ASYLUM LAKE POLICY AND MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Minutes
February 11, 2021

Members Present:  Duane Hampton; Chair; Steve Kohler, Vice Chair; Kay Chase, Council Secretary; Tom Sauber, Natural Areas Manager; Bonnie Alkema; Tyler Bassett; Sharon Dever; Mark Frever; Lauri Holmes; John Kreuzer; Dave Lemberg; Paul Scott; Cybelle Shattuck; Pete Strazdas; Marnie Twynham

Members Excused:  James Penner;
Guests:  Judy Huxmann; Paul MacNellis; Phil Micklin; Mark Kieser;

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ZOOM ROLL CALL.

• There was a quorum of members present and the meeting was called to order at 7 p.m.

II. EDITING AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 11TH.

• There were no changes to the Agenda.
• Mr. Strazdas, supported by Mr. Kohler, moved approval of the agenda as submitted. The motion was approved.

III. EDITING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 14TH.

• Ms. Holmes, supported by Mr. Frever, moved approval of the minutes.
• The minutes should state that the new signs are aluminum on the back side. There should be a period after the statement about Kieser & Associates making a presentation. Mr. Hampton stated that he needed to make a couple of minor changes to the minutes and provide them to the Recording Secretary.
• The motion to accept the minutes was approved.

IV. PRESENTATION BY MARK KIESER OF REVISED PROPOSAL TO REMOVE SEDIMENT & PHOSPHORUS FROM STORM WATER INFLOW. TIMELINE, COST & HOW TO PAY.

• Mr. Kieser met with the project committee to discuss the proposal. There were a number of findings and considerations. An overview of the project was provided and the following information was discussed:
  • Storm water from the U.S. 131/Drake Rd./Stadium Drive area comes under Drake Road and flows east into Asylum Lake. The storm water from the former K-Mart parking lot to the north is untreated. The headwaters pond west of Drake Rd. provides treatment for the storm water that flows into that area.
  • There are two primary areas of focus for storm water monitoring. Pie charts were provided showing details of the sediment and phosphorus that flow into Asylum Lake. Most of the phosphorus coming into Asylum Lake is attached to sediment and that is good.
  • Sediment is flowing into the drainage areas from different locations: about 21% is coming from Drake Rd., almost 60% is coming from U.S. 131, and about 20% of the sediment is coming from the former K-Mart area to the north. The headwaters pond to the west is acting as a fairly good treatment system for the water from US-131.
  • In August, two treatment areas were discussed: the headwaters pond area and the untreated storm water from the north. About 64% of the sediment going into Asylum Lake comes from the K-Mart area to the north. That largest source of sediment and phosphorus contamination is the priority. It was suggested that the water coming down the road could be directed to a sediment retention pond and an infiltration trench.
  • The line on Kieser’s map which was thought to be the property line between the Preserve and Mr. Tehrani’s property, was wrong. A survey showed the actual property boundary was further south, which presents some constraints for the treatment proposal to avoid working in the wetland or crossing Mr. Tehrani’s land.
  • The original proposal cost estimate was $78,000 for the design and construction. Based on that information, the Council directed Kieser & Associates to focus on Area 1 and develop a scope of work. Kieser &
Associates looked at the site conditions and discovered that the property line is further south than originally thought. This means that part of the project will be in the wetlands near Drake Rd.

