



WATERSHED NEWS

October 2021

LITTLE SEWICKLEY CREEK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 183 LEETSDALE, PA 15056

www.lscwatershed.org

October 2021 Update

Barbara Carrier

On my walk I met a neighbor of mine who had just returned from a fishing trip. As we were talking, he mentioned that when he first came into the area, he spent time catching and releasing fish in Little Sewickley Creek. He still enjoys fly fishing the creek but laments that there are not as many fish as there were years ago but enjoys the beauty of the stream. It is for him and others that the mission of Little Sewickley Creek Watershed is “to protect and conserve the natural beauty and environmental health of the watershed.”

Although 2021 has been a challenging year in many ways, Little Sewickley Creek continues to be a source of natural beauty and enjoyment as it meanders throughout the different municipalities. The total length of the creek and its tributaries is over twenty-six miles and protecting and preserving the quality of the water is an essential mission of the Association.

Thanks to a grant from Colcom, the Association funded a second water study by Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc. The purpose of the study was to gain more information about potential impacts to the Watershed. Water samples were collected quarterly from July 2020 to June of 2021. Study areas were Little Sewickley Creek Headwaters, Fern Hollow Headwaters, Edgeworth along Little Sewickley Creek Road, Sevin Road and Devil's Hollow. The results of the study are posted on our website and there will be a presentation by the consultants to Watershed at the Annual Membership Meeting.

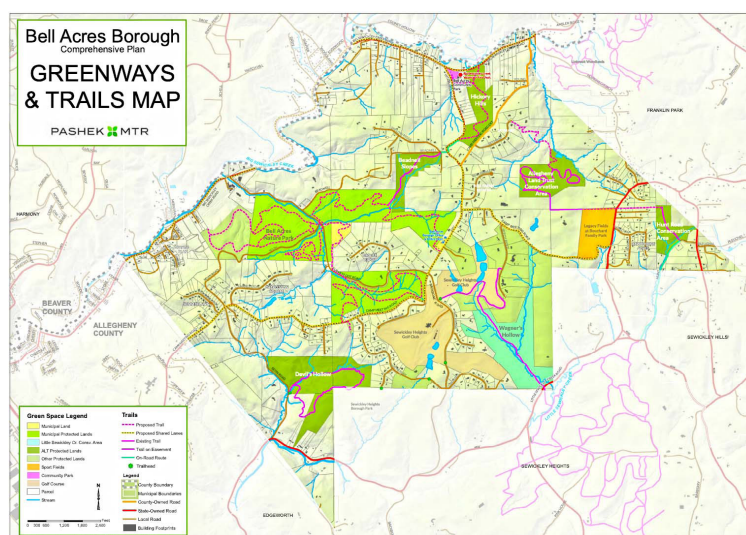
The Little Sewickley Creek Watershed Association continues to strive to be aware of any developments that might affect the health of the creek. The Association continues to support educating the general public about the interrelations among groundwater, plants and animals that enjoy the stream. Much of the watershed runs through Bell Acres and their newly adopted Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of the watershed.

Bell Acres Approves New Comprehensive Plan

Roy Kraynak

Environmental and recreational issues were the top five raised by residents of Bell Acres. Protecting green space and rural character was the highest-ranking issue among responses to a 2018 survey conducted for an update to the Borough's Comprehensive Plan. Followed in order of priority by:

- Lack of public sanitary sewers in Hawthorn Acres
- No fracking
- Dedicated funding for parks
- Bike paths.
- 98% of the respondents to the survey said they believe that green spaces such as woodlands, streams and meadows are valuable and worthy of protection.
- 68% of those respondents said they are willing to make a financial contribution if their gift could be matched.



Now that the Plan has been adopted by Borough Council, it is time to strategize implementation. Implementing the goals of a Comprehensive Plan is complicated, takes time, commitment and coordination between Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Hearing Board and members of the community.

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Summer Discovery Camp 2021

Chriss O'Lare, Secretary

Campers were excited to leave their screens behind and return to Summer Discovery so we ran two full weeks of day camp. We spent most of each week exploring the land and water of Walker Park and then headed to Fern Hollow Lake each Friday. Don and Rett King once again welcomed us so we could compare the organisms found in the creek to those of their lake. Our campers were quite adept at catching critters, and we had some interesting finds including crayfish (in sizes XS to XL), fishing spiders, sculpins, and salamanders (including the photogenic long-tailed salamander which is orange with black spots). To register for next summer, look to the LSCWA website in March 2022.



