AGAWAMUCK CREEK WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN
WATERSHED ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING #3 SUMMARY NOTES

Project Number:

Location: Town Hall/Zoom

Date: June 14, 2023

Time: 7:00PM

Meeting Attendance	
Committee Members	
Barbara Sagal	Chair, Watershed Advisory Committee
David Lewis, Esq	Chair of the Conservation Council, Town of Hillsdale
Sally Baker	Project Manager, PBI, Inc.
Gretchen Stevens	Conservation Council, Town of Hillsdale
WAC Advisors	
Emily Vail	Hudson River Watershed Alliance
Consulting Team	
Matthew Rogers	LaBella Associates
Corneil Smith	LaBella Associates
Steve Winkley	LaBella associates
John Behan	Behan Planning
Dana Brady	Behan Planning

Meeting was convened at 7:10 pm

1. Matthew Rogers began the meeting by reviewing the agenda and mentioning the next meeting date.
2. Matthew began a review of the report.

Watershed Visions, Goals, and Objectives

1. The committee reviewed each item and Matthew asked for feedback.
2. David Lewis commented that some of the wording may need to be adjusted, he offered to send a draft to LaBella.
3. Gretchen Stevens commented that strengthening local legislation would help with implementation of the management plan and that it should be included as a goal.
4. Matthew explained that the Vision, Goals, and Objectives would be updated based on input. Additional comments from the WAC will be accepted by email.

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Physical Features, Geological Resources, and Water Resources

1. Steve provided an overview of where data was sourced.
2. Steve explained that report's findings are provided at the subwatershed level. Seven subwatersheds have been identified.
    a. The Agawamuck Creek has been split into 3 reaches: Agawamuck Creek, Middle Reach, and Upper Reach.
    b. Additionally, the watershed contains 2 physiographic provinces, "Hudson Valley section" of the Valley and Ridge as well as the "Taconic section" of the New England physiographic provinces.
3. One major takeaway from the report is the high amount of variability for multiple factors in the watershed.
4. Slopes:
    a. The slopes within the watershed were analyzed using a Digital Elevation Model (DEM)
    b. Ranges from gentle slopes to very steep areas, with steepest areas found in the Taconic region.
    c. Steep slopes have impacts on multiple areas of infrastructure, specifically sewer systems. This requires creative solutions for areas/properties with steep slopes looking to be developed.
5. Geology and Soils
    a. The Taconic region has bedrock at or right below the land surface and are subject to higher rates of erosion.
    b. Steve provided an overview of the importance of infiltration vs. runoff.
        i. Explained that most of the watershed is made up of glacial till which has low infiltration rates and high runoff rates.
        ii. This makes erosion a big issue, regulations around steep slopes should be considered/assessed.
6. Precipitation
    a. Rain has a range of 44-48 inches within the watershed, while snow has a larger range of 76-100 inches.
7. Wetlands
    a. Steve explained the importance of wetlands' hydrological, geographical, and ecological importance.
    b. There are 2 databases used to map wetlands, NWI and DEC.
    c. NWI wetlands are not necessarily under the jurisdiction of NYS or the federal government.
    d. DEC has regulations around mapped wetlands, including a 100-foot check zone.
    e. There is very little wetland coverage in the watershed, which is slightly alarming, and Steve recommended that attention to wetlands be given in the vision, goals, and objectives.
8. Waterways and Classifications
    a. Many streams and tributaries are unnamed.
    b. Others have been assigned classifications by DEC.

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c. Based on available data, NYSDEC may have incorrectly labeled and classified Philmont Reservoir. Another water body is labelled as the Philmont reservoir, and it is listed as a possible drinking source which it is not.
    i. This potential discrepancy will be addressed in the Report.
d. Summit lake is considered Class B waterbody, which is recreational.

