SUMMARY NOTES OF THE FEBRUARY 7, 2018 MEETING OF THE OAK CREEK WATERSHED RESTORATION PLAN ADVISORY GROUP

INTRODUCTION

The February 7, 2018 meeting of the Oak Creek Watershed Restoration Plan Advisory Group was convened at the Oak Creek Civic Center at 9:07 a.m. The meeting was called to order by Laura Herrick, Chief Environmental Engineer, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC). Attendance was taken by circulating a sign-in sheet.

In attendance at the meeting were the following individuals:

Members Present

Advisory Group Members

Bob Anderson ..... Professor of Biological Sciences, Wisconsin Lutheran College
Phil Beiermeister ..... Environmental Engineer, City of Oak Creek
Greg Failey ..... Environmental Manager, General Mitchell International Airport
Dave Giordano ..... Executive Director, Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network
Craig Helker ..... Water Resources Management Specialist, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Laura Herrick, Secretary ..... Chief Environmental Engineer, SEWRPC
Steve Keith ..... Environmental Services Unit Leader, Milwaukee County Environmental Services
Julie Kinzelman ... Director, Laboratory Division & Research Scientist, City of Racine Health Department
Janette Marsh ..... Nonpoint Source Technical Program Manager, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Cheryl Nenn ..... Riverkeeper, Milwaukee Riverkeeper
Linda Reid ..... Executive Director, Southeastern Wisconsin Watersheds Trust, Inc.
Brian Russart ..... Natural Areas Coordinator, Milwaukee County Parks
Tom Slawski ..... Chief Biologist, SEWRPC
Kyle Vandercar ..... City Engineer, City of South Milwaukee
Jennifer Wright ..... Watercourse Section Manager, Engineering Department, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District

Guests and Staff Present

Megan Beauchaine ..... Research Analyst, SEWRPC
Joseph Boxhorn ..... Senior Planner, SEWRPC
Aaron Owens ..... Planner, SEWRPC
Katlyn Pluer ..... Restoration Ecologist, Milwaukee County Parks
Mark Mittag ..... Senior Project Manager, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District
Allison Thielen ..... Program Manager, Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network

Ms. Herrick welcomed all attendees to the meeting. She stated that this was the kickoff meeting of the Advisory Group for the Oak Creek Watershed Restoration Plan (Plan). Ms. Herrick informed attendees that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Advisory Group's role for the Plan, to review draft Plan presentations for the public meeting March 8, 2018, and to discuss the Plan report outline and upcoming schedule.

ADVISORY GROUP'S ROLE FOR THE PLAN

Ms. Herrick briefly discussed the Advisory Group's role for the Plan. The primary roles for the Advisory Group members are to review draft Plan report sections and provide comments and data relevant to the Plan as appropriate. Draft report sections will be available on the project website (www.sewrpc.org/OakCreekWRP) approximately two weeks before an Advisory Group meeting.

Relevant municipal data that would be useful for the Plan include the following:

- Capital Improvement Project (CIP) list and costs
- Green Infrastructure construction and maintenance costs
- Road salting costs and volumes
- Stormwater plans
- Stormwater MS4 WinSLAMM data
- Stormwater flooding concerns
- Agriculture (leased land, public gardens) location, long term plans, conservation practices
- Municipal park and trail plans

Ms. Herrick indicated that the data above can be submitted to her via email (lherrick@sewrpc.org). Transmittal of relevant non-digital information can be coordinated through her as well. She noted that the requested road salting information will also be used for the SEWRPC Regional Chloride Impact Study that is getting underway. No questions or comments were offered on the Advisory Group's role for the Plan.

REVIEW OF DRAFT PRESENTATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDER MEETING ON MARCH 8, 2018

Ms. Herrick began the review of the draft presentations for the March 8, 2018, Plan stakeholder meeting. She noted that the final presentations will be available on the project website noted above. Ms. Herrick briefly discussed the results of the Plan online survey completed in fall 2017 (Exhibit A). No questions or comments were offered on the online survey summary.

