

St. Marys River AOC BPAC Meeting Minutes

Place: CC202 Algoma University
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

When: March 7, 2018
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

1. Call to order/introductions

Members: Aubrey Maccoux-Leduc, Don Marles, Kristen Sherlock, Paula Antunes, Mike Ripley, Klaas Oswald

Agency Reps: Nicole Lindahl (APH), Ron Dorscht (OMOECC), Mark Chambers (ECCC), Catherine Taddo (City)

Guests: Mark McMaster (ECCC), Peter Tonazzo (City), Jonathan Kircal (City), Patrick Lo (City), Carrie Ginou

Regrets: Ron Prickett, Crystal Falk, Brian Wesolek, Jessica Wesolek, James Dukes, Mary Rossiter

2. Approval of Last Meetings Minutes

- January 31, 2018 – Approved as presented

3. Business arising from previous minutes

- Official Plan for the City of Sault Ste. Marie – Peter Tonazzo
 - Brand new Official Plan for the City of Sault Ste. Marie
 - City has re-launched shapethesault.ca as the portal for the new official plan. Can find policy briefs, calendar of events, interactive map, can be added to the mailing list.
 - Two year project: 1st year is intended as an outreach phase.
 - BPAC Comments/Questions
 - Timeline is approximately 3 years until the OP will be adopted after all approvals.
 - Input from groups such as BPAC will happen within the first 24 months.
 - Ravine protection is a concern considering past developments not in line with past plan. Protection of ravines will depend on the particular ravine (i.e. possible habitat or hazard).
 - Ontario Municipal Board makes it difficult for development not consistent with the OP. An argument can be made that OP's are even more important than in past? In regards to Pointe Estates under new policies the appeal would never have been accepted. OP only strengthens Provincial Policy.
 - BPAC encouraged to look at a bylaw for trees within riparian zones/within wetlands to backup and strengthen designated Environmental Management Zones. Therefore, not just Conservation Authority (CA) enforcing but the City *AND* the CA.
 - Worried about future "Pointe Estates" happening again on other privately owned wetlands. Through "zoning" is there a possibility to create a need for permit application? Can possibly put holding categories on properties.
 - Is a template being followed for this new OP? The city has looked at other city OP's (Sudbury) to gain ideas, although the main focus is to get consultations from local community.

- It was suggested that a tree bylaw should be opened to individual properties/unique trees for protection. City council has historically been resistant to environmental issues.
- Visioning sessions were taken with multiple stakeholders. What extent are those ideas being incorporated? Answer: Environmental aspect is lacking. Concerns are mostly on renewable energy only. Future Sault Ste Marie and Cooperate Strategic Plan form the pillars of this OP.
- Input ideas for the OP can be made through social media, email through website, call or email Peter Tonazzo directly.
- Aggregates: gravel pits are getting bigger. Aggregates are a provincially significant resource and are protected. Viewed as a growth industry. Provincial policy doesn't allow OP to protect land if valued aggregates are found. Aquifer protection is a potential issue. There is an argument that aquifers are more important for long-term water supply for the city as opposed to short term exploitation of aggregates.

