \$5,100

A week of events, activities, and workshops for people of all ages to learn about the Schoharie Watershed, its resources, and programs available for water quality protection. Under the direction of the SWAC E/O subcommittee, costs for the inaugural SWW are associated with watershed film series, fly fishing demos, downspout disconnect program, adopt a stream/Clean up, agency workshops (CWC, WAC), watershed scavenger Hunt, kayak and canoe demos.

Questions: The downspout disconnect program is the commercial version of the residential Rain Barrel Workshop. Interested businesses will be assessed for rain barrels at their businesses.

- Manor Kill Information Kiosk, Conesville. Amount requested: \$1,833

The Town will be asked to use a similar kiosk format that is being designed for sites in Greene County, in order to build a theme around self-guided tours. The kiosk is modeled after the one at the Mountain Top Arboretum, only smaller.

The following resolutions and preliminary votes were registered for each:

1. **Resolution # 1 of 2010, Mountain Top Arboretum Woodland Walk Outdoor Classroom** – a motion to approve this funding request was made by Dennis Lucas, seconded by Steve Walker, with all present in favor.
2. **Resolution # 2 of 2010, Rain Barrel Workshop** – a motion was made to approve this funding request by Walt Keller, seconded by Janet Orlando with all present in favor.
3. **Resolution # 3 of 2010, Schoharie Watershed Week activities and events** – a motion was made by Steve Walker to approve funding requested, seconded by Walt Keller, with all present in favor.

4. **Resolution # 4 of 2010, Manor Kill Information Kiosk** – a motion was made by Dennis Lucas to approve funding requested, seconded by Steve Walker, will all present in favor.

Recreation and Habitat Improvements – Carrie Miles presented the one proposal

- Windham Path multi-use, non-motorized trail on Batavia. Amount requested: \$15,000

Question: Dan inquired how much stream frontage the Path would open up. Carrie and Jeff responded between 1,000 – 1,500 feet.

Resolution # 5 of 2010, Windham Path – Walt Keller made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Dennis Lucas, with all present in favor.

Planning and Assessment – Abbe and Michelle presented the two proposals

- Town of Hunter Land Use Regulation Review & Development Guidelines. Amount requested: \$35,000

Question: Walt questioned why these two projects were not done together as they seem similar in outcome. Michelle responded the Town of Hunter's project is much more detailed than the Mountaintop Better Site Design Workshop (MBSDW) and includes going through the SEQRA process for recommended code changes. Because the MBSDW covers many more municipalities, it is not designed to go into the level of detail that Hunter's will. The two projects will, however, coordinate where relevant for consistency.

- Mountaintop Better Site Design Plan Workshops, Watershed-wide. Amount requested: \$12,000

This request is contingent on a Local Technical Assistance Program grant through the CWC, which was approved.

If both of these requests are approved, this category will be depleted and \$14,753 will need to come from the General Project category as there is not enough to cover both proposals.

The following resolutions and preliminary votes were registered for each:

1. **Resolution # 6 of 2010, Hunter Land Use Regulation Review & Development Guidelines** – Walt Keller made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Steve Walker, with all present in favor.
2. **Resolution # 7 of 2010, Mountaintop Better Site Design Plan Workshops** – Dennis Lucas made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Walt Keller, with all present in favor.

4. 2010 appointments – process, letters sent to municipalities

Michelle announced that SWAC member appointment letters were sent to municipalities in the basin. The first two year term is up in May and the municipalities will need to reappoint current members, or appoint new members.

5. 2010 calendar of activities and events (handout)

There will not be a meeting in April. The next meeting for the SWAC may occur in May depending on how much work is needed to complete the Action Plan update.

6. First round progress on projects (sample logos)

Logos – comments were received via email and at the meeting and will be passed on to the designer, such as including more human element in # 1. Contract language has been finalized, initial projects are at varying stages of development. A tour of approved projects completed or near-completion will be scheduled sometime over the summer for the SWAC.