

**MISSISSIPPI VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
POLICY AND PRIORITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MVCA Offices

2:00 pm

January 16, 2020

AGENDA

ROLL CALL

Adoption of Agenda

Declaration of Interest (written)

Minutes

1. Approve Minutes – Policy & Priorities Advisory Committee – December 4, 2019

Information Item

2. Mississippi River Watershed Plan – Backgrounder Four: Asset Management

Hard copies of the document will be distributed at the meeting. Staff will walk members through key elements of the report and highlight issues that will require consideration as we move through the watershed planning process.

ADJOURNMENT

Mill of Kintail Gate House
Almonte

MINUTES

December 4, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT:

J. Atkinson, Chair;
K. Thompson, Vice-Chair;
F. Campbell;
G. Gower;
B. Holmes;
J. Inglis;
J. Mason.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

R. Darling;
T. Fritz;
J. Karau.

STAFF PRESENT:

S. McIntyre, General Manager;
A. Symon, Watershed Planner;
S. Lickley, Recording Secretary.

VISITORS PRESENT:

G. McEvoy.

J. Atkinson called the meeting to order at 2:22 p.m.

PPAC12/04/19-1

MOVED BY: B. Holmes

SECONDED BY: F. Campbell

Resolved, That the agenda for the Policy & Priorities Advisory Committee meeting be adopted, as presented.

“CARRIED”

BUSINESS:

1. Minutes – Policy & Priorities Advisory Committee Meeting – November 14, 2019

PPAC12/04/19-2

MOVED BY: J. Mason

SECONDED BY: F. Campbell

Resolved, That the Minutes of the Mississippi Valley Policy & Priorities Advisory Committee meeting held on November 14, 2019 be received and approved as printed.

“CARRIED”

2. Mississippi River Watershed Plan – Backgrounder Three: Natural Systems

A. Symon reviewed key elements of the document titled *Backgrounder Three: Natural Systems*. Her review highlighted key considerations of each section of the report, which present baseline conditions, trends and potential concerns for the future system health.

Targets and Thresholds

No comments were made.

Wetlands

A. Symon described studies that suggest that our watersheds (Carp and Mississippi River) have experienced a 65% loss in wetlands from pre-settlement conditions.

J. Mason suggested that MVCA complete comparison to other CAs to see the range in the province. She explained that at the Latornell Conference many of the Southern Ontario CAs were looking at multi-million-dollar projects to restore wetlands because of too much development. A statistic on other CAs' wetland coverage would be valuable to aid in protection of wetlands from development pressure.

S. McIntyre added that wetlands mitigate flooding. There is a need to protect wetlands near urban areas, which are under development pressure, to mitigate future flooding.

B. Holmes noted that farmland also acts as a buffer for regulating flooding. She said that she observed that paving over farmland causes areas of mass flood.

A. Symon noted that she will bring the breakdown of each municipality's wetland coverage back into the appendix so it shows which areas in the watershed are over developed or lacking wetland coverage compared to pre-settlement numbers.

S. McIntyre advised that A. Symon add mention that non-Provincially Significant Wetlands are regulated through the Conservation Authority. S. McIntyre provided her understanding of the difference between a 'fen' and 'bog' and it was agreed that definitions should be included.

Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs)

B. Holmes asked if Appleton Swamp is a Candidate ANSI and added that there was a lot of debate from residents on this topic. She asked how is an area determined as an ANSI.

A. Symon responded that Appleton Swamp is still undetermined, and it continues to be studied by the Field Naturalists to determine if the nearby dam is affecting the tree growth.

J. Mason asked if there is any action to try and get the Appleton Wetlands protected.

B. Holmes responded that they are waiting for conclusive scientific evidence. She advised that if there is significant evidence that it needs to be protected, the Municipality of Mississippi Mills would like to protect it.

S. McIntyre suggested to add the 3 main wetlands in a different colour to the map in this section.

B. Holmes asked if the development near the Burnt Lands Conservation Area was moving forward. She advised A. Symon to look into this specific case further.

Woodlands

S. McIntyre suggested that a table be added so readers can see how each municipality is performing in woodland coverage (bring forward from the appendix).

Natural Heritage Systems

A. Symon noted that there are no comprehensive maps of heritage systems available.

B. Holmes added that the Municipality of Mississippi Mills has created its own mapping for planning purposes, although it has not been well received by the public. She also added that in their municipality there are undocumented historic municipal drains that have created new wetland-like areas.

Species at Risk

S. McIntyre noted that locally we should advocate for the species at home that we are trying to protect. She added that a recent scientific study states that there has been a 70% reduction in migrating birds in North America which most people aren't aware of.

J. Mason shared that Ontario's Natural Heritage Information Centre is updating its data, so reaching out for more data is advised.

The group suggested that citing numbers of local sightings of species at risk from the Field Naturalists and other sources would show that there is opportunity and need for protection.

Surface Water Quality – River and Tributaries

S. McIntyre stated that the scatter plot graphs are not readable and would like the data to be reformatted for the next version. A general concern was expressed regarding what statements could be made regarding trending given the data set. A. Symon stated that she would re-examine the data and look at other formats.

Surface Water Quality – Lakes

J. Mason stated that it is clear that some lakes have declining health. She added, when the report details possible actions, these lake trends will be useful data. The limited data proves that monitoring and data collection is valuable and it would be beneficial for MVCA to have more monitoring and sampling.

Algae

A. Symon described that a study on Mississippi Lake indicates that algae blooms are most often spotted during a spike in temperature. S. McIntyre elaborated that the public needs to be concerned about Hazardous Algae Blooms (HABs) after the algae breaks down, which is when the toxins are released into the water. This can be a concern for water recreation and cottages where people use lake water for personal use.

Fish and Fish Habitat

S. McIntyre noted that dam structures can affect fish habitats. It would be helpful to know generally if and when we lost species at dam locations to see if further mitigation is needed.

Invasive Species

S. McIntyre asked about control measures for invasive species. She advised to contact Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) to get more information.

The group expressed its interest in reading the information provided in these reports and optimism for public interest in the content.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

PPAC12/04/19-3

MOVED BY: K. Thompson

SECONDED BY: B. Holmes

Resolved, That the Policy & Priorities Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

“CARRIED”

“S. Lickley, Recording Secretary

J. Atkinson, Chair”