



Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting
October 14, 2015

Location: Gerwig Lane, CA Maintenance Facility, Large Conference Room

Attendance: Brian England, Rhoda Toback, Ann Coren, John McCoy, Deborah Wessner, Jeremy Scharfenberg, Alan Pflugrad, Tim Titus, Dan Kirk-Davidoff

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm

August Minutes: approval delayed to next meeting.

Agenda Approved.

Resident Speak-Out: Elaine Pardoe, sent out schedule of meetings of Howard County Watershed Management section of DPW. Watershed Improvement Network: two meetings, fall and spring, plus steering committee which meets more frequently. Alan Kittleman will be coming to the spring meeting. <http://www.howardcountymd.gov/SWM.htm>

Manager's Report: John McCoy reports that the bioretention facility is under construction at Wilde Lake Barn, maybe complete tomorrow. The CA has bid out six bids for the Dobbin Rd & Harper's Glen bioretention projects, and contracted with EQR to build the Harper's Glen bioretention. The Dobbin Rd project needs to be rebid. The Harper's Glen HOA obtained a grant for design of this facility, and handed the design over to CA to implement with good community support. The budget for 2017 and 2018 has been approved by the CA board. Reedy Brook bioretention facility is in the budget for 2017. The rest of the large projects are put off until 2018. Bryant Woods open space, next to Bryant Woods Elementary, is in the 2018 budget, for example. Stabilization of EPA study weirs above Jackson Pond is also in 2018 budget (the concern is they might erode and dump a lot of accumulated sediment into Jackson Pond).

Raingardens: Over 230 installed so far. A bunch this year, not sure of number.

Weed warriors, Columbia Families in Nature and River Hill Village WAC are doing lots of good work removing invasive plants in CA open space.

Dannon Garth: *CA does not have a plan to abandon its ponds.* Rather, CA (or county) has a regulatory obligation to maintain them. CA got an order from the county to fix the pipe running through the berm at Dannon Garth. Engineer said we're not in compliance with Maryland 378 (Natural Resource Conservation Service code for maintenance of small earthen dams).

Maximum pool level of a 100 year storm has to be 1 ft below the berm. Need to drop the pool level 0.8 ft. Decreased surface area by 10%. Changed pipe through berm to a weir. Dug two sanctuaries to lower pond level. Stockpiled material on north end of pond to dewater, used some to grade out. Residents don't like the material piles and the grading. A tree was suffocated, all of which has occupied a huge amount of staff time. An emotionally charged community meeting was held, at which John and other CA staff were present to answer questions.

CA has received an order to remove excess sediment from Pushcart Pond in OM. CA Staff are concerned about the integrity of structures in Waiting Spring pond - \$80,000 has been allocated for restoration in 2018. \$1 million has been allocated for dredging of Wilde Lake to make a deep forebay. Wilde Lake gets about 1100-1300 cubic yards of sediment each year, so dredging of similar magnitude will be required every 3 years. (By contrast, Jackson Pond just had 1100 cy dredged, after previous dredging in 2007, so must receive about 150 cy/year of accumulation). CA has two permanent dredging permits for Wilde Lake and Lake K, the first such standing permits granted in the state. Plan is to dispose of sediment at county site on Murray Hill.

John points out importance of distinguishing wet ponds, dry ponds, CA ponds and county ponds, etc. Who's obliged to do the maintenance? Stormwater easements in the villages are often County responsibility. John's report on this should be issued to the board in the Spring of 2016.

Richard Klein is doing an independent citizen's survey of mud and erosion in streams resulting from development projects. "Community and Environment Defense Services".

Residents and WAC members who note issues with ongoing construction projects that should be brought to the attention of the County should use the TellHoCo application, available on major mobile phone platforms, on the County website and on several village websites.

There was a meeting on September 20 at the Hickory Ridge community center on runoff mitigation work in the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area. There were good speakers, and lots of rain barrels given away. Barbara Schmeckpepper talked about quantitative impact of things like rain barrels. A contractor had done a street-side assessment of each house's impact on flow into MPEA. Looking for opportunities for large improvements. There was discussion on how to get feedback to homeowners on what they could do for improvements.

Resources: Center for Watershed Protection - talk to Barbara Schmeckpepper about it. Neighborhood Pollution Assessment Tool: aggregates results by neighborhood to avoid stigmatizing particular residents.

A watershed brochure for Columbia residents, after the example of the one we reviewed in July from Reston, is under development by John McCoy's staff.

Village Reports

We need to recruit a River Hill WAC rep. A difficulty is that River Hill's own Village WAC is doing great work, and we don't want to distract them. But we'll ask them if any of them would be willing to be the RH WAC rep, or else consider inviting Bruce Ebersol, due to his leadership and exceptional work, although he lives in an outparcel.

Hickory Ridge (Brian and Deborah): WAC now has it's own nice webpage. There are four members, and the village manager is running the website. They are looking for a few new members. <http://hickoryridgevillage.org/about-us/8-2/watershed-advisory-committee/>

Deborah asks- can we have the CA clean-up day be dedicated to a stream clean up this year? Response to this by other committee members is that we should try to do this via our separate village WACs.

Wilde Lake (Rhoda): CA did a great job removing bamboo from the path around lake. Families in Nature also did a bunch of trash and invasive plant removal. They held a planting day with John McCoy, planting Christmas Ferns by the Rouse Rock, to hold sediment, and planted 15 replacement trees below the dam in The Grove, where original tree plantings had died. Rhoda shared her New York Academy of Science, Global STEM water challenge mentorship with her middle school teams in Accra, Ghana.

Owen Brown (Ann): Reports on her trip to California and the severe drought there. Owen Brown won't address any watershed issues until next year.

King's Contrivance (Alan Pflugrad): Sean Harbough of CA Open Space came to the KC WAC meeting and described the open space boundaries in KC. KC WAC/Open Space will meet every other month, next meeting in November. Watershed Stewards' survey program is making big progress. Alan bought a bunch of plants to hand out at the meeting.

Long Reach (Tim): Advertisement for Patapsco Heritage Greenway History Days. One of the learning stops on the annual CA BikeAbout was at Jackson Pond and focused on the history of storm water management, dredging, and maintenance in the Jackson Pond sub-watershed. LR Village Manager invited Tim to walk through Dannon Garth with the angry people. Long Reach WAC chartered by Village Board. Enhance watershed awareness and educate LR residents about concerns and what residents can do to make a positive difference. Tim will scan and share his charter.

Oakland Mills (Dan): There was a large tree planting at OMI (60 small trees). There was a Village PSAC meeting with Dan Damore where woodland maintenance and encroachment on open space were discussed.

Harper's Choice (Jeremy): Just getting chartered.

Dorsey's Search has named a rep tonight, but we haven't received that person's name.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.