

**Cass River Greenway Meeting Minutes**  
**May 6, 2015**  
**City of Vassar Office 1:00 – 3:00 PM**

**Welcome and Introductions**

The group welcomed Audrey Schwing, who has replaced Charlie Bauer at the DEQ for the NPS program in our district. Audrey's email is [SchwingA1@michigan.gov](mailto:SchwingA1@michigan.gov)

Also, Robert McKay reported that he has met with the Vassar School District and a science teacher, Andy Tallman, is interested in joining our group.

**Saginaw Bay Watershed Conservation Partnership**

Mary Fales reported on the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) that is being implemented by the US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA). The Saginaw Bay Watershed Conservation Partnership, co-led by The Nature Conservancy and the Michigan Agri-Business Association, is the regional effort in this national program. A \$10 million, 5 year program, agreement is now in place to address excess nutrients and sediment in regional waterways throughout the Saginaw Bay watershed by employing three innovative strategies; 1) Utilizing precision conservation to set meaningful goals for implementing conservation practices, 2) Harnessing the influence of agribusiness to deliver conservation practices directly to farmers, and 3) Tracking progress using cutting edge online modeling tools. Training will begin this summer and project rollout will begin in the fall. For more information visit <http://nature.ly/saginawRCPP>.

**Streambank Erosion Grants/Project**

With the recent \$20,000 grant award from Saginaw Bay WIN, we now have over \$36,000 in funding for this project. Tiffany is now working with UM Flint to refine the erosion site survey data and preparing for the 2015 site work.

Jim distributed a "Standard and Specifications for Tree Revetment" document. We will need 300+ trees for the project over a 2 year period. Spruce, fir or red pine, 15 -20 feet tall, are the preferred trees. We can "stretch" our installations by using as much volunteer time and materials as possible. We currently have a good lead on trees and volunteers are needed to cut, haul and help install. We will discuss specifics at our next meeting.

Jim and Tiffan have submitted a grant request to the Great Lakes Commission for additional funding, using our existing grants as match money. We expect feedback on this request in June.

### **Tire Disposal Options**

Craig Kilpatrick has worked with his fellow Tuscola County Commissioners and they agreed to allow our Cass River Greenway committee members to dispose of, free of charge, tires we reclaim out of the Cass River and its waterways. We now have a letter of authorization that is available to interested members. Several letters were handed out at the meeting. Thank you Craig.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Cass River Clean Up – July 25**

Bill Wheeler reported on the clean up planned for Saturday, July 25, 2015. We will gather at Davis Park, located behind the Bridgeport Township Office at 8:00 AM for breakfast and orientation. Bill will issue a press release for the local papers. We will clean the river from Dixie Hwy to the Historic Bridge in Bridgeport. A grant request has been approved by the Great Lakes Commission and local sponsors been lined up. Visit [www.cassriver.org](http://www.cassriver.org) and click on the “Events” tab for more information.

### **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Float and Swim – June 27**

Area swimmers and paddlers are invited to join in the camaraderie for the 4<sup>th</sup> annual event. Kayaks, canoes, and paddle boards and more should meet at the Tuscola Township Park Launch and depart at 9:30 am. Swimmers will depart from the 9000 block of Ormes Road at 9:00 am.

Pontoons will assist and escort the swimmers downstream to Heritage Park. Wet suits are recommended for swimmers.

Interested swimmers should contact Bill Zehnder or Lori Payne at 989-652-9941 or email at [bzehnder@bavarianinn.com](mailto:bzehnder@bavarianinn.com).

Commemorative t-shirts will be available for a small fee.

### **Vassar Launch Project**

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund has recommended funding and the contract with them is now being finalized. Spicer Engineering has been hired for the project engineering and permit application work. Current plans call for the permit request to be submitted by midsummer and the new launch and park site to be constructed in 2016.

### **Bridgeport Launch Projects**

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund has recommended funding for the Davis Park proposal and the contract for funding has been finalized. Spicer Engineering has completed the design and the permit request to the DEQ has been submitted. Plans call for construction to begin on August 24.

Bill Wheeler further reported that their grant request for the development of the Hoffman site (Dixie Hwy) was not recommended for funding. Bill has submitted a new grant request to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for \$50,000. If approved, this launch would be built in 2016.

### **M-46 Launch Site**

The archeological assessment (SHPO) has been completed with no issues. Joe and Don have completed the project specifications and will be issuing an engineering request for quote soon. The request will include engineering and permit application. Joe is also working with MDOT to obtain their agreement since the launch will encroach on their right-of-way near the bridge.

### **Caine Road River Access Project**

C. A. Hall has been contracted for the bridge construction. The access drive across the ditch will be constructed by the Tuscoal Road Commission crew. After that is completed, the parking lot will be constructed. Access to the river will be via a natural pathway. All work should be completed this summer.

### **Frankenmuth Boat Launch**

Frankenmuth Parks & Rec have applied for a Natural Resources Trust Fund grant to expand the park area and rebuild the boat launch in Memorial Park (across the river from our Heritage Park canoe launch). We will not know the results of the MNRTF grant decision until December. In the meantime, Daren is looking for \$60,000 additional match. If monies are secured, it will be late 2016 or 2017 before construction is complete.

### **Channel 191 – Protecting our Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands**

A 35 minute video is now showing on Bridgeport/Frankenmuth Charter Cable channel 191 entitled “Protecting our Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands”. The schedule is posted on the community calendar of events (running on

channel 191) and the video is broadcast Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays at 9:00 am and 9:00 pm.

### **Communications Committee**

We had another discussion about the need for a Cass River Greenway Communications committee. Betty Goings and Janice Zawol agreed to serve on this effort. Bob will work with Betty and Janice on next steps.

### **Summer Events on the Cass**

4<sup>th</sup> Annual Paddle and Swim – June 27 – Tuscola to Frankenmuth

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual “FrankenMudder” – July 18 - Frankenmuth

7<sup>th</sup> Annual Cass River Clean Up – July 25 - Bridgeport

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Triathlon Bavarian Inn Experience – August 1 – Frankenmuth

The Great Lakes Rendezvous –August 14, 15, 17 - Bridgeport

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 15, 2015 1:00 – 3:00PM**  
**Vassar City Office**

Bob Zeilinger  
May 18, 2015