QV Creekers

Susie Moffett

The QV Creekers is a high school internship that gives students the opportunity to learn more about environmental science skills and careers while helping to care for Little Sewickley Creek. Students do monthly water quality testing to monitor the health of the creek, help with habitat improvement projects within the watershed and meet with professionals to learn about how to keep our watershed healthy. They also develop and present individual research projects at the Student Research Symposium in April, organized by Creek Connections at Allegheny College. You can see examples of last year's projects here: <https://tinyurl.com/c6cu6my8>. The long time leader, April Claus, has passed the torch on to Fern Hollow Educator and new LSCWA board member, Susie Moffett, who will help coordinate the student's

LSCWA Annual Meeting

Barbara Carrier

The annual Little Sewickley Creek Watershed Association meeting will be held on Monday, January 10th at 7:30 p.m. The meeting will be virtual, with a Zoom meeting link that will be available through our mailing list and posted to our website.

Longtime and Founding LSCWA Member Joseph Hajnas Sr. Passes



The LSCWA regrets to announce the passing of long-time and founding member, Joseph A. Hajnas. Mr. Hajnas passed shortly before Thanksgiving from a brief and final illness. He loved the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed Association and treasured his time with fellow members, both past and present.

Mr. Hajnas was preceded in death by his devoted wife of 44 years, Virginia G. Hajnas. He is survived by his son, Joseph (Tricia) H. Hajnas; his sister, Gertrude (Robert) Kowalski and his beloved companion of 15 years, Patricia Henry. Also, numerous nieces and nephews as well as three grand nieces.

It was not easy for him to step back; mind & spirit were willing, but the flesh was ever weaker. His native optimism, talent & enthusiasm for stewardship will be missed. Arrangements for a Memorial/Celebration of Life are pending and will be announced when finalized.



efforts, along with Creek Connections Educator, Laura Branby. If you know of projects that the Creekers might be able to help with, please reach out to Susie at susie@fhnc.org.

The QV Creekers are an approved Educational Improvement Organization. Ask us how your company can participate in the Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program and support our educational programming for students in need in our area.

Little Sewickley Creek Watershed Association 2022 Budget

John Orndorff



The Little Sewickley Creek Watershed budget for 2022 allocates funds for our basic operating expenses:

- 1. Educational Programs
- 2. LSCWA Website
- 3. Annual Newsletter
- 4. Sundry Administrative Expenses

Budgets for the preceding two years (2020 and 2021) included funds for our basic operating expenses and for our recently completed water quality study. The recent study came at a cost of \$50,000. The Colcom Foundation provided a significant grant for this but it was supplemented by money from the LSCWA investment account. The board of directors will be reviewing the results of the water quality study and deciding how best to respond to its recommendations at future meetings.

OPERATING INCOME	\$11,600
Membership dues/contributions	\$8,000
Summer Discovery camp fees	\$1,500
Investment Account	\$2,100

OPERATING EXPENSES	\$11,600
Program	\$9,300
Summer Discovery Camp	\$3,850
QV Creekers	\$3,250
Allegheny College Creek Camp	\$1,500
Website	\$700

Administration	\$650
Secretarial Supplies	\$50
Postage	\$75
P.O. Box Fee	\$100
Liability Insurance	\$400
Other	\$25

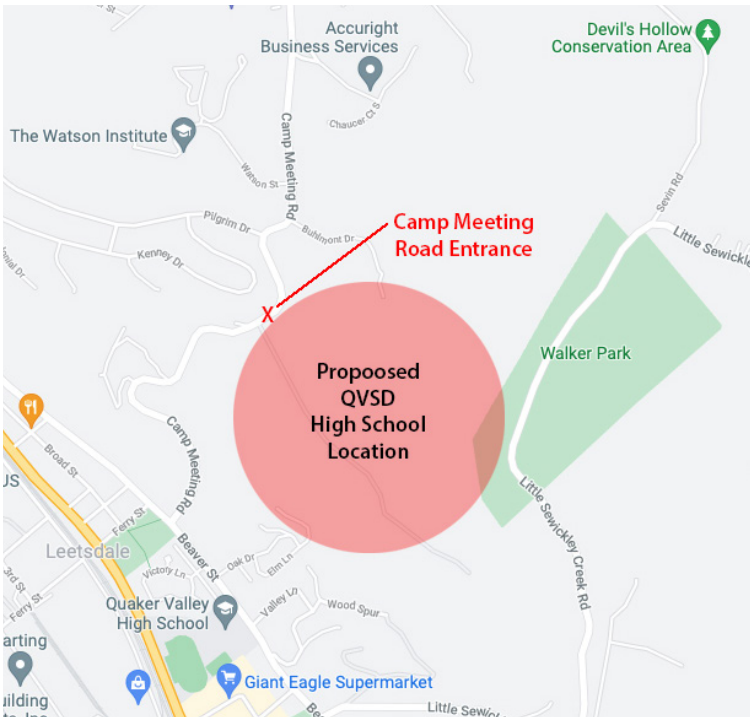
Fund Raising	\$1,650
Newsletter	\$1,650

LSCWA Expresses Concerns About New QVSD High School

John Orndorff

On July 13, 2021, John Orndorff, LSCWA treasurer, and a small group of concerned citizens toured the proposed new site for the QV High School at 210 Camp Meeting Road. Charlie Gauthier, Director of Facilities & Administrative Services for QVSD, led the tour.

