

**Big Walnut Watershed Planning Partnership
Meeting of Thursday, December 16, 2010
Blendon Township Senior Center
6330 South Hempstead Road
Westerville, OH 43081
Meeting Summary**

Attendees:

Partner Communities

Dave Martin, Sunbury
Troy Euton, Gahanna
Jim Hatten, Oxford Township
John Carter, Columbus
Chris Hann, Hamilton Township
Steve Volpe, Kingston Township
Jeanna Burrell, Galena
Ben Collins, Plain Township
Christie Ward, Lockbourne
Frank Wiseman, Westerville

Stakeholders

Matt Brown, Franklin County
David Roseman, Friends of Alum Creek Tributary (FACT)
Allen Prindle, Otterbein University
Jerry Holloway, FACT
Alli Shaw, Metro Parks
Bill Myers, Friends of Big Walnut Creek (FBWC)
Al Harten, FBWC
Bill Resch, FBWC
Bob Kyle, FBWC

MORPC Staff

Joseph Kitchen, Associate Planner
Erin Grushon, Associate Planner
Brandi Whetstone, Outreach Coordinator
Jerry Tinianow, Director of Center for Energy & Environment
Kurt Keljo, Watershed Coordinator

For the most up to date information including the next meeting date, time and location, previous meeting slides and minutes, please visit our website at <http://balancedgrowthplanning.morpc.org> and click on your watershed.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. Erin introduced herself and asked the meeting attendees to go around the room and introduce themselves. There were no comments on the draft agenda and the agenda was approved.

Erin began the meeting by highlighting the current and upcoming tasks, explaining that the Big Walnut Planning Partnership (BWPP) would work together in this meeting to finalize the Priority Area definitions. Meeting attendees would also be asked to begin discussing the list of potential Priority Area criteria. Next, the Steering Committee would meet in January to draft the recommended criteria list and weighting.

Before working on the definitions, Erin provided a brief review of the Balanced Growth Planning process and presented the following goals that the group had established at the last full partnership meeting on October 20th:

- A. Protect Environmental Resources
- B. Preserve Unique Character of Each Community
- C. Promote Sustainable Development

After reviewing the BWPP's goals, the group moved on to finalizing the Priority Area definitions. Erin reminded the BWPP that the Steering Committee had created draft Priority Area definitions at their meeting in November. Erin pulled the draft Priority Conservation Areas (PCA) definition up on the projector screen and asked for comments and feedback from the group. Several partners commented that they thought the draft definition was good. The group agreed on the following as the BWPP PCA definition:

PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREAS (PCA)

Areas designated by local communities for protection, conservation, or restoration because of their ecological, cultural, recreational, or historical value and for the significant role these areas play in water quality, stormwater management, and general quality of life.

Erin pulled the draft Priority Development Areas (PDA) definition up on the screen and asked for comments from the group. The attendees discussed whether or not the phrase "that are favorable for" should remain in the definition and ultimately decided that it should. Jim Hatten suggested including something in the definition about watershed impacts. Another attendee suggested changing the word "limited" to "restricted" in the final part of the definition. After some discussion, the group agreed on the following as the BWPP PDA definition:

PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREAS (PDA)

Areas designated by local communities that are favorable for development, redevelopment, or revitalization based upon efficient use of infrastructure and having restricted negative impacts.

Next, the partnership decided to work on the Priority Agricultural Areas (PAA) definition. Erin pulled the draft PAA definition up on the screen and asked for comments from the group. An

attendee asked what a “quality watershed” means, suggesting that it could be interpreted differently by different people. Others in the room agreed. One partner suggested changing the phrase to “consistent with a high quality watershed,” because there are generally accepted standards for the term “high quality watershed.” The group then agreed on the following as the BWPP PAA definition:

PRIORITY AGRICULTURAL AREAS (PAA)

Areas designated by local communities which, due to historical, cultural, natural or man-made features, are conducive to agricultural activities and associated practices consistent with maintaining a high quality watershed.

Erin then pulled up the 3 amended Priority Area definitions so that the group could see them all together. Jeanna Burrell made a motion to adopt the list of Priority Area definitions. John Carter seconded the motion and the definitions were unanimously adopted by the Big Walnut Planning Partnership.

Next, Erin briefly reviewed the process that would be used to create and revise the Big Walnut Priority Area maps. Erin explained that land within the watershed would be scored based on the Priority Area criteria and weighting. Then, the high scoring areas would be highlighted as recommended Priority Areas on the initial draft Priority Area maps. Erin asked the group to review a list of potential Priority Area criteria and provide feedback, noting that the feedback from the full Big Walnut Partnership would be used by the Steering Committee when they meet in January to draft their criteria recommendations.

Erin pulled up a list of potential criteria and informed the group that MORPC already has watershed-wide data for the features on the list. Erin also commented that it would be possible to consider other features as Priority Area criteria if there is an existing watershed-wide data source. Also, Erin noted that we could not use partial or incomplete datasets or create new datasets that do not currently exist. Meeting participants began to discuss the list of potential criteria.

One participant asked if conservation easements could be included as a PCA criterion. Erin noted that she would discuss this with MORPC’s GIS staff to see if the data was available.

Another attendee asked if the partnership could include a buffer around streams as a PCA criterion. The group then discussed the difference between stream buffers and riparian corridors. Erin explained that it would be possible to include stream buffers, but that MORPC would not be able to calculate the riparian corridors across the watershed.

Another partner suggested including data related to bedrock geology on the PCA criteria list. An attendee asked if MORPC staff could check with the Ohio Historical Society to see if we could include their data in the analysis for PCAs.

Erin reminded meeting attendees that the Steering Committee would be meeting in January to draft the recommended criteria list and weight the criteria. The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.