



New Hanover County
Local Watershed Planning Group

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, July 11, 2001 meeting held at the Cape Fear Riverwatch Educational Ctr.

Next Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Meeting Agenda:

- ◆ Presentation on land preservation, Camilla Herlevich, NC Coastal Land Trust
- ◆ Recap on the July goal-making exercise

The meeting will be held at the Cape Fear Riverwatch Educational Center from 6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m. The public is welcome to observe.

Group Members/alternates present:

Jim Bordeaux, Castle Hayne Steering Committee
Stacy Smaltz/ Bouty Baldrige, Cape Fear River Watch
Michael Pope, Sierra Club, Wrightsboro Community
Chris O'Keefe, New Hanover Co. Planning
Dick Loeffert, Northchase HOA
Don Cooke, CP&L
Joe Blair, NC Department of Transportation
Matt Hayes, City of Wilmington (alt. For David Mayes)

Support staff & guests present:

Christy Perrin, WECO/NCSU
Sunny Snider, WECO/NCSU
Kevin Schneider, Cape Fear River Watch volunteer, KCI
Angie Pennock, USACE
Alex Marks, New Hanover County
Scott McLendon, USACE
JoAnne Likens, Princess Place Neighborhood

Group members absent:

Marian McPhaul, UNCW
Jabe Hardee, Cameron Company
David Mayes, City of Wilmington
Curt Hensyl, Local watershed resident/ International Paper
Tommy Tew, Corbett Timber Co.
Karen Moorefield, Carolina Heights Neighborhood

CURRENT STATUS AND GOAL SETTING

At the July meeting of the New Hanover County Watershed Planning Group, group members received an update on KCI's work from Bonnie Duncan, discussed their definition of "quality of life", and brainstormed potential goals for their watershed plan. At the end of the meeting Christy presented a timeline for the group for the remainder of the year.

UPDATE ON KCI'S WORK

Bonnie Duncan, NC Wetlands Restoration Program

Models

KCI's work involves a modeling component consisting of three models: a development build-out model, a water quantity model and a water quality model. These models will be combined at the end to provide a tool for the group and for the WRP to use when choosing restoration or other types of projects in the watershed.

Currently, KCI is using a simple method for modeling phosphorous loading as phosphorous is easy to study. They are working on formulas for nitrogen and fecal coliform, which are more difficult to develop. Bonnie showed the group an example of the phosphorous model and reminded everyone that the model is simply a tool for the group to use in making educated decisions for their watershed. Functioning best management practices (BMPs) located in the area and preservation options will be added to KCI's models.

The group will also have monitoring data from Mike Mallin for Burnt Mill Creek and Upper Smith Creek. This data includes information on fecal coliform and surfactants.

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Strategies and Design Charette

Group members should think about what strategies they want to pursue with the subcatchments that were not chosen for further study. What goals would the group like to pursue for the other subcatchments?

Bonnie proposed that the group participate in a design charette. The design charette involves participants in brainstorming locations and types of BMPs that will be the most effective at a reasonable cost. During the charette, group members will use the modeling tools provided by KCI.

Questions for Bonnie

Q: Why won't Mike Mallin's formulas for fecal coliform work in KCI's water quality model?

A: Dr. Mallin's research is very specific, and relates only to impervious surface (one type of land use) to the number of colonies in a tidal stream. There may be a ratio that we can use, however, phosphorous methods work well. Mike Mallin will be collecting first flush samples at specific locations during large storm events (at least 1-1½ inches of rain) that should shed a little light onto what's getting into the surface waters.

Q: Should we have Camilla with the Coastal Land Trust come in to speak to us before the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) December deadline?

A: Yes, she is included in the timeline we will present later in the meeting.

Comment: Another source of information would be FEMA.

A: Yes, we could have a talk by them if you wanted. We won't have monthly meetings after our projects are implemented but the group can carry on by themselves. It would be good to try for the CWMTF funding.

Q: Will there be an ultimate time to come forward with project ideas?

A: We hope that you will come forward with ideas as we go along. We don't have to wait until after the assessment to make suggestions. Its never too early to bring projects to our attention.

UPDATE ON NORTHCHASE PROJECT

Dick Loeffert, Northchase HOA

The Northchase HOA authorized a drainage study due to problems in the Northchase subdivision. The study pointed out several options. After meeting with Bonnie and the original subdivision owner/developer, the owner/developer agreed to donate a piece property he owns for retention. Chris O'Keefe and Larry Hobbs checked out the spot and currently the Board is waiting to hear from Larry.

Bonnie told the group that Larry is waiting on a final bit of information to make a decision, and the WRP hopes to do a project there.

Q: Where will the funds come from?

A: The project may be sponsored by the WRP. If the information Larry is waiting for indicates that the project does not meet WRP funding criteria, they can get the money elsewhere.

Q: Would this project qualify as a mitigation project?

A: No.

