

Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization (I O) Meeting Minutes 2/22/17

Attendance: Tee Ann Hunter, Darby Kiley, Tom Vawter, Dave Sprout, Hilary Lambert, Cynthia Brock, Michael Boggs, Lynn Leopold, Jackie Cassaniti

This meeting was to go over the updated 2017 draft of the Restoration and Protection Plan (RPP), and to talk about the funding possibility of the ditching project for the Cayuga Lake Watershed area.

Hilary again presented suggestions made over the last month for the RPP, and some were made at the meeting. The most important suggestion given by Cynthia was what industrial use is there in the watershed and whether they take water from the lake or creeks in the watershed (consumption use), and how does it get used? Tom said there are no regulations for taking water out of the creeks. An example out of our watershed is the gathering of water from creeks in the Elmira area that is taken to the fracking work in Pennsylvania. The Great Lakes Basin Compact said that water shouldn't be moved from one basin to another.

There are 6 points that are highlighted in the report: 1. Drainage, stormwater and tiling, 2. Monitoring and collaboration in streams and the lake, between farmers and municipalities, 3. Communication, 4. Adoption of local laws, 5. Education and outreach, 6. Open space preservation - wetlands, and public access for swimming and boating.

Hilary said that people need to get to the lake to want to care about it. There have been no new swimming beaches in the last 15 years because of the DEC guidelines, but those that are established are grandfathered (ex. Taughannock). The reason is clarity of the water and plant growth; that is why there is no swimming at Stewart Park. Cynthia mentioned that cattails clean water, and gave an example of a pond where water is pumped to a cattail area to be cleaned and returned to the swimming area.

Tee Ann and Darby will work on the 10 priorities, and the general statement of the RPP; Hilary will finish the draft before presenting it to the Ithaca Town Board at the March meeting. Hilary requested that the wording should be "prepared by the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN) for the I O". Then there will be meetings around the watershed to present the updated RPP, and a presentation at the TC Library.

Tee Ann spoke with Rebecca Schneider (Dep't of Natural Resources, Cornell) about the ditching project for the Cayuga Lake Watershed and Darby said Rebecca's master's class will have a ditching project this year. Tee Ann also spoke with Stephanie Wojtowicz of the DOS and she said the ditching project is highly fundable. There is a concern about the runoff to Yeager Creek and the ash runoff going into Milligan Creek, as well as the TMDL for Cayuga Lake, and possibly other finger lakes. CLWN and Community Science Institute were given grants by _____ to study those creeks. TCAD may be asked to fund a drinking water study again.

Submitted by Jackie Cassaniti