



New York - New Jersey
Harbor Estuary Program

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

of the New York – New Jersey
Harbor Estuary Program

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HEP Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

April 26, 2005

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Newark, NJ

Present: *Bob Alpern, Joel Banslaben* (HEP Office), *Laura Bartovics* (NY Sea Grant/HEP Office), *Anne Carpenter* (NYCSWCD), *Carter Craft* (MWA/ CAC Co-Chair), *Edgar Freud* (Sierra Club), *Porter-Ann Gaines* (MWA), *Jane Jackson* (NYRP), *Steve Lang* (CUNY), *Anthony Maraccini* (Turn Around Friends), *Michelle Doran McBean* (Future City, Inc.), *Robert Nyman* (EPA/HEP Office), *Clay Sherman* (NJDEP), *Bill Shore* (Nature Network), *Debbie Mans* (NY/NJ Baykeeper/CAC Co-Chair)

C. Craft: Opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions. First item is to tackle the by-laws, which the CAC has followed off and on over the years but having a useful, working set of by-laws makes more sense. Proposed the formation of a working group to “fix” the by-laws: strengthen, update and augment them.

B. Alpern: One thing that isn’t reflected in the current by-laws is that the original Citizens Advisory Committee was combined with the Local Government Committee (LGC) to form the current CAC; there is no local government representation, not only on the CAC but also largely (and perhaps more importantly) throughout HEP (only the Management Committee).

L. Bartovics: After looking over the historical CAC documents, there are only references to the LGC but nothing written about what happened to it.

B. Alpern: This happened during the time Genie was co-chairing the CAC.

R. Nyman: Another important question to ask while talking about local government involvement is “what does the CAC want and expect from the local government’s participation?”

C. Craft: Those willing to work on the by-laws should meet separately; Bob Alpern and the 2 co-chairs agreed to work on this together.

M. Doran McBean: There’s a Policy Committee (PC) meeting on 5/25 and a Management Comm. (MC) meeting on 5/19 so CAC should plan to either have something in time for those meetings or else not meet until afterwards

Citizens Advisory Committee Co-chairs

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R. Nyman: The LGC could be discussed at the MC mtg. but there must be something put together beforehand

L. Bartovics: Seems that this is part of the larger discussion about what the CAC is (advisory group to the MC and/or group that takes the lead on public involvement, education and outreach); perhaps all of these issues should be explored simultaneously

B. Alpern: The MC needs to look more closely at the structure of HEP overall, considering many of its issues extend well beyond just the CAC (the STAC hasn't met in a long time; DMMIWG has been abandoned or superseded by the Harbor Roundtable; still neglecting the NY Bight, which was combined with HEP years ago)

R. Nyman: Just a clarification, that in terms of the Bight, there was a conscious decision made that HEP would focus on the core area, considering that resources are limited and there are other programs that address parts of the Bight

L. Bartovics: In terms of the CAC, there is a difference between the Citizens ADVISORY Committee whose role is to advise the MC on what citizens want and need them to be doing - and the education/outreach/stewardship that the CAC currently engages in; these are two separate roles involving very different activities

C. Craft: Based on these comments, it seems like the CAC needs to clean out its own attic before telling other work groups how to structure their own. Good course of action would be to have revised by-laws in time for the 5/19 MC meeting which will hopefully invigorate other working groups (members should submit comments on the by-laws by 5/7 to be incorporated into the revisions)

A Marraccini: Doubts the CAC's capacity to reach-out to elected officials

L. Bartovics: And CAC should be aware of the difference between speaking for the CAC – and speaking for all of HEP (something the CAC does not have authority to do)

D. Mans: Are elected officials on the mailing lists?

L. Bartovics: YES. The mailing list includes representatives from the US House and Senate, NY & NJ Senate and Assembly, NY & NJ Governors, and NY & NJ Mayors. Other than Mayors, the only other local officials on the list are NYC Council Members.

D. Mans: Perhaps members could submit names of other local officials that they want to receive the HEP mailings?

C. Craft: CAC would need to be wary of endorsing elected officials; but need to move along to other issues. In terms of the by-laws, voting has been determined by Steering Committee consensus in the past. Could this be changed to be simply a majority of members in attendance at the meeting? Or else change the Steering Committee to be anyone who has attended 2 meetings in the past year

M. Doran Mcbean: Can we define the word 'consensus' first?

J. Banslaben: In terms of the membership, have been seeing lots of the same faces; perhaps we should start trying to broaden our reach and attendance

L. Bartovics: With the development of clear goals and a mission, the CAC have the necessary tools to attract more people

B. Alpern: What about an annual report on the state of education efforts; determining participation rate could be really useful (similar to the State of the Harbor report)

R. Nyman: This was initiated last year; Cathy Yuhas has compiled information but is waiting to incorporate the 2005 data in order to have enough to “show.”