9. Aquifers
    a. Philmont gets its drinking water from a sand and gravel aquifer.
    b. The rest of the watershed is reliant on bedrock, 95% of wells drill into bedrock at depths ranging 40 to 1,000 feet.
        i. Average yield is 5 gallons per minute, but it varies quite widely.
10. Steve reviewed the information collected and presented, as well as information that still needs to be inventoried. He opened the floor for questions.
11. Gretchen mentioned that the Philmont reservoir once served as a backup water source but was unsure if it is still controlled by Philmont to some extent.
    a. Steve responded saying that it is privately owned and abuts private property. It is no longer a back-up water supply, along with another pond (possibly Forest Lake) that had been designated for the same purpose.
        i. Philmont is also subject to surface water treatment rule which is why those sources are no longer used.
12. Barbara Sagal asked about development on wetlands.
    a. Steve explained it depends on the type of wetland.
        i. NWI is just an inventory and does not have any regulatory authority, but that there are certain regulations associated with DEC wetlands.
        ii. DEC wetlands have rules about what kind of development is allowed within 100 feet.
13. David mentioned that the Hamlet of Harlemville believes they are on the Agawamuck Creek rather than within a subwatershed/tributary.
    a. Steve explained that the subwatershed names were found on the USGIS national database.
14. Sally Baker mentioned that people often get confused by which streams/waterbodies are which and that it is likely best to keep using the USGIS designated names and provide a footnote or comment to understand the difference between common names and official names in the case that local readers are confused.
15. Sally asked about the major points of the current report which could be relayed to the Mayor of Philmont.
    a. Steve mentioned the importance of wellhead protection overlay districts (some communities in the watershed already have this)
        i. Matthew stated that overlays that are in the land use regulations will be discussed and added to maps.

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16. Sally mentioned that there was a DEC dam that was recently redone on the Philmont Reservoir, and agreed to send the information she had to Steve.

Community Profiles

17. John Behan summarized the results of the community profiles and reviewed applicable community plans and reports (comprehensive plans, water quality studies, biological reports).
18. John discussed land cover and land use within the watershed.
    a. Very rural, majority of land is used for hay pasture or is forested (deciduous).
19. Discussed land use impacts on water quality.
20. Residential, vacant, and agriculture are the top 3 uses in the county.
    a. John mentioned that this is consistent with landcover for the watershed based on parcel data.
21. Gretchen Stevens mentioned that some of the information being presented could be misleading or incorrect given that parcel classifications do not always give the most accurate indication of a land use/land cover (e.g., a large parcel of forested land with a house on it could be considered residential even though the larger character of the parcel does not serve a residential purpose). Some of the maps might lead people to believe it's a highly suburbanized when in reality it is not.
22. Looking at aerial photography actually gives a better indication of how land is being used or what the .
23. The report text will be updated to clarify the differences between land use and land cover data.
24. John went on to provide county population demographics and discussed the population density for each Agawamuck community.
25. John then discussed the importance of maintaining water quality in the watershed.
26. Matthew then reviewed regulations that impact water quality and infrastructure for each community.
27. Some committee members provided additional areas to include in the regulation review, such as a ridgeline overlay for Hillsdale.
28. Sally mentioned the Philmont is in the middle of updating their comprehensive plan.
29. Matthew stated that once the initial regulation review is complete, Labella will connect with each community to ensure that all the relevant regulations are included and up to date.
30. Matthew reviewed next steps.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm

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ITEM	ACTION ITEM	OWNER
1	Send draft of vision, goals, and objectives edits/formatting to Labella	David Lewis
2	Send information on DEC dam to Steve Winkly	Sally Baker
3	How should public water be dativized	Village of Philmont
4	Update maps	Labella
5	Include additional regulations into report	Labella
6	Create methodology for build out analysis	Labella

The preceding minutes represent the author's understanding of the matters discussed and decisions reached. The Committee will determine completeness and accuracy at their next scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
LABELLA ASSOCIATES, D.P.C.

Matthew Rogers, Senior Planner, LaBella Associates

Cc: All Attendees

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