The proposed site is on a ridge between the residential community of Leetsdale on the southwest, and Little Sewickley Creek watershed on the northeast. The ridge top is a relatively flat corridor flanked by steep tree-covered hillsides and located mostly in Leet Township but Extending into Edgeworth Borough. The proposed school building and adjacent parking lots will occupy the flat top portion within Leet Township.



Mr. Orndorff expressed concerns of the LSCWA about the potential for soil erosion and landslides into the Little Sewickley Creek watershed. According to the geologic survey map, the slopes northeast of the ridge are at high risk for landslides. Maintaining existing tree cover, minimizing soils disturbance, and controlling the stormwater runoff from any impervious surfaces (e.g., the new high school building and parking lots) are essential to ensure slope stability and to prevent polluting Little Sewickley Creek tributaries with excess sediment. Mr. Gauthier has pledged to invite LSCWA representatives to a meeting with the architects/engineers about these issues once the Leet Township zoning hearing is complete and the QV School District finalizes the contract with the civil engineer.

Comprehensive Plan *(continued from page 1)*

When all are rowing in the same direction things can get accomplished in a timely fashion. Following are some examples of objectives to advance issues that residents said were a priority:

- Identify and protect parcels vulnerable to development and close gaps between existing protected green space.
- Develop ways of preserving green space and the funding mechanism to do so.
- Improve on-road bicycle trails and an off-road trail network
- Revise development ordinances and policies to protect natural systems, such as setbacks from streams, and to require dedication of green space from developers when possible.

Additional, enhanced changes to the Bell Acres Comprehensive Plan are provided below.

Bell Acres began its planning process in 2017 and 2018 with a “listening phase,” said Jim Pashek, founding partner at Pashek+MTR. “For Comprehensive Plans to have much hope of getting enacted, it is crucial that they focus on what is important to the people who have the most at stake – the residents. Bell Acres reached out to the public in many ways to find out what matters most to people in the Borough.”

The Bell Acres Implementable Comprehensive Plan was formally adopted by Borough Council on July 12th, 2021, after a public hearing attended by a large group of residents and stakeholders in support of the Plan. As required by the PA Municipalities Planning Code, the Planning Commission is tasked with facilitating the implementation of the Plan’s recommendations. Work has now begun in earnest to align the vision of the Comprehensive Plan with the Borough’s Code of Ordinances

The Plan focuses on the following:

Protect Green Space and Enhance Trails

- Develop ways of preserving green space and the funding mechanism to do so
- Improve on-road bicycle trails
- Expand development and funding of parks and trails in parks and protected green space

Improve Borough Communications

- Raise awareness through education of what exists now
- Continue public engagement including strategies to expand the Borough’s website and access to social media

Address Infrastructure Needs

- Sewage problems in Hawthorn Acres
- Flooding of Turkey Foot and Sevin roads
- Road resurfacing strategies

The Planning Commission recruited citizen volunteers to participate in a working group that discussed ways to protect green space and enhance trails in the Borough.

The work of this group was slowed down due to the Covid lockdowns, but the Pashek+MTR consultants continued this work with individual members of the group. In addition, Jim Pashek collaborated with the Borough Engineer and Bell Acres staff and officials to better understand infrastructure needs and to begin to identify potential solutions.

For the full report, please visit the Bell Acres Borough website at www.bellacresborough.org. The plan is under the “Our Borough” menu.

2021 Current Board Members

Officers

President: Barbara Carrier, Rep. Glen Osborne
Vice President: Diana Morrow,
Rep. Sewickley Heights
Secretary: Chriss O’Lare, Rep. Franklin Park
Treasurer: John Orndorff

Members

- David Case, Rep. Leet Township
- Steve Downing
- Meg Forsyth
- Joseph H. Hajnas
- Mary Kirsch
- Roy Kraynyk, Liaison with Allegheny Land Trust
- Joe Marrone, Liaison with QVRA and QVHS construction
- Dave Mastrococco, Rep. Leetsdale
- Diana Morrow, Sewickley Heights
- Susie Moffett
- Chris Popovic, Trail Advocate; Website, Newsletter and Fundraising
- Steven Pukansky
- David Quatchak
- Harton Semple
- Gary Smith, Rep. Edgeworth

For additional updates on all things LSCWA, visit our website at www.lscwatershed.org