- The proposed project would isolate a portion of wetland to the north, along the road and onto the adjacent property. If the project crosses the wetland, there will need to be a flow path linking the wetland to the north with the rest of the wetland.
- The sediment pond will be further to the east and smaller, and there will be a smaller area for the infiltration trench along the north side of the lake.
- The mechanical treatment device (Barracuda trap) will be in the road right-of-way. Shoring will be required along the roadway. A larger barracuda trap can be installed than was originally proposed. That will be valuable and necessary because there isn’t as much space for the sediment pond.
- Where the east/west berm and pipe cross, there will be a sediment moat. The pipe will be buried and sediment will move east to the hydraulic forebay from the mechanical treatment device. Working in the wetland is more expensive. There is an option of doing just a mechanical treatment device and discharging into the wetland where the storm water is currently discharging.
- The updated cost estimate is $223,222 based on 60% conceptual design. The larger mechanical treatment device and the shoring that is needed are additional expenses. The cost of installing the infiltration trench is also significantly higher due to the constraints of working in the wetland. There would be a berm to allow flow to go north and south.
- It was suggested that samples could be taken from Asylum Lake this year and next year so there is data before and after the proposed changes are made. Monitoring can also be done at the mechanical treatment device.
- Option 1 was just the mechanical treatment/capture device (Barracuda trap), but that would only provide about 50% treatment. Option 2 is to combined the mechanical treatment device with the infiltration trench and that would provide 100% treatment of pollutants in the storm water.
- Mr. Kreuzer commented that the preliminary cost of $78,000 was for remediation of Area 1. The cost of remediation for Area 2, to the west, was substantially different. No additional costs were provided for the infiltration basin to the west, now that BTR2 is depositing water into the area. He inquired if there would be more benefit from doing long-term remediation as proposed for Area 1 rather than for Area 2.
- Mr. Kieser confirmed that Area 1 is the targeted area. All other storm water goes through the treatment pond. Mr. Kreuzer mentioned the 10-year life span of the pond and the addition of BTR2 to the calculations. He inquired if the life span of the pond would be decreased because of the additional flow. He expressed concern as to what might happen to Asylum Lake when the pond reaches its maximum lifespan.
- The effectiveness of the barracuda trap is dependent on a commitment from the City of Kalamazoo to maintain it properly. The barracuda trap at Woods Lake is not effective due to a lack of maintenance.
- Mr. Keiser stated that the load will be reduced, not increased, as the BTR2 site is developed because there are additional requirements on site for storm water, which is directed through the pond. The estimate will still be a quarter of a million dollars even if the pond is dredged.
- Maintenance is critical. The barracuda by itself is a higher risk if maintenance doesn’t take place. The Woods Lake barracuda hasn’t been cleaned out in about 20 years. After about 10 years it was still highly efficient. The City has not said they won’t help with maintenance of the barracuda trap. It might be a logical extension of their maintenance programs on their existing storm sewers, but it is still a question. The cost was estimated to be about $4,000 per year to clean out the barracuda trap.
- If we don’t mitigate the storm water coming from the north, it goes in the lake. The storm water coming from the west is being treated.
- Mr. Kohler inquired if the infiltration trench would need maintenance and, if so, what kind of maintenance schedule would it require and what is the cost? Mr. Kieser stated that the infiltration trench wouldn’t need maintenance for decades.
- The source areas have no treatment. The City of Kalamazoo storm water policy states that storm water treatment would be required if someone is redoing their parking lot. The EPA wants to go back to the source areas and control them first but that is a long-term proposition.
• Mr. Kreuzer inquired about the location of the barracuda trap. If the former Vermeulen property is developed, and if there is a drive by parcel C where the house is, would that development have an impact on what the Council is trying to do? Mr. Kieser advised that adding a drive in that area would require the developer to fill in part of the wetland and the road grade, which would be a major hurdle. The existing driveway isn’t anywhere near where the trap would be located.

• Ms. Alkema commented that the boundary line appears to cross part of the former Vermeulen property. She inquired if it would be better financially for the Council to buy that piece of property. Mr. Kieser stated that the Council would have to purchase a sizeable piece of that property go get around the wetland on Drake Road. Kieser & Associates was given a directive to stay away from that area.

• Ms. Alkema suggested approaching the property owner to see if he would be willing to sell the parcel with the wetland. Mr. Kieser stated that the property owner would need a permit to use the wetland. The barracuda is not in the original location that was proposed. Acquiring the property wouldn’t buy the Council much opportunity.

• Mr. Hampton referred to the presentation from August 8th. The price has gone up for storm water treatment east of Drake Road. He inquired if the cost has also gone up for treating storm water west of Drake Road. Mr. Kieser referred to the information on the pie charts, which show that 60% or greater of the load is still coming from the north. He recommended option #2 with the mechanical treatment device and infiltration trench along north side of lake, which will provide 100% treatment. If the cleanout doesn’t occur on schedule, you still have 100% back-up for the device. It is recommended that the barracuda traps are cleaned out twice per year.

• Mr. Tehrani’s team said they would take storm water run-off from the north and treat it on the former Vermeulen property. Mr. Hampton inquired if storm water input from northeast of the lake had been factored in. Mr. Kieser stated that storm water outlets northeast of the lake are not adding much to the lake. Storm water coming down Drake Rd. from north of Stadium Drive is more of a concern.

• Mr. Strazdas referred to three take-aways: 1. Do we want to focus on stormwater to the north or west? (north because is it untreated). 2. Should we proceed with the 100% treatment option or the 50% treatment option? (100%). 3. Should we proceed with the plan now or wait to negotiate purchase of the property to the north? (proceed now).

• Ms. Alkema concurred with Mr. Strazdas but suggested asking if the Council could buy the property to the north, even if the project proceeds at this point. Purchasing the property would at least rescue the strip of wetland, even if it doesn’t change the plan.

• There have been no updates lately regarding Mayor Anderson’s conversations with Hadji Tehrani, the property owner, about the possibility of the Council purchasing part of Mr. Tehrani’s property. Mr. Kreuzer stated that he has spoken with Mr. Tehrani and he wants to get something done on that corner.

