

**Nimishillen Creek Watershed Partners
Core Committee Meeting**

Tuesday, November 16, 2004
2:00 p.m.

Stark County Regional Planning Commission
201 3rd Street NE, Suite #201
Canton, OH 44702

Meeting Summary

I. Introductions

- Meeting Attendees: Eric Akin - NEFCO, Jan Lukens - Marlboro Twp. Citizen; Ray Shanabruch - Building Industry Association; Michael Miller - North Canton; Todd Paulus - Stark County Health Department; Joe Underwood - Stark RPC; Pam Feagler - Earth Action Partnership; and Sandy Humphrey - Nimishillen Twp. Citizen

II. Nimishillen Creek LEAP Recap - Eric Akin & Pam Feagler

- The 3rd Annual Nimishillen Creek LEAP held Saturday, October 23 was a success. Over 45 volunteers showed up to help remove trash and tires from Nimishillen Creek by Thurman Munson Memorial Stadium and Esmont Park.
- Three business size trash bins were filled with trash and over 25 tires were removed from the Creek.
- The Canton City Council recognized all the volunteers and sponsors in an informal resolution adopted by the Council at their November 1 meeting. Eric circulated a copy of the resolution.
- Thank you letter to all the sponsors including the City of Canton, NRCS, Subway, and the Joint Solid Waste District
- Pam took several pictures of the event and offered them to anyone wants to view or use them.
- Eric reported that he updated the website (www.uptuscwatershed.org) and it now includes a recap of the Creek LEAP. He said digital pictures of the event would be up very soon.
- The Core Committee unanimously agreed to continue the Creek LEAP in 2005. The group wants to explore expanding the clean-up to include multiple sites or events in 2005.

III. Watershed Funding Review - Eric Akin

- Eric reviewed various funding options for water quality improvement work in the Nimishillen Creek Watershed.
- Sources of funding that are linked to a State endorsed watershed management plan:
 - Ohio EPA Section 319 Grant
 - Low Interest Loans from Ohio EPA Department of Environmental & Financial Assistance (DEFA)
 - Ohio EPA Water Resource Restoration Sponsorship Program (WRRSP)

- U.S. Department of Agriculture Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQUIP)
 - Ohio Department of Transportation Section 401 Permit - Pending
- Programs that are cited in the Nimishillen Creek Watershed Action Plan:
 - Ohio Environmental Education Fund
 - Ohio Department of Natural Resources NatureWorks Program
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
 - U. S. Department of Agriculture Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)
 - PL-566
- The Clean Ohio Fund is one new program that has been established since the completion of the Nimishillen Creek Action Plan.
- Eric distributed handouts with detailed information about each program to the meeting attendees.
- Eric reported that he is in the process of revising the Nimishillen Creek Watershed Plan so it can be submitted for State endorsement. The endorsement will improve the chances of local projects receiving funding from the programs first mentioned.
- Eric recommended that a list of proposed water quality projects list for the watershed should be developed and prioritized by the committee.

IV. Reifsnnyder Park Wetland - Macroinvertebrate Study

- Eric Akin reported that NEFCO recently completed a study of the macroinvertebrates (water insects) upstream and downstream of the constructed wetland site in Canton's Reifsnnyder Park. The purpose of the study was to determine the ability of wetland to improve the water quality of the discharge from a 36 inch storm water pipe before flowing into Nimishillen Creek. Overall, the monitoring results showed no change in the macroinvertebrate community, although it is believed that the constructed wetland did provide benefits. It is felt that other pollution sources in the area that likely "overwhelmed" any improvements provided by the constructed wetland. Also, it was noted that in monitoring several locations throughout the watershed, the area downstream of the wetland was one of few sites (out of sixteen) that did not have a reduced macroinvertebrate counts. The reduced counts are believed to be caused by the numerous high flows experienced in 2003 and 2004.
- Mike Miller pointed out that there were 5 other storm water pipes that discharge into this section of Nimishillen Creek and the master plan developed by the City of Canton calls for all of these storm water pipes to be diverted through constructed wetlands. However, money is not currently available to complete the project and the completed constructed wetland was merely a demonstration project to show what could be done to abate pollution from storm water sewers. He said an issue with projects like this is to educate the public to let them know the benefits of a wetland like this, and that a properly functioning wetland doesn't produce swarms of mosquitos. In fact, a properly functioning wetland can reduce the mosquito population because it is home to insects and animals that feed on mosquito larva.

- Pam Feagler said that trees Earth Action Partnership planted at the wetland are doing well. She said a few of the larger trees planted by a local nursery were left too high in the ground and their roots were exposed last winter. Some of these trees aren't doing well and may need to be replaced. Overall, she said the vegetation was coming in very well.

V. Strategic Planning Session

- Due to some constraints, the committee agreed to postpone the planning session and make this the primary focus of the next meeting.

IV. Next Meeting and Adjourn

- The next meeting was set for January 11, 2:00 p.m. at North Canton's City Hall and will include the following:
 - A strategic planning session - it was suggested that each member of the committee identify a potential project and possible funding option. The committee as a whole will develop a list and prioritize the projects.
 - Eric plans to provide an update on the revisions to the Watershed Action Plan he has been working on.
- Eric said he would send out a meeting notice and directions the first week in January.
- Meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.