

**Whippany River Watershed Action Committee  
Whippany River Watershed Management Group  
Action Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, June 6, 2018  
Morris County Library**

**Call to Order.** The Action Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

**Attendees.**

Jim Baranski – Chair – Hanover Township  
Len Cipkins – Vice Chair – Parsippany  
Sergio Capozzi – Facilitator  
Jenifer O’Neill - Administrator  
John Hoover, Madison  
Jen Holzberger, Mendham Township  
Joe Attamonte – Burnham Park Association, Morris Township  
Mary Ellen Murray – Morris Township  
Dennis Dittrich – Hanover Township  
Don Ginsburg, Morristown  
Rich Hoffman, Parsippany  
Phil Castles – Nutley (NJIT Graduate Student)

**Management Group - Open Comment Period**

- Joe Attamonte from Burnham Park Association
  - Summarized goals of project to reduce fecal coliform and goose management
  - Plants put in at cost of \$100K to NJDEP & Pat Rector 2004
  - Association acts as steward
  - Some residents unhappy about plantings growing too high near their property– 2009 – homeowners along Mendham Avenue decided growth too high and came in and removed plants and installed pipes to drain water from their property.
  - Joe spoke before town council issued cease and desist letter and residents stopped removing plants
  - Present – formed group Citizens for Common Sense
  - Sent around slick newsletter demanding meeting with Mayor
  - Had meeting 3-4 weeks ago which Joe attended – 100 people in attendance along with township officials who have no say in it
  - A lot of yelling and screaming at mayor ensued about it being unsafe
  - Mayor handled questions well and said that on 5/28 after service he would meet residents in the park.
  - He met them, Lyn Seabrook, President, Joe, residents and walked the riparian buffer pointing out concerns about various growth.
  - Morris Township had attorney. Morristown did not. Tried to shut them down.
  - Want riparian buffer removed.
  - It is part of the original deeding of the land that the buffer has to be maintained per the DEP.

- Official signs from DEP are missing that explain what the riparian buffer is for and what it does.
- Current concern, how do we educate the residents about the purpose of the project and convince them that this is to their benefit and we are not working against them? They think we are causing problems for them.
- Appeal to WRWAC to join a meeting and do a walk around with Mayor, BPA members.
- We need to convince them that we are not working against them.
- Do not need decision now but want to know if WRWAC can help.
- They want the riparian buffer removed. Not going to happen.
- Morristown entered into an agreement and there are regulations
- Don Ginsburg – Morristown Environmental Commission
  - We met last night. I had not read Sergio's letter completely.
  - Maureen Denman chairperson is aware of situation and history.
  - Understanding that one of the conditions of the grant to the park was that the agreement was in order to keep it in the condition that it was and there are some actions that could be taken.
  - At 5/28 meeting Morris Township had attorney and tried to dictate to the town of Morristown what their responsibilities were – Mayor shut it down.
  - They have obligation to maintain buffer – DEP
  - Town is supporting the park.
  - Last night discussed initiative on July 1<sup>st</sup> to clean up the park – garbage, etc.
- Joe – Complaints that illegal activities taking place in the upper pond – not the one that was installed.
  - Signage is missing and must be replaced.
- John Hoover, Madison – asks
  - Is there validity to the complaints?
  - Can they be taken care of?
  - Is there a regular maintenance plan for the property?
  - Who takes care of it?
  - Does it get patrolled by the police department regularly?
- Joe –
  - Walkarounds are done every year with the DPW supervisor re lawn mowing, trimming plants.
  - DPW needs education. Must connect with town administrator (Jillian Barrett).
  - Invasives could be removed (Russian Olive)
  - Must coordinate cleanups with the town, administrator with education component for residents and the DPW
  - There are portions that are 50-60 feet wide.
- Don Ginsburg – waiting to hear back from Maureen
  - She will reach out to Jillian as her role in supervising DPW and what their role is
  - Next meeting will be in July – Will publish to all.
- Jim Baranski
  - Reiterates that we have so many projects that need to be listed with schedules for cleanups, maintenance. Will add to Exec Committee Agenda on June 20.

