

Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

ACCOTINK CREEK DRAFT WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN PUBLIC FORUM

SEPTEMBER 21, 2010

Fairfax County High School
3501 Rebel Run | Fairfax, VA 22030

I. Welcome and Introductions

[Please note that the presentation from the September 21, 2010 Accotink Creek Draft Plan Forum will be available online at: http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/accotinkcreek_docs.htm].

Juliana Birkhoff, RESOLVE, opened the Accotink Creek Draft Plan Public Forum by welcoming the public and County officials in attendance. Ms. Birkhoff reviewed the meeting agenda and group expectations.¹

II. Welcome and Process Update

Fred Rose, the Branch Chief of the Watershed Planning and Assessment Branch of the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, thanked everyone for attending the meeting and participating in developing the Draft Plan. He reviewed the watershed management planning process, which began with a comprehensive assessment of the County's streams a number of years ago, followed by watershed quality assessments as part of each plan. The County developed a Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) as a resource to assist the County in the planning process.

The impetus for creating Watershed Management Plans (WMP) for Fairfax County watersheds was an inventory taken ten years ago which showed that seventy percent of the County's watersheds were impaired. Financial support for restoration projects began in 2005-2006 by dedicating a penny from the property tax rate for stormwater initiatives.

During the watershed planning process, almost 3,000 projects have been identified to restore the County's watersheds. The County is prioritizing these projects into ten-year and twenty-five-year projects. These are working plans, giving the County the flexibility to move projects between the two timelines. Additionally, the projects are conceptual, meaning implementation is not guaranteed and the technology or scope of the project may change.

Mr. Rose emphasized the objective of the watershed management process is to use an adaptive approach to solve watershed quality problems. The watershed management plan is dynamic and will reflect County-wide needs. Mr. Rose explained that it was possible the County may need to adopt other watershed objectives to meet the federal Chesapeake Bay TMDL requirements, which EPA will release later this year. Fairfax County's watershed management program will support the federal Chesapeake Bay initiatives from a local level.

John C. Cook, the Braddock District Supervisor, highlighted why the County needs WMPs and what the EPA's Chesapeake TMDL regulations will mean for the County. Mr. Cook emphasized that this watershed

¹ Twenty-eight members of the public and approximately ten members of the staff team attended the meeting. A copy of the meeting agenda is available at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/accotinkcreek_docs.htm

process ranks as one of the most important County government activities. He provided background on the effects of rapid development over the last decades in Fairfax County. This development has prompted the County's effort to fund the improvement of critical watershed infrastructure.

Linda Q. Smith, the Providence District supervisor, emphasized the importance and value of community involvement in this process. Erosion, flooding, and stormwater management are important events affecting residents' backyards. The watershed planning process gives the County and its residents options for finding solutions, and community input is a valuable formal component of the WMP.

III. Introduction to Watershed Concepts

Danielle Wynne, Ecologist in the Fairfax County Watershed Planning & Assessment Branch, reviewed terms and concepts behind watershed planning. She explained that Fairfax County has thirty watersheds but only thirteen Watershed Management Plans because they combined some smaller watersheds into one plan. The watershed planning process categorizes each watershed into Watershed Management Areas (WMAs), defined as a three to five square mile area with similar land use and development characteristics and a common drainage area. WMAs allow watershed planners to focus project proposals and are further broken down into sub-watershed units for planning purposes.

Ms. Wynne gave a brief overview of stormwater management (SWM) and the different types of stormwater structures proposed in the WMP. Each structure addresses stormwater needs such as runoff, sediment control, and high volume management. In Fairfax County, the volume and velocity of stormwater runoff are a primary cause of watershed and stream impairment.

The Draft Plan includes a ten-year and twenty-five-year prioritized list of proposed projects. The County will use a comprehensive plan to address the financial implications, recreational opportunities, property value, and other County-wide issues. The County has currently completed watershed plans for approximately fifty percent of Fairfax County. The County will complete the final watershed management plans by next year.

IV. Overview of the Draft Watershed Management Plan

Bill Frost, Engineer with KCI Technologies, summarized the organizational structure and components of the Draft Plan.² He reviewed the following components of the plan:

i. Executive Summary

The executive summary includes background information for the Accotink Creek watershed and a summary of each of the Draft Plan sections. The executive summary includes non-structural, ten-year, and twenty-five-year master project lists (by project number, type, WMA, and location). Mr. Frost emphasized that participants should use these lists to identify projects and find them on the map.

