

GGC May 20, 2025 meeting at the Welcome Center, 5:30pm

Zoom: <https://hws.zoom.us/j/92156663764?pwd=UJJ7ExYP7DwblO0Ps2Et1zmjlqPfb.1#success>

Present: Pat Wallace (Chair), Anne Hoyt, Jim Stiles, Marcia Cullen, Julia Hoyle, Richard Cox, Larry Campbell, James Anderson, Pat Keefe, Sara Britting

Joining via Zoom, **Special guest Ian Smith, Seneca Lake Steward**, to discuss Castle Creek ventures.

After the call to order and brief introductions, the GGC and Ian Smith discussed a new project: Castle Creek clean-up.

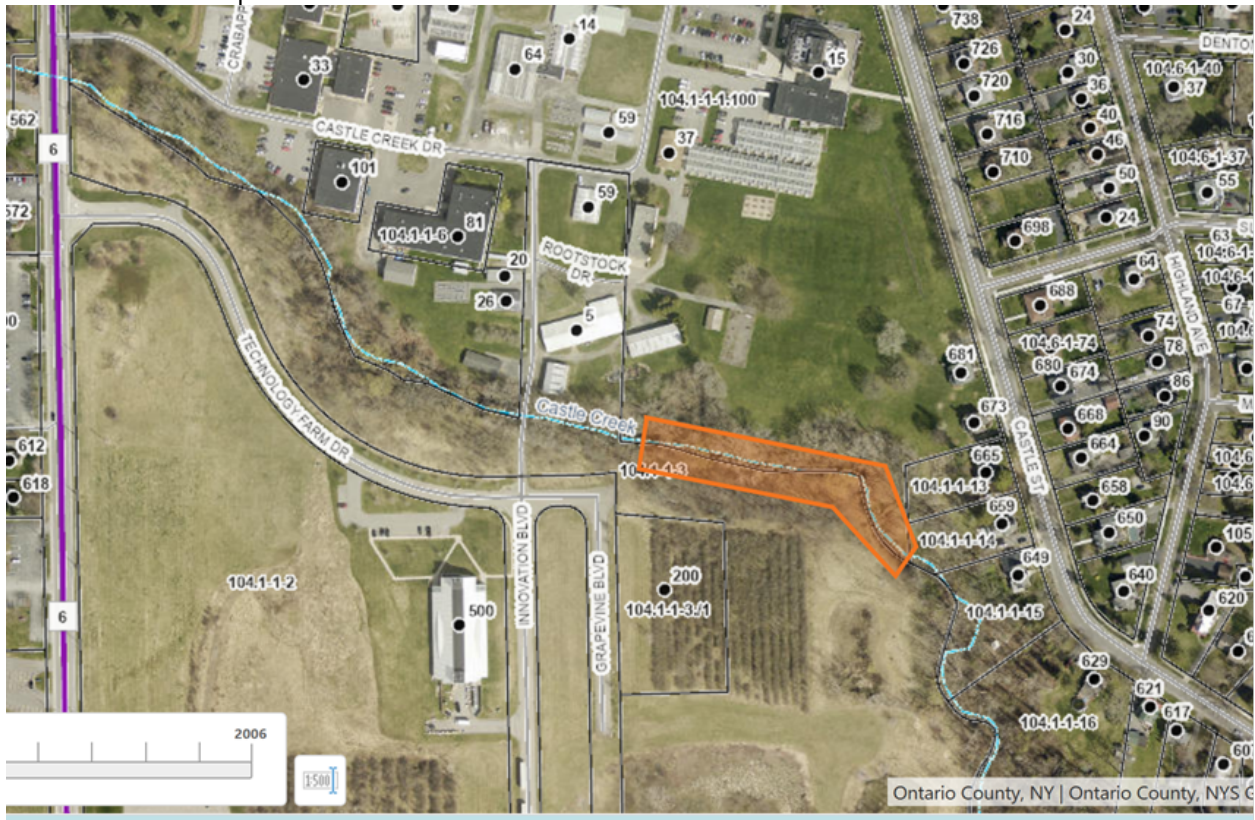
AH: City's treatment of Castle Creek debris: bulldozed creek bank.

IS: a Clean-up Day could start w the fence which borders Castle Creek and Cornell's AgriTech.

AH: I spoke with AgriTech's Scott DeHollander, former GGC member and current Assistant Director of Facilities. Can we use chainsaws?

