

**Watershed Management Planning for the Au Sable River
First Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, July 26, 2 pm – 4:15 mp
Jay Town Hall, History Room**

Minutes

Present:

Carol Treadwell (ASRA ED)
Mary King, Keeseville Trustee
Joseph Kahn, Town of Jay Rep
Walt LaMountain, Town of Chesterfield Board
Richard Klague, Town of Chesterfield, Board
Fred Dunlap, NYS DEC
Garrett Dague, Essex County Planning
Lorraine Duvall, Town of Keene Rep.
Jeanne Ashworth, Town of Wilmington Supervisor
Rob Bissig, Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District
Stuart Baird, Village of Lake Placid Rep
Stephanie Wojtowkz, NYSDOS-DCR
Andy Labruzzo, NYSDOS

The meeting was called to order at 2:07 pm.

Carol Treadwell began the meeting by introducing herself and everyone present introduced themselves.

Each member of the committee was given a folder with information about the Au Sable River Association (ASRA), its history, projects completed by ASRA in its 10 year history, The DOS grant Work Plan, and the Draft Public Input Plan.

Carol explained the history starting with the Ausable River Study done by the National Park Service in 1991-92. This study produced the first watershed management plan with goals and strategies for the river. One of the strategies implemented was to create a watershed organization. A list of goals is summarized in the hand outs.

Carol explained that “Watershed Management Planning for the Ausable River” is a grant written by the ASRA, submitted by the Town of Wilmington, and awarded by the Department of State, Division of Coastal Resources (DOS-DCR). The grant is \$20,000 and requires a \$20,000 match; the match is in public time. The goal of the grant is to begin the process of creating a Watershed Management Plan WMP for the Ausable Watershed. Other grants will follow in order to complete and implement the plan.

Carol explained the Watershed concept and emphasized that all of the communities and people living in the watershed needed a chance to have input into a WMP plan. This is

why an Advisory Committee of Town Representatives was created and convened. State and County representative are also present on the committee.

The Ausable watershed contains: 7 towns, 2 counties, 2 incorporated villages.

Carol outlined the steps to WMPlanning, listed on the hand out. First, is to understand the resource – the watershed and its natural and cultural resources – much of this has been done by the NPS in the Ausable River Study, and by research and data collection done by ASRA over the past 10 years. The second step in WMPlanning is to gather public input, have meetings for the public to attend so they can share their concerns, issues about the river/watershed. Issues may include: water quality, flooding, fishing, recreation, road salting/sanding, bank erosion, trash in the river...

Andy Labruzzo and Stephanie Wojtowkz from the DOS-DCR were introduced. They further explained the steps in watershed management planning by handing out example plans resulting from other watershed planning projects and discussing other projects they had worked on. A draft “Watershed Plans Guidebook” was viewed by committee members, and deemed useful to this project. Stephanie showed a 15 minute video on WMP with interviews of citizens and state reps from other watershed projects.

Carol then explained “Expectations of the Advisory committee state and Town Reps” from the “draft Public Outreach/Education Plan.”

Carol proposed putting some dates on the calendar for Public Input meetings. Mary King suggested that the Adv. Comm. needed more education on the topic of WMP and some educational materials needed to be created in order for the Town reps to be lucid when they go back to their boards and citizens. Walter LaMountain seconded this thought explaining that the public may not attend meetings if they do not understand the importance of the issue. He also said people needed to know where the river started ended and contained. Mary King suggested a set of brochures: “Coming to your area Soon...” “Did You Know?” – Q/A on facts about the Ausable River. Stuart Baird suggested getting educational material off of the EPA web page. He volunteered to help Carol find existing material. Lorraine Duvall stated that some of the educational material on the Ausable Watershed already exists – a fold out map of the watershed showing natural and cultural resources of the Ausable was produced in 2001 and could be used for the piece about the river that Walter recommended.

It was also stressed that materials should explain the WMP process and what it can do for citizens not what it will take away from private citizens “take the fear out of the word “planning.”

Other educational suggestions:

- Road Signs: “You are entering the Ausable Watershed”
- News Paper Articles
- Educational handouts for school children that they will take home to their parents; including info on meetings and dates
- Local Access channel

- Board Meetings: show the video provided by the DOS

Public Notice Suggestions:

- Three week notice required
- Post card
- Posters in the libraries, post offices, Stuarts Shops
- TV, community calendars in the papers

Any dates already slated for meetings should be crossed off the list of possible dates.

Chesterfield Board – first Tuesday

North Elba Board, Keene board – second Tuesday

Au Sable Town Board – second Wednesday

Jay Town Board – Second Thursday

Joe Kahn suggested meetings combine two to three towns in order to keep the schedule manageable:

- 1) North Elba, Lake Placid Village, Wilmington
- 2) Keene (Hamlets of Keene, Keene Valley)
- 3) Jay, Black Brook
- 4) Au Sable, Chesterfield, Keeseville

The Advisory Committee asked to have one more meeting before proposing Town Public meeting dates. In the interim they requested that Carol send out sample educational materials.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, August 22, 2007, Jay Town Hall, 2 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 4:07 pm