1. Introduction

Mr. Frost provided a brief overview of watershed basics and the County's current watershed plans.

2. Watershed Planning Process

This section includes the criteria and objectives for the watershed planning process. Mr. Frost reviewed the indicators used to measure and compare existing and future conditions. A map of the Accotink Watershed displays the condition of the watershed; green is the best condition and red is the worst. The section also reviews stormwater modeling techniques and the County's Public Involvement Plan.

² The complete draft watershed management plan is available on the County website. Information for submitting comments is also available at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/accotinkcreek_docs.htm

3. Summary of Watershed Conditions

This section is a summary of information first presented in the Watershed Workbook, including information on each land use, imperviousness, area, and subwatershed stressors. A map indicates where the various conditions are present in the Accotink watershed.

4. Summary of Watershed Restoration Strategies

Mr. Frost reviewed the County's goals, restoration strategies, project prioritization, and the development of the master project list. He highlighted the difference between structural and non-structural projects, the latter being non-capital projects such as community outreach. Mr. Frost highlighted restoration strategies with photos and examples of non-structural projects. KCI prioritized projects based on an objective and quantitative process, using monitoring data, geographic information, and modeling results information to calculate an overall score for each subwatershed.

5. WMA Restoration Strategies

The section reviews WMAs and how proposed projects will help meet watershed restoration objectives. Mr. Frost explained how to use the fact sheets prepared for each proposed project. Each fact sheet includes the project's location, land owner(s), costs, control type, drainage area, and receiving waters. The fact sheets include a description of the project, its benefits, design considerations, and an aerial map of the project area.

6. Benefits of Plan Implementation

Mr. Frost highlighted the overall benefits of the Draft Plan for the Accotink watershed, in terms of material improvements and reduced pollutants.

Appendices

Mr. Frost reviewed the appendices. The appendices include (1) *Draft Watershed Workbook* with information and modeling results from the beginning of the planning process, (2) *Technical Documents* describing subwatershed strategies, priorities for potential projects, the model data collection, and (3) *Public Involvement* records and summaries.

V. Comment Period

Danielle Wynne emphasized the County's interest in receiving public comments on the plan for specific projects and general topics. The one-month comment period began September 21, 2010 and will end October 21, 2010. The County will incorporate comments to finalize the plan. The County will send the final plan to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Once the Board approves the plan, project implementation will begin.

Following the presentation, there was a brief Q&A session. During this discussion, Fairfax County officials and Bill Frost noted the following:

- County staff completed an initial stream assessment in 2003. KCI Technologies has noted many changes since then, and any updates from the public are welcome.
- The public is encouraged to submit comments about the status of projects on specific sites. Some of these projects may already be in the County's queue and may not be included in the Draft Plan.
- Maintenance considerations are unique to each project, depending on the degree to which it is a public, private, or partnership venture. The County will often negotiate easements to access private property for site maintenance. Public-private partnerships are an attractive option

because of the County's budget concerns and interest in community involvement.

- Stream buffers share characteristics with structural projects but are listed as non-structural projects. The public is encouraged to submit comments on funding, prioritization, and suggest pilot sites for stream buffer projects.
- The Accotink Draft Plan gives priority to projects entirely located on public land because their implementation is not complicated by land ownership and access agreements. If a community can demonstrate their commitment to providing resources for a project, the County may increase prioritization for that project. The ten-year and twenty-five-year plans are conceptual and have a great deal of flexibility. Public-private partnerships can be extremely important and effective mechanisms.

VI. Breakout Session

During the breakout session, participants were able to locate Accotink Creek watershed projects on sub-watershed maps and review corresponding fact sheets. Participants noted comments on specific projects and the plan in general.

Project Specific Discussions

- Project # 9222: The eroded bank is a safety concern and threatening backyard landscaping. The creek also has suds and foam. This discharge could be from a nearby business and the pollution source should be determined. This project could be an opportunity for partnership.
- Project # 9211, 9212, and 9213: On Turkey Run, a resident group may be interested in a partnership with the County.
- Project # 9218: Erosion at the site has gotten worse in recent years, threatening the older trees that a resident does not want removed.
- Project # 9500: Two projects have the same code – one in the ten-year plan and one in the twenty-five-year plan. The ten-year plan project has no profile sheet. This may be an error.
- Project # 9957: This project is listed on both the ten-and twenty-five year project lists, but should be listed on the ten-year project list.
- Project # 9913: There are obstructions and dump sites that will be revisited to determine what is needed for clean up.
- The intersection of Prosperity Avenue and Accotink Creek has major flooding problems.