IS: I met w DPW yesterday. Cleared behind ballfield for debris management. Debris...E. coli spikes, further degradation of the storm sewer system. Chainsaw liability, proper training required, best to coordinate w Cornell because City staff can't go onto private property. An old cattle fence is catching significant debris.

AH shared a map:



“What Cornell plans to clean up by removing fencing”

Work w HWS Day of Service students in Aug. the City will take the scrap metal from the fence and the debris at Doran Ave. City dumped tree debris on AgriTech property.

LC: Have any trees grown into the fence?

AH: Probably. Maybe just remove fence? (General agreement.)

IS: If any woody material is embedded into the fence, be careful (using a chainsaw)! 50% of the flood overflow in a big rainstorm last year diverted overground into someone's house where Castle Creek takes a 90° bend under the old Madias. Riparian corridors....

JS: there's a skilled technique for felling trees across a stream bed which can catch smaller branches upstream to prevent them from washing downstream and causing more problems.

RC: some of us should walk the area to see the debris pile.

AH: Ian, are you doing an assessment?

IS: Yes, short-term and longer-term process.

AH: I'm wondering about the Macro- and Micro-organism assessment?

IS: that's being done by Seneca Lake Pure Waters.

AH: Anything else you can tell us about Castle Creek of interest?

IS: there are ongoing attempts at daylighting it, attempts to acquire parcels over the streambed didn't go through, a debris plan is needed going forward.

AH: Scott said AgriTech plans to impound an area by Sutton Rd (outside of City) to install a weir.

IS: Town of Geneva did a stormwater analysis pre-2010 and (liquid state?) overflow was suggested.

AH: Does anyone else have any questions for Ian?

MC: Have pictures been taken over time of the debris areas to document it?

IS: We could.

PK: Pictures won't tell the story.

SB: Street sweepers have started to use sweepers to clean the storm drains. Ever since the storm drains have been cleaned, my basement has stopped flooding. So if you can, reiterate that.

PW: I've noticed that the storm drains on Oak St are completely clogged with cut grass. People mow and blow it into the street with leaf blowers.

JS: We should have a map highlighting problem areas.

MC & SB: Document it with Before and After photos.

SB: there was a case in Australia in which they contained and slowed excess water.

IS: (GI?) infrastructure, time, money

SB: Get neighborhood help

RC: need a plan

JS: need a species list for this locale.

IS: DEC Trees for Tribs Riparian Corridors:
https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/ttffactsheet.pdf

RC: Last year HWS had a Waterworks team take 2nd place in a national planning contest.

IS: I've done a far more detailed feasibility analysis and gave it to Anne H.

AH: Could you please resend that?

LC: Are there water sources for Castle Creek besides rain? Storm drains? City storm sewers?

IS: Yes, ~12...broken into chunks...will resend to Anne.

AH: Thanks for your time, Ian. You're in communication w Cornell?

IS: Yes. (Ian signed off from the Zoom connection.)

PK: I've done a fair amount of that (debris-clearing) stuff, so I'd like to go. It's a 2-week training to use a chainsaw.

RC: What's the meeting on Friday?

AH: It's about the fence.

JS: If anyone has a come-along it could pull out the posts.

AH: just cut the wires. Exploration of project for us over the summer and do it in conjunction with the HWS Day of Service.

AH: new issue: Jill Byington's **gardening experience at 41 Lakefront (the hotel)**. JB recently encountered a man hired by the hotel weed-whacking the black-eyed susans and intentionally planted native grasses in the gardens near the hotel because they didn't like the way they looked (all green, no other colors at the moment) and there was a wedding coming up at the hotel. AH and James Norwalk had previously explained to the hotel management that the gardens are on City property and that the plantings are part of the Master Plan for the Park. AH composed a letter to the hotel management/owner about this and that they need permission and to know the Plan before any changes or work is to be done to these beds but BID Director Catherine Price and Mr. Patel came to an agreement for maintenance of the beds so AH refrained from sending the letter. Mr. Patel owns the hotel, according to JB.

PK: Same problem as here. they want us to volunteer. I thought it was arranged that she would be consulted.

AH: I guess we didn't tell the hotel. BID got enough funding to increase JB's hours from 1 day/wk to more than that.

JS: County jail crews can sometimes help.

AH: Need supervision and training. We don't have the manpower to supervise on a regular basis. Maybe BID can.

PK: It's difficult to teach.

MC: Is there still Weeding Wednesdays?

