**Notes from GREN meeting on Monday 1st February, 2016** held at 7.15 pm in the Christian Science Church on Water Street in Kitchener.

Present: John (Chair), Kevin , Don, Deaun, Deb, Sandra, Anne, Lulu, Theo, Jeff , Bob.

Regrets: Susan K , Greg M., Susan B

Theo reported a balance of $2405 in funds before 2016 memberships were paid. There are currently17 members.

The evening was spent on further discussion of 10 possible projects to decide on those requiring priority attention versus those for which we will provide a supporting role, and who was going to provide leadership on each. How important is it for GREN to be doing a particular project or where can we assist others. Two charts were drawn up by Deaun who will do a synthesis of these. A work plan for the year will be made at a meeting within a month. You will find a person or persons listed with each topic below to work on this. This is preliminary at this point. At the time of the next meeting, we will be canvassing the entire GREN list for interest in participating on the project. For a brief description of possible work on each project area go to the GREN website at <http://gren.ca/calendar/?mc_id=4> and click on the name of each subject area in the agenda list.

1. AGGREGATES –ongoing checks with compliance. A lot of work needed for later. Temara will take the lead on this (we hope). On their own behalf separate from GREN, Temara B and Lulu L are in the process of submitting an Application for Review under the EBR on MMAH’s monitoring for quarry pit requirements.

2. WATER TAKING PERMITS – Short term support to Waterloo Wellington Water Watchers, as well as ongoing long term. Bob B will take lead on monitoring this and informing us of when we should be taking action.

3. GREENBELT – we need to make contact with people making decisions to reinforce the inclusion of our region into the Greenbelt. **Contact regional councilors now**. Decide on message we take to the table …… do we want expansion of Greenbelt. Clear that province wants to expand Greenbelt, most of rivers already protected, but Grand River considered an urban river. Deb and Kevin will take immediate action to reinforce Regional Official Plan. Other members of this committee will be Deaun and John. Possibly contact Rob Horn and Tom Galloway.

4. TRANSPORTATION AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE …. Support all forms of transportation (trains, LRT, Go bus, Go train and local bus etc) as well as improvement of trails. MTO meeting Feb 4 at Crown Plaza Hotel regarding high speed rail. GREN will support Regional Master Transportation Plan later. Don R will monitor the development of the Regional Master Transportation Plan or us.

5. LAND TRUST – a land trust in Waterloo Region is being formed. GREN will be asked to have a member of the steering committee. We will ask Greg M to fill that position and to keep us informed as to whether we need to take action.

6. REFORMING GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY – GREN will work to improve the procedures and public involvement in GREN decision-making, monitoring, etc. Deb S and John J will take the lead on this. The first step will be to meet with the new chair of the GRCA – Regional councilor Helen Jowett.

7. WASTE MANAGEMENT – make contact with local key decision makers this year while alternatives to landfill being discussed. Communicate with Interfaith Grand River and other religious groups who are discussing environmental issues. John J will take lead on this project.

8. BIOSOLIDS – Over the next four years the Region of Waterloo will be developing a biosolids strategy. The Region is setting up an advisory committee for the development of this strategy. GREN will nominate Bob B to represent us on this committee. We will play a support role now with Bob as rep. Perhaps leadership role later.

9. ALUS – we will play a support role with Susan K as rep.

10. GREN PROFILE RAISING – We did not discuss this except to agree that we need it because Susan K was away. We are assuming that Susan K will be willing to lead this.

HIDDEN VALLEY – GREN also decided to work on protecting Hidden Valley. There was a general belief that the best option is to find someone to purchase land in part or completely. We will form a sub-committee of Sandra, Bob, John to meet with Daphne and Gord, if they are available, to discuss what we could do to solve this issue. Suggested that we talk to Kitchener mayor and suggest that some of the funds the city has allocated for parks be set aside over the coming years towards the purchase of Hidden Valley. Perhaps funds could also be raised in the community. These are just some thoughts – no decisions on strategy yet.