General Discussions

- A resident wanted to know where to procure a hard copy of the Draft Plan. While the County is not providing hard copies, it is available for review in County libraries and Supervisors' offices.
- Generally, non-structural improvements will be County-wide projects.
- Construction sites and recent developments are good candidates for small-scale bioretention retrofits, such as islands in medians and parking lots. These strategies are options in the County building code.
- A resident suggested it would be useful to add tributary names to the maps.
- Participants discussed the following concerns around George Mason Woods:
 - There is significant erosion at the head waters where GMU has a construction site;

- They would like to be informed of County-funded projects;
- They were advised that ample notice would be given before the project begins, including preparatory measures; and
- The responsibilities for Riparian Protection Areas are in a brochure from the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.
- Stream buffer restoration projects should be self-maintaining.
- The County is addressing project designs that are two decades old, or older, which were not originally designed to address water quality. Now, they are seeking site-specific retrofit projects such as Low Impact Development (LID) structures that can treat water quality before stormwater reaches the conveyance system.

Next Steps

Danielle Wynne informed participants that the County will accept comments on the Accotink draft watershed management plan for a 30-day comment period, ending October 21. Comments can be submitted via the County's [Accotink Creek](#) website, via mail to the Stormwater Planning Division at 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 449 Fairfax VA 22035, or via Phone 703-324-5500, TTY 711.

Juliana Birkhoff encouraged participants to spread the word about the plan and encourage their communities to provide feedback.

The Accotink Creek watershed is severely degraded, mostly due to urbanization. A planning process initiated by Fairfax County is underway to improve the quality of the waterways and their watersheds. The Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) provides input to Fairfax County. The WAG members serve as liaisons between their respective communities and the project team. KCI Inc. serves as the technical team lead, prepares watershed plan drafts and engineering studies, and facilitates WAG and public meetings for the county. For more information, please contact [<Danielle.Wynne@fairfaxcounty.gov>](mailto:Danielle.Wynne@fairfaxcounty.gov) or visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/>

“The opinions represented herein do not necessarily represent those of Fairfax County or its agents.”

Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

ACCOTINK CREEK WATERSHEDS

DRAFT WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN FORUM

SEPTEMBER 21, 2010

Forum Participants*

L. Holtgrieve	Linda Q. Smith
Rochele Radish	Juliana Birkhoff
Bruce B. Davis	Brian Mattes
Jane Ellen Saums	Tim Sandusky
Beth Forbes	Charles Kackley
Geof Ballard	Mike Sours
Chris Landgraf	Kenny Shealy
Tena Bluhm	Fran Wallingford
Philip Latasa	Joanne Richeneek
Faith Hurley	Sherell Williams
Robert Iosco	Lydia Estes
Karl Kellar	Rob Mooney
Rosemary Ryan	Patrick O'Brien
J. Tahan	Lynn Daft
Bill Frost	Linda Daft
Danielle Wynne	Ed Putnam
Fred Rose	Jim Dewing
John C. Cook	Monica Cameron

*If you attended the forum and are not on the participant list, please contact Tim Sandusky, tsandusky@resolv.org.



Healthy Watersheds, Healthier Communities

Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

Accotink Creek Draft Watershed Management Plan Forum

*Fairfax High School
3501 Rebel Run
Multi Purpose Room
Fairfax, VA 22030*

Tuesday, September 21, 2010 6:30-9:00 pm

Agenda

- 6:30 p.m. **Watershed Registration – Sign in**
- 7:00 p.m. **Welcome** by Fred Rose, Chief, Watershed Planning and Assessment Branch, Fairfax County

Supervisor John C. Cook, Braddock District
- 7:15 p.m. **Slide Show:** Introduction to watershed concepts and overview of the Accotink Creek Draft Watershed Management Plan
- 8:00 p.m. **Watershed Input:** Learn about the plan comment period and timeline and attend breakout sessions to view watershed maps and provide feedback for proposed projects
- 9:00 p.m. **Adjourn** (*turn in any comment sheets*)

For more information:

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/accotinkcreek_docs.htm



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