



Meeting Minutes

DATE / LOCATION

December 9, 2021 / Daphne City Hall – Daphne, Alabama

IN ATTENDANCE

Tim White, City of Daphne

Cathy Barnette, Dewberry

Cade Kistler, Mobile Baykeeper/resident - Daphne

Anna Miller, Keen Living/resident - Fairhope

Elizabeth Tonsmeire, resident - Fairhope

Lee Yokel, EcoSolutions/resident - Daphne

Gary Grover, Fairhope Environmental Advisory Board, Resident

Connie Whittaker, South Alabama Land Trust (SALT)

Danny ??, resident - Daphne

Maurice Horsey, resident – Daphne

Kent Brewer, Fly Creek Watershed Preservation Association

Stephanie Middlelot, resident – Daphne

Mike Shelton, Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR)

Danny Wray, resident - Daphne

Project Team

Henry Perkins, MBNEP

Christian Miller, MBNEP

Suzanne Sweetser, Thompson Engineering

Eliska Morgan, Thompson Engineering

Nicole Love, Thompson Engineering

Christopher Warn, Environmental Science Associates (ESA)

Troy Ephriam, Ephriam Environmental, LLC

Tim Thibaut, Barry Vittor and Associates

AGENDA

- The Team presented information about Watershed Management Planning process, Eastern Shore WMP watershed characterization, online survey results, and critical issues.
- Participants were then asked to go deeper on one or more of the critical issue areas. They were asked three questions: 1. What are the greatest concerns associated with this critical issue? 2. What are some solutions to those concerns? 3. What are the challenges to implementing those solutions?

DISCUSSION

- Human Health and Wellbeing Critical Issue Area (Troy Ephriam, facilitator)
 - 1. What are the greatest concerns associated with this critical issue?
 - Good water quality, clean air, and clean soils
 - Industries and private/corporate transportation need to be accountable for clean air
 - With clean soil citizens have access to healthy food
 - Quality of life = happiness
 - Lack of education and access to resources
 - Needs to be a balance of quality of life and access to resources to create a healthy wellbeing
 - 2. What are some solutions to address those concerns?
 - More public access to clean water resources/activities
 - Improved access to resources (i.e.; education, clean food, clean water, etc.) for citizens
 - 3. What are the challenges to implementing those solutions?
 - The Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) mindset of homeowners and local residents
 - How do we educate citizens about these issues and solutions to them? There doesn't seem to be an organized/coordinated method for that.
- Habitat Loss Critical Issue Area (Tim Thibaut, facilitator)
 - What are the greatest concerns associated with this critical issue?
 - Wetland fill (and thus loss of wetlands) is contributing to habitat loss
 - Shorelines along the Bay are eroding
 - One source could be the excessive stormwater outfalls into the Bay.
 - What are some solutions to address those concerns?
 - No responses
 - What are challenges to implementing those solutions?

- No responses
- Litter Critical Issue Area (Christian Miller, facilitator)
 - What are the greatest concerns associated with this critical issue?
 - No responses
 - What are some solutions to address those concerns?
 - Need to identify best locations for litter traps (Osprey Initiative).
 - What are some challenges to implementing those solutions?
 - No responses
- Erosion/Sedimentation Critical Issue Area (Suzanne Sweetser, facilitator)
 - What are the greatest concerns involving this critical issue?
 - Excessive hardening of shorelines is creating multiple problems including lack of public access.
 - Overuse of bulkheads
 - Regulatory/permitting hurdles are causing people not to want to use living shorelines
 - Over development has exacerbated instream erosion
 - What are some possible solutions to address those concerns?
 - Education
 - Cost sharing/funding
 - Need more contractors with living shoreline experience
 - More low impact development practices including larger riparian buffers
 - What are some challenges to implementing those solutions?
 - Costs
 - Political will
 - Easy way out
 - Reducing regulatory burdens
 - Better public education
- Development Critical Issue Area (Tim White, facilitator)
 - What are the greatest concerns involving this critical issue?
 - Overdevelopment is creating negative wetland impacts
 - Altered hydrology post-construction
 - Sewage transmission

- Runoff during construction
 - Lack of appropriate barriers during construction
- Fines for not following rules are too low
- Raising lots with fill
- Using non-native vegetation
- What are possible solutions to address these concerns?
 - Higher fines
 - Stricter ordinances
 - Creation of a stormwater management authority
 - Impact fees
 - Impervious cover limit ordinances
 - Build “up” – higher rather than wider
 - Mandate green infrastructure
- What are some challenges to implementing these solutions?
 - Funding
 - Politics
 - Developers in the position of power
 - Variances
 - Difficult to put a dollar value on environment and aesthetics
 - Not enough examples of good conservation or development practices
- Water Quality Critical Issue Area (Cathy Barnette, facilitator)
 - What are the greatest concerns involving this critical issue?
 - Speckled trout fisheries and other fisheries are strong, but need to maintain good water quality to avoid a potential downfall in populations
 - Over application of pesticides
 - Septic maintenance by homeowner
 - Sewer reporting
 - The municipal sewer/stormwater systems do not have a high enough capacity
 - Identification and protection of groundwater resources.
 - Is the Bay safe to swim or fish? How do citizens know? Who informs the general public?
 - Geese at the Fairhope beach.



- There is a report in Fairhope of bacteria levels that showed 20% of swimmers had gastrointestinal issues. The report states this is due to the geese.
- Abandoned steel pipe in Big Mouth Gulley
- What are some possible solutions for these concerns?
 - Education to homeowners regarding how to apply pesticides/fertilizers in a more environmentally friendly manner.
 - Education campaign on septic system operation and maintenance to septic owners.
 - Development of a self-reporting system.
 - Sewer infrastructure improvements
 - All utilities should do continued sewer capacity studies to ensure new growth and development does not overwhelm system.
 - Need to develop a common definition of “capacity”
 - Need to map septic systems and focus education campaigns accordingly
 - Can source tracking assist with this? Dauphin Island Sea Lab may be getting some funding to do source tracking in Fly Creek.
 - Conversion of septic to sewer
 - Create a stormwater authority
 - If there is no political will to create it on a regional scale then the cities could coordinate and develop a regional one.
 - Need to add a public aspect to it.
 - Goose eradication at Fairhope public beach
 - Model example: Great Lakes also had a goose problem and created a beach management plan. Could see if that would work for Fairhope.
- What are some challenges to implementing those solutions?
 - Funding
 - Public education and participation
 - The ability to identify who “owns” the problems and who is ultimately responsible for providing solutions