4. Presentations

- St. Marys River Fish Tumour report – Mark McMaster, Environment and Climate Change Canada
 - 1985-90 incident rate of 9.2% of liver tumours for suckers in the SMR. Reference Sites: Batchewana Bay 8.6% (suggested to be from aerial testing of sea lamprey control pellets “BEAR”) and Mountain Bay and Nipigon Bay 2.4%
 - Only real liver tumours will be used to delist sites. Pre-neoplastic liver tumours are no longer accounted for.
 - Liver tumours are a direct result to exposure to contaminants.
 - 2009 Reference Site: Batchewana Bay (5%). Sampled Bellevue Marina (12%), EEWWTP, (40 samples) (7%), Richards Landing (40 samples) (0%).
 - 2009: Combined 10.6% tumour prevalence rate.
 - With Batchewana Bay tumour prevalence rate consistently high it is now recommended to no longer use as a reference site.
 - 2015: 100 total fish came from Bellevue marina and EEWWTP sites.
 - 4/100 had tumours, however there were “unusual” results in 5 other fish. Three of those fish went under additional assessment. Two of the 3 had tumours not seen in fish livers until now. Therefore, liver prevalence rate of 6%.
 - Recommended that the BUI status should remain as impaired.
 - BPAC Questions/Comments
 - Brown bullheads not sampled due to insufficient numbers in the upper Great Lakes.
 - Previous presentation ~3yrs ago emphasizes PAH's within sediment are driving the tumour. With upcoming dredging of boat slip, that will be followed by post monitoring of PAH levels there may be a better understanding of correlation between PAH and fish tumours.
 - Black River (Ohio) after sediment dredging tumour prevalence spiked quickly but dropped off once dredging finished.
 - Is the river going to remain impaired if these spikes keep happening after dredging happens? Legacy contaminants are/have been removed. Therefore, tumours levels are expected to continue to drop.
 - Is there a possibility there is contamination in a pocket that is unknown where fish may be feeding? With the Algoma Boat Slip and old manufacturing gas plant on the US side being cleaned up the theory is fish tumours prevalence will go down.
 - Can BUI be realistically delisted after prevalence drops to 5% or under, knowing that when dredging happens spikes occur? This will be addressed in the Sediment Management Plan, fish tumours BUI is a symptom of contaminated sediment.

- More sediment data collection happening (mostly around Bellevue marine park) this year to determine where contaminant levels are. Results will also come from Algoma Steel doing the post dredge monitoring.

5. Office Reports

- Ontario RAP Office:
 - There is a new Interactive Map for the Canadian portion of the AOC.
 - Provides summaries of BUI's and work/projects completed within the AOC.
 - Provides links to official reports for more information.
 - Partnership with Sault College with EC funding.
 - Potential partnership with Lake Superior State University to create points and data for the US side.
 - Historical before and after photos suggested
 - Outreach Events: Soo's Big Sport and Outdoor Expo Mar. 10 – 11, 2018
- SPAC: Greater AOC conference Sheboygan Wisconsin in May. Funding from BPAC for --- and two other members from BPAC to attend

6. Agency Updates

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)

- Concept designs for a Whitefish Island Habitat Restoration project that ECCC is doing in partnership with Batchewana First Nation can be found here: http://bpac.algomau.ca/?page_id=632. These were originally presented to BPAC in December 2016 by Mark Chambers and Rick Kiriluk. Please be advised that these are preliminary ideas showing what could be done. Work in 2018 will add greater definition and certainty for restoring and enhancing aquatic habitat in the targeted project areas and will address geotechnical and material needs, river hydraulics, as well as bathymetry and topographic realities. BPAC will be consulted and information shared later in 2018.

7. Memberships

- No new membership letters/requests

8. New Business

- The City of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, has initiated a Stormwater Financing Study to explore alternative ways to pay for its stormwater management program. If you are interested, please follow the link where you can view public information center materials and fill out an online comment form. Link: www.saultstemarie.ca/stormwater. There will also be other opportunities to provide comments and feedback. Goal to create system to properly fund stormwater systems, operations and maintenance. Subject to council approval.
- Jeff Hagan from EUP Regional Planning is looking for someone to be on the regional solid waste planning committee. Meet once or twice a year. Contact Mike or Jeff (jshagan@eup-planning.org) directly if interested.

9. Public Comments

- NA

10. Next Meeting

- To be scheduled for late April – early May at the LSSU campus
- Ideas for next meeting: Spills readiness plans presentation by Coast guard or Little Rapids post monitoring data

11. Election

- Chair 2018 – Canadian – Paula Antunes
- Vice Chair 2018 – American – Mike Ripley
- Second Vice Chair – Canadian – Kristen Sherlock