• It was suggested there should be a Plan B for cleaning out the barracuda if it needs to be serviced quickly. Could the Council engage a local vendor to clean it out? Mr. Frever advised that the university uses similar services on campus. Members of the Council were in favor of proceeding with the project at the estimated cost of $223,222.

• Mr. MacNellis mentioned that the calculations are for conditions as they exist now. How would that change if there is development on the former trailer park property or the former Vermeulen property? Mr. Kieser stated that there are requirements for on-site treatment for those properties. There will be treatment controls for new development. Older developments will be retrofitted.

• Storm water from adjacent properties wouldn’t necessarily dump into the street. The natural features protection overlay is a double protection and there are new ordinances for storm water.

• Discussion followed with regard to the requirements for withdrawing the $223,222 from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. There might be a limit as to how much money can be withdrawn and how much needs to remain in the account. The requirements should be verified before proceeding with the project.

• There might be options for grants from EGLE or the EPA to offset some of the costs. The Council is paying for problems they did not create. Mr. Kieser stated that the EPA has gotten away from funding regional treatment systems. Their funding is prioritized to low impact development. Grant money for up-stream source control might be available.
The grant cycle for implementation grants is June or July and it takes about a year from the time you apply. Those grants are highly competitive and you would have to be in a priority area. If the grant is awarded, it would take about a year and a half before the funding would start. It is hard to get support for an EGLE grant.

Mr. Strazdas, supported by Mr. Kohler, moved to accept the storm water proposal from Kieser & Associates. The Council is requesting that Kieser & Associates proceed with completing the design documents as presented. Follow up with the Kalamazoo Community Foundation should proceed to determine how much money the Council can withdraw from the account. The motion carried with no objections.

Mr. Frever mentioned that the motion is in alignment with the Declaration of Conservation Restrictions, which specifies that special attention should be given to water quality in Asylum Lake and protection of the Asylum Lake watershed.

Kieser & Associates will move forward with the 60% design and the Council will check with the Kalamazoo Community Foundation to determine if the funds are available for this project. The subcommittee will meet monthly with Kieser & Associates.

Discussion followed about contacting the City to find out if the Council can get a firm commitment regarding the barracuda traps. Mr. Kieser stated that James Baker, Director of the City of Kalamazoo Public Services Department, indicated that maintenance of the Barracuda traps would fit within their purview.

Mr. Strazdas commented that the Council would be putting private assets in the City of Kalamazoo right-of-way, so there are legal issues to consider. There was a discussion at the annual meeting about the proposed Barracuda trap. City representatives were in favor of cleaning out the barracuda trap but sometimes commitments slip. The Council could draft a letter to the City administration and the mayor regarding this issue.

V. OLD BUSINESS.

a. Abuse of Preserve. Signs harmed; bike racks trashed; needed maintenance by spillway. Ice hockey & bonfires.

- There have been recent reports of skating and bonfires on the lake. Mr. Sauber spoke with the police captain about having a patrol at night but they won’t be driving in the Preserve. Ms. Holmes stated that police have been patrolling the Preserve during the day on the path by Drake Rd. The ALPA is wondering if there is anything else that can be done. There was reluctance about placing video cameras in the Preserve.

- Mr. Strazdas advised that the Police Chief stated that if more police reports are filed regarding issues in the Preserve, the patrols will be increased. Mr. Scott observed a police vehicle going through the Preserve.

- Ms. Huxmann has materials to fix the aluminum sign by the Drake Road entrance. She got a quote of $450 to replace the new sign face. We need to see how the split material of the sign weathers through repair with the clear plastic film. Once the trail on the southeast side is re-routed, the sign will be replaced there.

- The back of the sign was vandalized but not the front. It was suggested that the sign could be reinforced with plywood on the back. Mr. Hampton stated that three gashes went all the way through to the front of the sign.

- If the trail is added by Parkview, that won’t be reflected on the map. An updated map could be placed over the existing map at the Parkview and Winchell entrances. Mr. Scott mentioned that the trail improvements will not make a big difference to the map.

- The Sign Subcommittee needs to report back to the Council about what they have done with the signs.

b. WALK nature route, the Winchell – Asylum Lake – Kleinstuck trail - ODWNA.

- Postponed

c. BTR2 Construction effects.

