

Nimishillen Creek Watershed Partners
Core Committee Meeting
Tuesday, February 15, 2005
2:00 p.m.

North Canton City Hall
145 North Main Street
North Canton, OH 44720

Meeting Summary

I. Welcome and Introductions

- Meeting Attendees: Eric Akin – NEFCO; Jan Lukens – Marlboro Township Citizen; Pam Feagler – Earth Action Partnership; Darrin Petko – Stark Parks; Joe Underwood – Stark County RPC; Michael Miller – North Canton; Dean England – Marlboro Twp. Citizen

II. Watershed Projects – Update

1. Strausser Park – Joe Underwood and Michael Miller:

- Joe Underwood said that he believes this would be a good project for the Partners to pursue. A 15” line drains the storm water in this area and all the neighborhood storm drains are tied into it. The problem is that the drain line acts in reverse when full and floods neighboring properties. He said he believes that the problem is a matter of grading in the open area and an undersized drain line. Mr. Underwood walked the site and said it is currently a depression area filled with matted grass that is not utilized for recreation. He said habitat enhancement opportunities appear to exist at the site, but that it was outside of his area of expertise. Jan Lukens said he drove around the site and agreed with Mr. Underwood’s assessment and said he believes a reduction in the size of the outlet device is needed.
- Michael Miller said that the City of North Canton is in talks with Windsor Medical Center which owns the land adjacent to the Strausser Park. The two sides are talking about the city purchasing some of the adjacent land to help solve the drainage problems in the area. If the city purchases the land, it could be used in the project.
- Pam Feagler and Darrin Petko said they could help with improving the wildlife and wetland habitat in the project area. Mike Miller said he has been in contact with Ducks Unlimited regarding another project in North Canton and they could be a possible partner in this project.
- Michael Miller indicated that there would need to be an education component to this project to handle questions about mosquitoes from

wetlands (West Niles Virus) and the habitat benefits of a diverse vegetation mix vs. a field of invasive, non-native grass. The group thought a good first step in an education program would be to hold neighborhood meetings and add signage at the site. He also indicated that North Canton would want a pond in the design for sedimentation/water quality purposes.

- The Core Committee next defined the scope of the project and discussed vegetation options for the site. The group agreed to work with the existing area until the North Canton actually purchases the adjacent land from Windsor Medical Center.

2. Nimishillen Creek LEAP Expansion – Ray Shanabruch and Dean England:

- No update was provided since Ray Shanabruch was unable to attend the meeting.

3. Vernal Pool Monitoring Program – Sandy Humphrey:

- Eric Akin said that Sandy Humphrey could not attend the meeting because the meeting time it conflicted with her job. It is likely she will not be able to make afternoon meetings in the foreseeable future and asked the group to consider meeting in the early evening so she and other members who have conflicts during the day can meet.
- Eric talked with Sandy and she was planning on attending a vernal pool monitoring training session in Cuyahoga Heights on February 26. The training session was being sponsored by the Ohio Environmental Council, the Cuyahoga River Action Plan, and The Nature Conservancy. Eric said Sandy was committed to getting a vernal pool monitoring program established in the watershed.
- Darrin Petko said Stark Parks has done some pool monitoring in the past and it might be a good partnership.

III. New Project Recommendations

- Michael Miller asked for support for narrowing of new roads in neighborhoods to reduce impervious area.
- Michael Miller also asked for support for adopting drainage swales between the sidewalk and road in new developments to treat and reduce runoff from homes. Joe Underwood, Jan Lukens, and Dean England believed that such design would not work because the infiltration rates are not sufficient and it could cause problems with subsurface road drainage due to the freeze-thaw affect. Mr. Miller said these are not traditional roadside ditches (they are wider and not as deep) and these types of systems are already in use in Seattle and

other places. Pam Feagler said she would look to see if such drainage systems has been successful used in northeast Ohio or other Midwestern states where freeze-thaw is also an issue.

- Pam Feagler mentioned getting other small projects going such as storm drain stenciling. Members of the committee pointed out that most new storm drains going in now have a dumping warning on them. Eric Akin said that it is still a possible project since there are several older storm drains that do not have the warning on them.

IV. Nimishillen Creek Action Plan Update – Eric Akin

- Eric handed out draft copies of the updated watershed plan. The plan was a very rough draft, minus most of the figures. He briefly went over each section and explained to reason for its inclusion and explained what was still needed. He asked the committee to review it and provide feedback.
- Eric explained that he was still waiting for Ohio EPA TMDL information in order to identify and prioritize actions. However, he said that he has come up with a list of issues, causes, and sources from previous reports on the watershed and has use them to come up with a preliminary list of water quality concerns in each subwatershed. Eric handed out a list of impairments and issues for each of the Nimishillen Creek subwatersheds and went through the list. He said that there was not time to rank these issues today, but they would discuss it at the next meeting.
- Eric said once the draft is completed he would post it on the website (www.uptuscwatershed.org) for review.

V. Next Meeting Date and Adjourn

- Joe Underwood said that he would like to start meeting in the evening since he will likely become too busy to meet during the day starting in the spring. Being short on time, the committee agreed to discuss this at the next meeting.
- The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 15, 2:00 p.m. at North Canton City Hall and will include the following topics:
 - 2004 Macroinvertebrate Survey
 - Project Updates
 - Action Plan Updates
- Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.