



Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership

**June 19, 2017 LRWP  
Meeting Minutes**

I. Introductions

In Attendance: Quentin Zorn (LRWP), Jamie Bruno (LRWP), Julia Gerdes (Middlesex County), Daryl Krasnuk (LRWP), Mirah Becker (Middlesex County), Stas Wnukowski (LRWP), Susan Edmunds (LRWP), Nick Tufaro (Middlesex County), Alex Zakrewsky (Middlesex County), Katee Meckeler (NJDEP), Eleanor Molloy (Elmwood Cemetery), Billy Kurzenberger (City of Perth Amboy)

II. LRWP Project Updates

- a. Water quality monitoring
  - i. Civic scientists are monitoring approx. 25 sites through summer 2017, Rutgers is monitoring headwater streams throughout the watershed
  - ii. Macroinvertebrate monitoring will kick off in October
  - iii. No chemical/pathogens monitoring this summer. Baykeeper will present results from our Summer 2016 monitoring during our July meeting.
- b. LRWP Resident artist Jamie Bruno (National Endowment for the Arts Grant w/ coLAB Arts)
  - i. Community Organizing / Trash Troubadour
    - a. River cleanup events
    - b. Make the events lively and fun
    - c. Possibly include music performances
    - d. Encourage community stewardship
- c. Project WADES (Watershed Action Dialogue Education and Stewardship)
  - i. Highland Park High School students mad art out of trash such as sculptures of fish and dragonflies
  - ii. Greater Brunswick Charter School students created a “story map” telling a story of how trash ended up in the stream
- d. Rail-Arts-River
  - i. Goals: Encourage and improve access to river; Stormwater capture, improve bike/residential access; encourage economic development around River uses
  - ii. Installations
    - 1. “Frames” in Boyd Park and in the gallery space – these will be “Curiosity Cabinets” filled w/ artifacts or symbols of artifacts found w/in the watershed (trash, boxes for bees/birds, student art etc.)
    - 2. Interactive in that we will encourage people to take photos of how they engage w/ the landscape through the “frames” and submit the photos to a project website. The frames are positioned so that photos will generate data on landscape change (e.g. climate change)



3. Security concerns – could include cameras
  - iii. Bloustein/Mason Gross building
    1. Route rain water on the side of the building through gutters that “map out” the buried streams of New Brunswick (e.g. Lyle Brook). Captured water will be directed to plants in a parking garage wall
  - e. Regional Stormwater Management
    - i. Recreated Lyle Brook Green Infrastructure Corridor and Walkway
- III. Partner Projects & Updates
- a. Middlesex County (Mirah Becker & Nick Tufaro)
    - i. County wastewater management: Plans with municipal chapters, and septic management plans needed by May 7, 2018
    - ii. Community Rating System (CRS) - rated according to FEMA minimum standards, ranking system grants credits to reduce costs of flood insurance. Directly benefits residents of ranked townships, increase in disposable income benefits the townships’ economies. Using Monmouth county assistance team as a model – Monmouth County helps educate people and provide services like signs showing high water mark. Assistance team in Middlesex is being created. Initial goal is to explain the benefits of CRS to Middlesex County / Lower Raritan Watershed communities.
  - b. City of Perth Amboy (Billy Kurzenberger)
    - i. August 5 Family Day + Rain Barrel Give-Away
    - ii. Seeking funding to develop a municipality-wide invasives removal plan
      1. Group discussion of invasives issues in the watershed
        - a. Cooperative weed and invasive species management needed on Raritan
        - b. Need to evaluate effects of invasives because some can provide beneficial ecosystem functions
- IV. Special Presentation by Katee Meckeler, Watershed Management Area 9 Watershed Ambassador
- a. Summary of water quality assessments conducted in the last year
  - b. Primary issues
    - i. Streams on maintained lawns tend to have erosion problems
    - ii. Loss of riparian cover from trees is problematic
    - iii. Pollution in streams can cause organisms to suffocate
  - c. Need to improve communication of these issues
    - i. Enviroscope can help communicate pollution problems to people
    - ii. Many people want to see streams from a distance but do not know the negative outcomes of reducing trees and vegetation around bodies of water