

**Rouge River Advisory Council (RRAC)
Draft Meeting Summary
October 5, 2017**

Attendees:

Attended?	Name	Attended?	Names
Y	Alice Bailey, Alliance of Rouge Communities (ARC)	Y	Marie McCormick, Friends of the Rouge
N	Dan Ballnik, Chair	N	Karen Mondora, Farmington Hills
Y	John Beisel, Farmington Hills	Y	Noel Mullett, Wayne County Dept. of Public Services
Y	Marty Boote, ARC	Y	Rob Myllyoja, Stantec
N	Cory Borton, Hubbell Roth and Clark, Inc.	Y	Chris O'Meara, ARC
N	Jeff Braunscheidel, MDNR	Y	John O'Meara, ARC
Y	Bill Craig, Vice Chair and SPAC representative	Y	Sally Petrella, Friends of the Rouge
N	Annette DeMaria, ARC	N	Heather Rice, Washtenaw County Water Resource Commissioners Office
N	Rose Ellison, EPA Representative	N	Devan Rosturfer, SEMCOG
N	Jacy Garrison, Oakland County Water Resources Commissioners Office	Y	Brandy Siedlaczek, Southfield
N	Orin Gelderloos, U-M Dearborn	Y	Jennifer Tewkesbury, MDEQ Coordinator
N	Kevin Goodwin, MDEQ	Y	Dean Tuomari, Citizen
N	Barb Goryca, Dearborn citizen		

Introductions

Introductions were completed.

Meeting Summary

The meeting summary from May 1, 2017 was reviewed and approved with two edits by the Council.

Old Business

J. O'Meara reported that the letter supporting the ARC's collaborative efforts went out. Currently the Collaborative IDEP and PPP/PEP plans have been approved by the MDEQ. The TMDL is being negotiated.

SPAC Report

B. Craig reported that he attended the Michigan Statewide Public Advisory Council summer 2017 business meeting in Macomb on June 12-13, 2017. Jen Tewkesbury, Sally Petrella, Rob Myllyoja and Dan Ballnik also attended the meeting. Anne Vaara, resigned as the Clinton River SPAC representative. There was also an update on the PAC grants and the future GLRI funding. There were presentations on the Clinton River habitat projects with two site visits to the spillway and wetland restoration projects in St. Clair.

B. Craig reported that the fall meeting and legislative briefing is scheduled for October 10-11. ARC Staff have provided some project flyers for SPAC to distribute to State Representatives and Senators.

MDEQ Update

J. Tewkesbury reported that the ACOE has received \$1M for the concrete channel. Work will include a Phase I assessment, hydrologic modeling and sampling.

She gave an update on the Old Channel stating that they are still working on the permit as it is going through lots of review. They are also reviewing the utilities and access agreements. The public meeting is set for November 8 for local stakeholders. The project is expected to be \$23 Million.

J. Tewkesbury reviewed the status of the Main Channel which is on hold now. The MDEQ had \$1M but talks fell off as a non-federal sponsor is still necessary. Ford is hesitant as they provided funds for another site which cost much more than anticipated.

J. Tewkesbury said there are no BUI removals on the horizon. She did inform the group that the MDEQ is going to remove the DO TMDL for the Rouge River. The group asked that ARC Staff send the map showing the DO information that supported this.

EPA Update

J. Tewkesbury reported on behalf of Rose Ellison that the GLRI funding for FY18 is looking promising and that funding priorities are being discussed. In addition, the ARC has provided our next list of projects that are ready in case the EPA finds some unallocated funds. J. O'Meara added that as we work on detailing our project descriptions from our list good things continue to happen.

B. Craig stated that he participated in an interview funded by the Sea Grant on the Old Channel to gauge the public perception. J. Tewkesbury added that this was mostly regarding the fish and wildlife.

Existing Grants Update

2017 GLC PAC support Grant

J. O'Meara reported that the current 2017 PAC grant has started and will go through June 2018. The new 2017 grant will continue to draft more project descriptions and include more fish monitoring and the preparation of a public education piece regarding the fish survey results.