QUALITY OF LIFE DISCUSSION

Quality of Life was one of the group's original topics of concern for the watershed. Discussing and developing a definition for a good Quality of Life can be used in the watershed plan and can also serve as the group's "vision for the watershed". Christy asked the group to define a good quality of life. Comments shared addressing this daunting task are listed below:

- For Quality of Life as determined by the City of Jacksonville Quality of Life Committee see www.jcci.org.
- Biological diversity – biological diversity could lead to ecotourism which would enhance local economy and education
- Health – Swimming and fishing in local streams raises questions about health
- Use (don't abuse) resources safely and efficiently

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- Living on or near the water (ocean and riverfront) – the way we treat the water reflects on the community
- Sense of renewability

Group members had other comments during this discussion:

- Many times people ask “what good is it to me?” instead of “What good is it?” Common desires don’t often fit with habitat needs, education, and economics.
- People want different aesthetics. Some want manicured lawns, some want wild lawns. This issue makes quality of life difficult to define.
- Quality of Life is a changing target.
- We must also deal with values, not just functions

Group members did not determine a definition for a good quality of life as they felt it was a very challenging assignment. However, thinking about a definition for a good quality of life is important to bring out what the group wants their watershed to look like now and in the future. In order to implement a project, the group must have a reason on which to base their actions. Goals for the watershed, such as removing Burnt Mill Creek from the 303(d) list, provide a reason for implementing water quality projects.

GOALS FOR THE WATERSHED PLAN

After the quality of life discussion, Christy reviewed the interests of group members (and their organizations) expressed at initial meetings. She also pointed out that interests really reflect goals that can be used as goals for the entire watershed. Christy asked the group the following question:

What should the watershed plan achieve for the overall watershed?

Group members split into two groups to brainstorm ideas to address this question in terms of the following topics:

- Water quality
- Flooding

- Growth and development
- Wildlife Habitat
- Other/Miscellaneous

The groups brainstormed the following goals:

For water quality:

- Determine a level of water quality to a certain standard
- Reduce sediment from eroded stream banks through acceptable flood control
- Protect and improve water quality through wetland, stream, and buffer projects, and other water quality improvement programs
- Improve water quality for safe consumption
- Assess the impact of sanitary sewers on water quality to lower fecal coliform and improve water quality

For flooding:

- Determine areas for retention thereby creating a useful purpose for future consideration of uses (reduce flooding with a secondary benefit)
- Create system allowing free flowing ditches therefore reducing erosion
- Implement BMPs and best available technologies (BATs) to decrease stormwater runoff and improve the quality of runoff
- Remove people from the floodplain and/or elevate structures in the floodplain (flooding changes as we develop)

For growth and development:

- Control growth through responsible government involvement and enforcement
- Provide infrastructure to areas where we want to encourage development and do not provide infrastructure to areas where we don’t want to encourage development
- Developer commitment to existing regulations

For wildlife:

- Preserve wildlife habitat through conservation

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- Continuity and connectivity of habitat
- Identify areas of important habitat and strive to protect these areas
- Encourage wildlife return by providing more habitat via the use of wetlands wherever possible

Group members asked to have a meeting at which they could bring and express ideas for projects in the watershed. A design charette is scheduled for November. During the charette you will be able to plug projects such as BMPs and preservation into models. The models will tell you how much phosphorous will be reduced as a result of the project. Using this tool and others you will be able to decide where BMP and restoration projects should occur. If you have any other ideas, please bring them to us as soon as possible.

TIMELINE FOR 2001

After consulting with the group at the meeting, the timeline for the remainder of the year is as follows:

AUGUST: Presentation on Land Conservation Easements

SEPTEMBER: For the first part of the meeting, there will be a presentation on DOT and how they mitigate. The second half of the meeting will consist of a presentation from CWMTF on what types of projects they fund. This presentation will assist the group if they decide to apply for CWMTF monies by the December deadline.

OCTOBER: The group will receive more information to help in their decision making.

NOVEMBER: Design charette with KCI's models

DECEMBER: Final report, (deadline for applying to the CWMTF – next deadline in June, 2002)

Questions:

Q: Can we come up with ideas for two CWMTF funding

cycles or just one? Will we have another opportunity to apply for funding?

A: Yes and yes.

Q: *What did the City of Jacksonville do with their Quality of Life information?*

A: They used it to make regulations and recommendations.

Comment: We want to understand how water quality will be affected by the DOT projects.

A: Keep in mind that along with the roads, DOT has to mitigate and we're not here to help them do that.

Comment: Maybe we need to know what their BMPs and mitigation projects are.

⚡ **PLEASE TAKE NOTE!** The September meeting may be changed to Tuesday September 4th or Thursday September 6th to accommodate a speaker from the NC DOT. We'll let you know as soon as the date has been confirmed!

For more information about the New Hanover County Local Watershed Planning Group, contact Christy Perrin at (919) 515-4542 email: christy_perrin@ncsu.edu

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