Ms. Herrick introduced SEWRPC staff members Aaron Owens and Megan Beauchaine to present the Oak Creek instream survey summary (Exhibit B). The presentation included an introduction of the watershed assessment areas that will be used in the Plan, a summary of data types that were collected in the field, and a photo tour of each of the assessment areas visited by the SEWRPC staff in 2016 and 2017. Mr. Anderson asked if the data collected in the field will be used to evaluate recommended improvements. Mr. Slawski responded that the same stream locations could be evaluated in the future to quantify changes in stream quality, along with future fish, macroinvertebrate, and water quality data. Ms. Marsh inquired if any algal blooms were observed and if the Plan would address cyanotoxins. Mr. Owens responded that algal blooms were observed and noted during the field survey, but no chemical data were being collected for cyanotoxins as part of the Plan.

Mr. Owens noted in the Lower Oak Creek – Mill Pond assessment area that a section of the stream has moved closer to the Oak Creek Parkway road. Mr. Keith asked if any prior morphology studies have been completed for the Oak Creek mainstem. Mr. Owens indicated that SEWRPC staff are still gathering relevant data and reports and he asked the Advisory Group to provide any relevant reports for the Plan. He further noted that SEWRPC completed a comprehensive watershed plan in 1986 that may touch on some morphology in the watershed, but he was unaware of a specific morphology study. Mr. Vandercar thought the stream migration occurred during the 2008 and 2010 floods. Mr. Vandercar asked if the storm sewer outfall data collected as part of the survey could be shared with the municipalities. Mr. Owens responded that the data can be made available electronically once SEWRPC staff have consolidated the information.

Ms. Beauchaine noted that several reaches of significant sediment deposition were observed in the Middle and Upper Oak Creek assessment areas in 2017. Mr. Beiermeister noted that a beaver dam was removed in the Upper Oak Creek assessment area that may account for the sediment accumulation in that reach. Mr. Mittag inquired about the number of drain tiles observed during the field survey. Mr. Owens responded that not many were observed along the Oak Creek mainstem or the two main tributaries.

Ms. Herrick introduced Wisconsin DNR water resource management specialist Craig Helker to present the Department's Water Quality Management Plan completed in 2017 (Exhibit C). Mr. Helker's presentation included a summary of the Targeted Watershed Assessment (TWA) completed for nine sites in the watershed which included sampling for water chemistry, fish assemblages, macroinvertebrates, and habitat conditions. Mr. Anderson asked if the fish Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI) was completed. Mr. Helker indicated that the fish IBI is included in the TWA report. Mr. Mittag noted that few fish tabulated in the survey were sport fish. He asked how sport fishing can be improved as desired by the watershed stakeholders. Mr. Helker indicated that downstream of the Mill Pond dam the Creek supports larger sport fish. He noted that upstream of the Mill Pond dam the Creek supports a warm water forage fish community. He added that there is potential to improve the trophic chain in fish communities in these upstream areas, but fragmentation of habitat limits the establishment of top predator species in those areas. Mr. Mittag inquired what top predator fish could be sustained in this watershed. Mr. Helker indicated that largemouth bass and, if adequate access to the floodplain were available during spawning, northern pike.

Mr. Giordano asked if the round goby numbers observed downstream of the dam were typical and what impact dam removal may have on their numbers farther upstream. Mr. Helker said that the round goby numbers found in the Oak Creek survey were consistent with other Lake Michigan tributary outlet sites. He also noted that removing the dam may allow round gobies to move upstream and potentially replace some darter species.

Mr. Giordano inquired about what the level of effort was to complete a fish and macroinvertebrate IBI survey for one location. Mr. Helker responded that it takes about an hour to establish the station, approximately a half hour to do the fish shocking, and two hours to identify and count the fish. The macroinvertebrates can be collected fairly quickly. The samples are sent to UW-Stevens Point for identification. The cost for the nine Oak Creek watershed sites for WDNR field work was about $7,000.

DRAFT REPORT OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Ms. Herrick introduced the draft Plan outline included below. The intent is to have Advisory Group meetings for one to two chapters of the Plan when drafts are complete. Tentatively Advisory Group meetings will be held about twice a year until the Plan is complete. A tentative project schedule is located on the right side of the Plan website noted above. No questions or comments were offered on the report outline or schedule.

DRAFT REPORT OUTLINE

Plan Chapter	Chapter Title
1	Introduction
2	Prior and Ongoing Studies, Plans, Projects, and Programs
3	Characterization of the Watershed
4	Inventory Findings
5	Watershed Goals and Management Objectives
6	Plan Recommendations

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Herrick
Recording Secretary

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Online survey presentation (242014)
Attachment B – Instream survey presentation (242010)
Attachment C – WDNR presentation (242011)