AH: Yes, JB supervises that.

PW: Weeding Wednesday is a small group.

PK: I know a guy.

PW: Tony and Zach are the regular BID crew which JB supervises.

AH: James, what about BluePrint?

JA: there will be a couple of students July 8th and going forward, supervised by JB.

PK: A lot of weeding is (or should be) done by then.

AH: There's always weeding to be done.

PW: **MZ4 report** : We had 377 people this year (hosts, vendors, and guests).

PK: Hold it every other yr.

RC: We should do something that leads up to it, teaching ppl, who you can do it with. Jennifer Grant suggested that we do pop-ups at the farmers markets, etc. catch attention, highlight the City's transfer station, cost comparisons, what's recyclable, which is changeable from yr to yr. need a couple of dynamic, exciting ppl.

SB: Should do a Survey Monkey via City email blast to gauge interest: pop-up vs MZ, where they get their info, preferences, feedback. I could help develop the questions.

JH: that would also help get ClimateSmart points. Not getting the points is leaving money on the table, grant programs.

LC: I called David West to talk to him about this but he never called back and now he's leaving.

RC: The City tried to do in-person surveys 2 or 3 times but no one showed up, only 2 people in 2 hrs.

SB: The neighborhood coalition isn't functioning.

JH: It's started back up again (by the LDC).

RC: I want to get Geneva Reads involved and do Ayana Elizabeth Johnson's book What If We Get It Right?

JA: On MLK Day, schools display art.

RC: I've been trying to get that w schools and Dove Block and poetry but can't find anyone to help w that. we displayed kids' artwork on the plexiglass at MZ3.

JA: Need teacher involved

RC: MLK Day has financial reward.

JS: Survey Monkey, City and County send out to their lists

JH: QR codes

RC: I spoke to the Environmental Studies Dept at HWS and they came up w a list. Make your city more environmentally sound. Invite local colleges to participate.

MC: I like the survey idea.

PW: how was the Native Plant Sale?

RC: we started w 33 and had only 6 trees left. Amanda's Garden and Jim Norwalk had 4 tables of plants ea and left w few. If ppl didn't find what they wanted there, we gave

them Jim Engles' # and ppl went. Vendors at MZ said they'd be here. Halco left early. The beginning was very busy due to the sapling give-away. Maybe shorten to 3 hrs?

PW: it takes just as much planning to put it on for 3 hrs as for 4 hrs.

RC: Dave had tables left up from previous event, which was very helpful and very appreciated.

JH: The (Ornamental) Garden Walk is June 22nd, 2:00-5:00pm with two routes each starting at Pulteney Park: one going to Jim Norwalk's house and the other going to the State St Community Gardens w Virginia. The Veggie Garden Walk will be in Aug, w Anne anchoring one end.

SB: Regarding the SMI issue, I sent an email to PW and AH. Should I send it to [Elissa BUD?]? Their methane emissions are 5 times what they self-report. Yvonne Taylor tried to close it. Meeting w Ont. County PEQ. Ontario County is the sole hold-out. All the other surrounding Counties have requested closure. Ont Co's stance is that "We closed ours, it's their responsibility to close theirs." It's shameful and reprehensible to dump on Seneca Falls after Ont Co (landfill) closes.

AH: Lou Guard, Mark Venuti...

SB: MV signed as Town of Geneva, not as County. I think they're worried about where they'll dump their waste. I spoke to Thomas Lyon. I'll send letters, Op Eds. Implement NYS Sustainable Waste Plan. Hired director for ReUse Systems at Bozzuto Center

RC:all in favor, all opposed...(what was said and what was this about?? ?)

PW: I make a motion to adjourn

MC: second

Announcements:

BID accepting volunteers for Weeding Wednesdays:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E48ADAC2AA4F5C16-48380529-weeding#/>

Town of Geneva Free Stuff Day, Sunday, June 1st (rain date June 8th) 32 White Springs Rd: drop-off 10:00-12:00, take-away 12:00-2:00. Volunteers accepted 9:30-3:00; email Jennifer Grant at jengrant5316@gmail.com

Geneva Parks Foundation meeting, June 8th, 2pm, Bozzuto Center, 22 Castle St

Neighbors Together Very Early Summer Garden Walk: June 22nd, 2:00-5:00,
starting at Pulteney Park.

Neighbors Together Veggie Garden Walk: August

Sun Day, Saturday, Sept 20th: <https://www.sunday.earth/welcome>