S. Petrella informed the council that they did fish monitoring at 19 sites on the Lower. S. Petrella noted that Jeff Braunscheidel expressed interest in more sites around the dam upstream so Curtis Lake was done and showed a good community but no minnows. She said they found a good variety of fish in Upper Long Lake including lots of minnows and the pug nose shiner, a new endangered species which has not been seen since 1931. The oxbow at The Henry Ford was monitored on both sides of the dam with 15 different fish found on the south side and not so many on the other side. This shows that connecting the oxbow will be good. S. Petrella said they will be sampling the similar number of sites, plan to fill in gaps and are taking any suggestions if you know of a specific site you would like monitored. She also said they will continue to work on the booklet that will map, document the results and show the different species found.

M. Boote reviewed the 5 project descriptions that were updated under the last PAC grant and include: 1) Fish Hatchery Park, 2) Lower Rouge River Habitat Restoration, 3) Riverview Park, 4) Seeley Creek and 5) Tamarack Creek. This included updating the contact information, detailing of work proposed, outcomes, benefits, outputs and refining the budgets. It was requested that these be added to the RRAC website. Chris O'Meara has added them and they can be found at: <http://www.allianceofrougecommunities.com/rracreports.html> . In the future as more descriptions are finalized they will be added to this section of the website.

The new grant will include updating the next priority project descriptions which may include some of the following: 1) Lola Valley Park Wetland, 2) Fordson Island and Upland Habitat, 3) Johnson Intercounty Drain Restoration, 4) Phoenix Lake Habitat Improvements and 5) Wilcox Lake Habitat Improvements.

B. Craig asked who the ARC is working with on the Wayne County Parks projects. J. O'Meara said they are working with Elizabeth Iszler and Alicia Bradford. B. Craig said Parks is working on a 5-year master plan and that he didn't see any focus on river restoration on their land holdings. There was some

discussion on the possibility that the master plan is being funded with Trust Fund dollars and habitat is outside of these funds. B. Craig is hopeful that they will expand this to a strategic and vision plan to include natural areas management (Green Infrastructure).

Wayne County Invasives

N. Mullett reported the project is moving toward completion as we are getting reports from the various partners on the project and will share with RRAC when it is complete. Newburgh and Wilcox were treated by Wayne County. 47 sites were done by a contractor with some sites being expanded and sites added along the Detroit River. N. Mullett stated that the results were impressive overall. The grant ends on 3/1/18.

Wayne County EPA Habitat Grant – HFE Fishway and Oxbow Phase 3 Implementation

J. O'Meara reported that the project is moving forward with SHPO, county permit and MDEQ permit. ARC staff have been working on the bid package and contract. It is expected to be advertised this month (October). He stated that the Oxbow Phase 3 Implementation is in about the same position with work expected to start in 2018.

Wayne County EPA Habitat Grant – Nankin Lake Restoration

N. Mullett stated that he expects the request for bid on the design for Nankin to be advertised next week.

FDR – NOAA Habitat Partnership Grant

J. O'Meara reiterated that this is a funding mechanism if money becomes available. The initial grant funds are going to Detroit River AOC projects. Then funding will go to an additional Detroit River project and then can start to fund Rouge River projects.

USDA Forest Service Grant

J. O'Meara reported that the ARC received another \$100,000 grant to replace trees affected by the emerald ash borer within the Rouge River Watershed.

New Business

B. Craig informed the group that the stream restoration conference is planned for October 23-25.

There was a reminder to send any monitoring requests in to the MDEQ.

Comments

Members

J. O'Meara stated that ARC staff will attend the HOW Conference in Buffalo October 17-19.

ARC Staff will send out a Doodle Poll for dates of the next RRAC meeting to be scheduled for the second or third week of January 2018.

There is a canoe trip planned on the Middle Rouge from Haggerty to Newburgh.

Adjourn

The motion was made to adjourn the meeting by S. Petrella and seconded by B. Siedlaczek. The motion passed.