D. Mans: But even if there isn’t enough to “show” that should be reflected in an annual report which would then tell us “the CAC needs to DO more!”

L. Bartovics: Would this be a CAC- or MC-produced report? They would be very different....

D. Mans: How about just a one-pager to the MC on the CAC?

R. Nyman: That would be really, really good to do

C. Craft: CAC activities over the past 12 months will be added to materials given to the MC

J. Jackson: Does the Harbor/Bight issue make sense to be left up to the Habitat WG?

B. Alpern: The HWG needs direction of its own; thus far their focus has been on the CRIP but ignored much else

C. Craft: Will prepare a draft document from the 5/19 MC meeting that will include the STAC, MC, DMMIWG, Geography and HWG. Send another other items to address via email

L. Bartovics: A lot of products, tools, priorities, etc. will fall under the stewardship roles, which are being discussed later on in the agenda

C. Craft: Great. Do need to make a decision regarding the by-laws; right now the Steering Committee members are the only ones who can vote, but would like to be democratic to make it possible for people who’ve attended over the past year to be able to vote for the co-chairs as well

M. Doran Mcbean: Motion to allow all CAC members who have attended over the past year to vote

D. Mans: Second the motion; motion was passed

L. Bartovics: Nominees are Carter Craft and Debbie Mans for CAC Co-Chairs for 2005/6 but a vote of no confidence can be cast

Agenda Item IV.

A. 2005 HEP Implementation Review

R. Nyman: The 2005 Implementation Review (IR) happens every 3 years where the EPA Headquarters comes to check on the progress, projects, how our money is being spent, etc. There exists an Executive Summary that can be made available for those who want it. The Review Team is Kathy Klein (from Delaware Estuary Program) and 3 EPA Headquarters/Regional people. The team will be visiting the area in June for an on-site visit (C. Craft and D. Mans would like to participate) and want to get out in the field to see some of the sites (especially Liberty State Park.) Will probably be sometime mid-June for 2 – 3 consecutive days. The team has been impressed with the Health of the Harbor Report and OASIS.

J. Banislaben: Is there feedback from past Implementation Review visits?

R. Nyman: Yes!

L. Bartovics: There are copies of the 2002 IR suggestions if people are interested in seeing them (can be emailed).

R. Nyman: If we don't pass the review, the federal funding gets cut. It was noted that while most Directors of NEPs are members of ANEP, R. Nyman cannot belong because they are a lobbying organization and he is a federal employee.

C. Craft: The National Estuary Program (NEP) has leveled off with \$35 million authorized (\$24 million appropriated) but the National Estuarine Reserves Research (NERR) funding keeps increasing; is there a way to fix this? Can we call and say "we want this fully funded!"?

J. Banislaben: Is there a breakdown anywhere that details where HEP gets all its monies aside from EPA?

R. Nyman: Right now we know about what HEP gets from the 2 states, NYC, PVSC, SWCD; it's fairly limited but could be much more comprehensive

J. Jackson: What's the source of money for the NERR? (NOAA) And is there ever cross-pollination with the NEP?

L. Bartovics: The Hudson River NERR is the closest NERR. It has 5 sites on the Hudson, the closest to the HEP core area is Piermont Marsh. The Jacques Cousteau Institute NERR also has 4 sites in NJ (Barnegat Bay and 4 others). Have had some contact with them, but it's been difficult to work together because of having to deal with so many agencies

S. Lang: What about the South Shore Estuarine Reserve?

R. Nyman: It's run by the NYS Department of State (DOS)

B. Stewardship Summit

L. Bartovics: Currently, the HEP budget is awaiting PC approval for FY05, which begins on October 1. The idea for the Stewardship Summit was born out of a call for budget requests that turned into a desire for more cooperative, regional projects as opposed to the kinds of proposals the Mini-Grants program was receiving.

C. Craft: Point of clarification: this doesn't mean that small grants won't be granted; we just don't want the CAC to be required to provide a series of small grants. Additionally, the estuary-wide message was being lost so the need to develop a plan to reinstate this portion of the grants became apparent, hence the Stewardship Summit.

L. Bartovics: Group needs to develop outreach and education goals; the Stewardship Summit would be a planning tool to have these goals developed, come October 1, 2005. Need to set a date; Friday in May/June (June 1, 2 and 3 were offered as options). Will draft goals of the Summit, but this will focus just on educational and outreach goals, not the role of the CAC. So it will address: what's the CAC/HEP message, who is our audience, what product do we want out of the grant program, etc. which will be essential to get a good attendance. Around 50 people; one large room with smaller discussion tables.