- Mr. MacNellis received the landscape plans for the new Borgess building at BTR2. There is about ¾ of an acre of parking surface for the Borgess project. There is curb and gutter all the way around so storm water will collect and not run off.
• They will be channeling the roof, parking area, and the canopies over the entryway to two of the three detention basins that already exist. The detention basins have quite a bit of capacity. They overflow to the pond that Mr. Kieser was talking about. The storm water will be treated too.
• The plan follows the design parameters that were set up, and they are using native plants and cultivars in the landscape. Mr. MacNellis will report back to the Council if he finds something that is a concern.

d. Asylum Lake financials & budget for next year.
• Mr. Sauber reported that $27,023 was spent from July to January, that includes repairs to the railing and the shadow box. The $17,000 in August was the total from March to August. From February to June, there is an expected total of $16,800 to be spent. The Garlic Mustard pull will cost about $1,000.
• The total for the year is estimated to be $43,823. The total should be about the same for next year. The cost for mowing might go down because some of those areas might be eliminated.

VI. PROJECT/SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS.
a. Any applications for using the Preserve?
• No applications were received.

b. Management Plan update and thoughts about hiring ecological services from Wildtype, prairie burning, surveys, etc.
• Mr. Bassett reported that the Management Plan Subcommittee met twice. They are doing an overhaul on the structure of the Plan.
• The contractor provided a ballpark figure for the second botanical ecological survey.
• Timelines will be created for the work that needs to be done this year. Discussion will follow with Wildtype and possibly another contractor about what needs to be done. The Management Plan won’t be revised in time to provide direction this year.
• The contractor for the burn provided an estimate to Mr. MacNellis of between $3,000 and $3,500 for the work that needs to be done. The goal is to burn savannah 1, which is 14 to 15 acres north of Cherry Lane. It would be preferable to burn that area before Wildtype begins their work.
• The subcommittee also discussed Section F6 on the south side of the lake between the spillway and the cement dock. That is a 4.5-acre section that needs to be burned to create carbon, and possibly get plants and seeding there this year. The estimate includes Section F6.
• Mr. MacNellis would like to bid the work out between Mr. Borneman and Mr. Mindell. The subcommittee still has $5,000 earmarked for burns. It would be helpful to get the bids before the March meeting.
• Mr. Strazdas referred to the second page of the budget document regarding funds that have already been allotted. The Council allocated $20,000 for Kieser & Associates. There is $4,900 remaining that is not encumbered.
• The Council needs to budget what Wildtype should do in the Preserve. Mr. MacNellis said that the Council spent an average of $32,000 per year for the work done by Wildtype. What should next year’s number be?

c. Signage committee: plans for next year?
• The signage committee already has $1,300 remaining per page 2 of the spreadsheet. Mr. Scott mentioned that the posts still need to be put up, but they have not been purchased yet. More way-finding signs are needed and informational signs are being discussed. The estimated budget is between $1,000 and $2,000 for next year.
• Temporary signs on wires were discussed. The signs can be moved around the Preserve. The Wolf Tree Nature Preserve is an example of how those signs can be used.

d. The trails committee would like to move forward with the OCBA proposal to implement the first phase of trail improvements; plans for next year?.
• There is a two-phase trail project proposed for an area near the Parkview parking lot. OCBA designed phase 1, which is moving the trail from where it is now to the west to avoid large trees. Mr. MacNellis suggested
that the project proceed as soon as possible to recover the existing trail, close it and protect the roots of the larger trees.

- Phase 2 is a bypass of the trail and steps that go past the big Oak tree. The subcommittee recommends proceeding with phase 1, which is estimated to cost $15,040.

VII. NEW BUSINESS.

a. ALPA memo suggesting video surveillance of the Drake Rd. entrance & a garlic mustard pull plan including $1,000 budget.

- Ms. Holmes stated that the ALPA sent out a tentative plan for the garlic mustard project. The subcommittee will meet again in a week or so. Mr. Sauber will stay in touch with the powers that be at WMU.
- The work days will likely occur on Saturday. It is a major task to register people for this project. It appears there will be a lot of people who want to help with the Garlic Mustard pull. There are over 1,600 people on Facebook.
- The plan is to have the Drake Road gate open and volunteer groups headed up by trained volunteers. The large patch of Garlic mustard will be mowed down by WMU equipment under the supervision of Tom Sauber and will be mechanically dealt with over the next few years.
- Ms. Holmes, supported by Mr. Strazdas, moved to approve $1,000 for the Garlic Mustard project. The motion was approved by voice vote.
- The garlic mustard project should be done in April or early May. The pit needs to be dug and that is beyond the scope of the volunteer project.
- The southeast area is not far from the Parkview entrance. There are small patches of Garlic Mustard throughout the Preserve. It should not be an issue to get volunteers but someone needs to give them directions. People are not normally encouraged to go off the trails but that will be necessary for this project. Mr. Bassett volunteered to help supervise the project.

b. New budget proposals.

- A budget will be presented for the March meeting.

VIII. NEXT ONLINE MEETING.

- The next meeting is scheduled for March 11th.

IX. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS.

- None

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS.

- None

XI. ADJOURNMENT.

- The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.