- Len Cipkins
  - Reiterates that we need to organize with towns better for staffing and scheduling upkeep. Often issue of shortage of manpower. We use local environmental clubs, scouting groups, etc. Must be coordinated.

### **Action Committee – Open Comment Period.**

- Approval of minutes from May Meeting

### **Featured Speaker – Jim Baranski, Chair WRWAC**

- About the WRWAC – Power Point explaining mission of the organization
- For benefit of many new members of Action Committee
- Explains that Action Committee has Speakers Bureau that is available to go out to present at local events or meetings to educate about the WRWAC
- Screening of A River’s Journey – documentary film produced by WRWAC

### **Treasurer’s Report.**

- \$1200 received from Morristown

### **Facilitator’s Report.**

- Summary of Executive Committee meeting minutes
  - Looking at accountants to handle taxes for the organization
  - Update on cleanups, etc.
- Upcoming Events
  - Projects
    - Hanover Library Rain Garden installation (Watershed Institute grant, Morris County grant, NJ Tree Foundation, Rutgers)
    - Len on Parsippany Town Hall rain garden cleanup –
      - Four raingardens installed 10 years ago with grants from Princeton Hydro and Rutgers
      - Very overgrown needed maintenance
      - Organized clean up with local scout group and other volunteers and rain garden expert (Ingrid Witty) & landscaper (Fox Hollow)
      - Fox Hollow donated two tons of river rock
      - Posted photos of before and after
      - Will schedule another cleanup for June 19
      - Will weed and clean up now and do plantings in fall
      - Will document, identify and label all plants so clear how to care for annually
      - Will be sending to mayor
      - Local scout troop adopting gardens for maintenance
- Phil Castles – NJIT Environmental Science graduate student – introduced by Sergio
  - Interested in water quality
  - Would like to volunteer with WRWAC
  - Sergio explains that other watersheds train stream teams to go out and monitor water quality
  - Offer as service to communities in the Watershed

- Stream assessment – state has seminars and Great Swamp has training
- Do education events at Passaic Watershed and teach students to do stream assessment
- Is common that watershed associations get citizens involved in doing stream water testing
- Reminder: We looking for additional projects to match projects with potential funding sources
- Please bring to our attention

#### Upcoming Events.

- Gala Fundraiser set for October 17<sup>th</sup> at Birchwood Manor
  - Len reminded everyone that he has updated all the fundraising materials (letters and forms) for all to use in fundraising effort.
  - Spread the word about the event
  - Need sponsors
  - Need contributors to Tricky Tray & Silent Auction

#### Committee Reports.

##### Executive Committee Report.

- Jenifer O’Neill received check from Morristown and will deposit.
- Working on the October Gala – fundraising efforts by all encouraged;
- Looking for sponsors and auction items for silent auction

#### Program

- John Hoover (Madison) inquired as to what the grants we receive are used for.
- Jim Baranski stated
  - Burnham Park – Riverbank stabilization – discourage geese
  - Bayer Grant to produce “A River’s Journey” documentary
  - PSTA – Detention Basin
  - Rain Gardens
- Rich Hoffman (Parsippany) suggested that video of our actions on the FB page and website would be more effective tool to illustrate what our organization is doing.

#### Outreach and Education.

- Sergio
  - Hanover Days and Parsippany Day
  - Let us know about township events to get on schedule
  - Watershed Jeopardy – has been located – Alan Johnson has and is ready to be picked up
- John Hoover (Madison)
  - Bottle Hill Day October 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Contact is Lisa Ellis – [ellisl@rosenet.org](mailto:ellisl@rosenet.org)

**Membership.**

- Need Chairperson
- Jim asked in anyone interested on AC Committee
- Goal is to increase membership

**New Business.**

- Don Ginsburg suggest tour of old paper factory in Whippany
- Question about how the film to be used
- Did research into using at film festivals; can screen on request; possibly at local schools; provide copies to local libraries for lend.

**Next Committee Meetings.**

- June 20<sup>th</sup> – Executive Board Meeting – Hanover Township Town Hall 6:00pm
- No Action Committee Meetings in July or August

**Adjournment.**

The Whippany River Watershed Action Committee meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenifer O'Neill, WRWAC Administrator  
June 20, 2018 (drafted)