

## Walnut Creek Wetland Community Project Meeting Summary

Dec. 1, 2015 at the Walnut Creek Wetland Center

*Participants: Emily McCartha, Randy Senzig, Bill Flourney, Stacie Hagwood, Kevin Boyer, Frances Carmichael, Louie Rivers, David Shouse, Jemonde Taylor, Christy Perrin*

Participants looked at a “draft action plan” at the beginning of the meeting, which consisted of sticky notes detailing potential aspects of a grant proposal(s). The ideas came from the group’s feedback at the September 2015 meeting. A photo of the poster follows this summary of the group’s discussion.

Question for group: Who is our target community?

- Churches in the area- many parishioners live outside the area
- Community centers: Chavis, Biltmore, Garner Road, Sanford Rd, Passage Home Safety Club
- Youth who attend the community centers
  - Have a social gathering plan/budget for food, educational materials (Louie and Frances offered to work on that for the proposal)
  - Hold informational sessions at pick-up times at the community centers to reach youth and their parents
- Homeowners who live nearby
- Spanish speaking residents of the nearby apartment complex on Peterson St.
  - El Pueblo is active there and would be a good partner
  - Many kids who live there go to Laurel Park Elementary School

In-the ground projects- where should they be located?

- Projects at schools would likely be best for reaching youth and connecting with parents
  - Elementary Schools ideal as parents are most engaged with that age
  - Willing partners depends on willingness of principal
  - Laurel Park Elementary school- many local children go there, the teachers hold outings at the wetland center (a great example of a recent activity was provided)
  - Fuller Elementary School- nearby St. Ambrose and wetlands, Father Taylor has relationships with Principal, science teacher works with St. Ambrose. 51% are magnet attendees from other neighborhoods, 49% are local
  - Washington Elementary School- Kevin knows the principal
- Should we identify specific project sites to include in the grant?
  - Should we hold off on applying until we do the partnership building?
  - The grant proposal could include the process of partnership building, as it’s difficult to get it done without dedicated funding for staff time

Discussion about partnerships

- We should show a strong connection with a tangible group that we can work with
  - Provide educational experiences to this group
- Take the time to develop the knowledge and relationships among our potential partners
- We need an educational expert for developing educational materials
  - Some experts are already in the room- Randy

- C.H.E.R. coordinates the Neighborhood Ecology Corps- recruited as middle school students who go through a 2 year program that includes immersion in the natural environment and learning about it. The 2<sup>nd</sup> class has started this year. Randy is talking with organizations about pairing up students with work study assignments (Natural Science Museum, Triangle Land Conservancy, others)
- C.H.E.R. and N.E.C. is hosting “Science on Saturdays” at the wetland center- they invite an expert in to engage people in learning and doing (Bird banding happening on Dec. 5)

#### Concepts to include in grant proposal narrative

- Refer to the Walkable Watershed Plan recommendations in the proposal to boost credibility, show some background work done (there are non-specific recommendations about engaging community and installing stormwater projects)
- Educate the community about the issues, find out what would be wanted/the needs, then install a project as an example
- It’s difficult to engage adults, the best way to reach people is through engaging their children
- Consider including 1 to 3 in the ground projects as outcomes, to increase competitiveness
- The process of identifying projects wanted by the community could yield projects that the City of Raleigh cost share program could pay for (leveraging the grant’s funds for additional work paid by another organization)