B. Alpern: Should encourage the LISS CAC participants to attend as well as NYSDEC's HREP

J. Banislaben: Does this need a facilitator?

L. Bartovics: Will work with the Co-Chairs to develop the goals of the Summit, but not sure that an outside facilitator is necessary; with HEP staff and others, should be able to manage but will be determined by the day's schedule and program; this is a meeting for the CAC by the CAC... The summit is a great way to bring in other groups that are already working on similar efforts; don't want to be talking about site-specific projects that are already underway necessarily; one outcome could be a master list of example projects (ex: master list of Habitat Restoration Projects)

A Marraccini: Turn Around Friends received \$50,000 from the US Forestry Service to plant 101 tree (20 ft. tall and 3-4 ft. in diameter) in upland areas. Great example of how different areas can be used to promote what the CAC and HEP do (as well as an alternate source of funding!)

L. Bartovics: The summit will identify projects to work on together to find other sources of funding! We need specific projects first, though

A Marraccini: Should also tap into the electeds discretionary funds

C. EstuaryLive!

L. Bartovics: The NY/NJ HEP was chosen as one of the 5 EstuariesLive! programs happening across the nation to celebrate National Estuaries Day. The live 1-hour webcast will be at Liberty State Park (Caven Point Beach) with 2 class groups (one from NJ and one from NY) and will be a great way to reach a much broader audience and result in a video that HEP can use indefinitely.

D. Mans: What will the HEP event focus on/cover?

L. Bartovics: All the broadcasts are different; some focus on a theme or topic. The HEP focus will be the urban estuary: seining, introduction to marine life, human interaction with the estuary (beach clean-up), recreational use of the estuary (kayakers)

M. Doran Mcbean: Request for a brief synopsis or copy of the invitation

R. Nyman: Has there been any marketing of this?

L. Bartovics: Yes: \$3,000 for marketing, film student to help with the script (maybe?), flow, etc. Is aimed at all grade levels. Can also use the \$3K to help market to get lots of schools to sign-up to participate/watch. Also want as many people (actual bodies!) to be there as possible, especially to screen and answer student questions

J. Banslaben: Is the focus strictly environmental?

L. Bartovics: No! It will need to include and incorporate the whole variety of issues at play in an urban estuary (esp. the Port) which means it could include pre-recorded segments at other locations.

M. Doran Mcbean: Perhaps this is a good discussion topic for the Summit?

L. Bartovics: As long as it doesn't take too much time; the summit is definitely a good place to recruit participants. Also need to develop a back-up plan in event of rain, develop a clear educational message and circulate pre-day materials. Note: A separate planning meeting will be scheduled.

J. Banslaben: The concept of collaborative efforts and its essential role in managing resources needs to be portrayed but that's difficult to show

A Marraccini: Urban Park Rangers?

L. Bartovics: Neither school has been identified but LSP will choose the NJ school and with the help of Mary Leou (at NYU) will choose the NY school.

J. Jackson: Knows a group in Upper Manhattan who has been doing a lot of water resources work

B. Shore: Need to make sure to involve the kids in habitat site restoration

V. Work Group/Subcommittees Updates

D. Mans: Harbor Roundtable was initiated to develop a sound and comprehensive environmental agenda to complement the ongoing port development and navigation initiatives in the Port of New York and New Jersey. The goal is to establish both a World Class Port and a World Class Estuary. On March 18, 2005 the Roundtable members submitted a statement to the Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy & Water Development, US House of Representatives regarding the US Army Corps of Engineers Appropriations for FY2006, Federal Channels in the Port of New York and New Jersey.

P. Gaines: The Public Access Subcommittee met on April 1 and discussed access issues in Southeast Queens and the federal transportation bill. MWA's H2O access points are now

available on the OASIS website. The river crossing design guidelines were submitted to HEP and Port Authority in mid-April. Additionally, NYSDEC gave a grant to MWA to develop temporary portable informational signage at ferry terminals.

R. Nyman: There is a new oversight group for the TMDL effort on management issues. The groups will provide guidance to the technical groups to ensure that resultant TMDLs meet all regulatory requirements. Key participation in the oversight group consists of Jim Dezolt, Dick Draper and Jeff Meyers (NY); Deb Hammond and Barbara Hirst (NJ); and Kevin Brick (EPA)

B. Shore: The Nature Network recently launched with a 2-day conference; 24 member organizations and 18 Board of Directors. The conference discussed the 5 ecosystems and variety of species in the Tri-State region. Currently working on a website/journal and solicited ideas for programs. They are trying to develop a framework to facilitate collaboration in research, education, etc. as well as starting a biodiversity atlas. Membership is open and the annual dues is \$100.

VI. Future Meeting Dates

5/19 Management Committee Meeting

5/25 Policy Committee Meeting

6/1 Stewardship Summit (tent.)