

# Healthy Watersheds, Healthier Communities

Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

## Minutes Pohick Creek Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) Meeting #5

Wednesday, March 10, 2010  
Sangster Elementary School, Springfield VA

Meeting Attendees	
<b>WAG Members</b>	<b>Fairfax Co. Stormwater Planning Division</b>
Patrick Gloyd, Burke Centre Conservancy	Shannon Curtis
Bob Jordan, Potomac Riverways	Darold Burdick
Gerry Kirwin, Lake Braddock Community Association	Chad Grupe
Chris Landgraf, Fort Belvoir DPW	
John Levtov, Christopher Consultants	<b>PBS&amp;J (engineering consultant)</b>
Ron Marlow, Burke Presbyterian Church	Laura Chap
Sarah Mayhew, Middleridge Civic Assoc.	Terry Suehr
Ed Miller, Kings Park West	
Jim Pomeroy, Hidden Pond Nature Center	<b>Waterford Inc. (public involvement consultant)</b>
	Beth Offenbacker
	Paul Coelus

The meeting convened at 7:10 pm with welcome comments by county staff and public involvement consultant/moderator Beth Offenbacker (Waterford Inc.).

Beth Offenbacker facilitated a discussion with WAG members about the second set of candidate projects (numbers 103-244) based on feedback the group had provided. *See the meeting handout "WAG Comments on Projects 103-244."*

Laura Chap (PBS&J) gave an overview of the project prioritization process. In general, the County is looking to clean up the worst areas and address the worst sources. Additionally, upstream projects and projects that are easier to implement will be given higher priority.

The top 90 structural projects will be ranked and placed in the 10-year plan; the remaining projects will be placed in the 25-year plan. For each project in the 10-year group, an individual fact sheet will be prepared with a project description, map, and planning-level cost estimate. Nonstructural projects will be on separate lists and may not be ranked at this time. The current list is preliminary and based on the technical criteria; hydrological modeling must still be done, WAG comments, and general public input (from the upcoming public forum) must still be considered.



Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division

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After some additional modeling the project team will finalize the proposed rankings and develop a draft Watershed Management Plan. It is anticipated this will be ready for the sixth WAG meeting, probably in May 2010. Approximately a month later (June 2010), a public forum will be held to collect general public comment on the draft WMP and project rankings. The WMP will be revised as needed then presented to the County Board.

Prior to the public forum, all landowners adjacent to proposed projects will be notified by mail. The mailing will identify the specific project near that property and will provide a website address where the landowner can find more information.

Each segment of the meeting included an opportunity for questions and comments by the WAG members.

Also, WAG members are asked to provide Beth Offenbacher with any comments or questions they might have on the project rankings no later than Wednesday, March 24.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

The following is a summary of the questions asked and comments made by members of the WAG and the answers provided by county staff and consultants. The identities of the persons asking and answering the questions are not included. This is not a verbatim transcript.

Q: Were the comments made by WAG members “actionable”?

A: Yes. Based on the group’s comments, some projects were clarified, and in at least one instance a project was deleted.

Q: [A member asked for more information about project 174, LID bioswale at Lakeside Park.]

A: Upon review, we decided it would be better to substitute a buffer restoration for the structural project previously considered at that location.

Q: Have many of the pervious pavement projects been removed from the candidate list?

A: Some pervious pavement projects were ruled out after we physically inspected the site. For example, a project might have been initially been considered based on aerial photographs, but then physical inspection revealed that the slope was too great to make the project feasible. In other instances the pervious pavement might have been combined into another project.

Q: Will non-structural projects be ranked?

A: We’re still evaluating that. A major challenge is that it’s much more difficult to quantify non-structural projects.



Q: The inverse relationship between project scoring and project ranking is a bit confusing. The worst areas receive low scores when you evaluate individual projects based on the scoring criteria, but then when you rank them for priority purposes, those projects get high scores (for higher priority).

A: We understand that can be confusing. We'll be sure to include an explanation of how the rankings were determined.

Q: What factors go into the criterion "best professional judgment"?

A: We considered comments from WAG members and our observations from site visits. For example, a site visit might have revealed information about the project's context that was not apparent from the initial modeling, and in context the project might be considered inappropriate or lower in priority.

Q: How does projected population growth factor in?

A: We evaluated/considered land use (zoning) projections in the County's comprehensive plan when we applied the various criteria.

Q: How flexible will the plan be to accommodate potentially more stringent requirements from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regarding the Chesapeake Bay?

A: The County will have a centralized watershed management system to keep track of such information and assess whether/how the watershed plans need to be updated or changed. We'll have the ability to adjust project rankings "on the fly" based on changed criteria. [Because this system has not yet been implemented, it will not be discussed in the draft plan.]

Q: Will projects be required to meet new standards that might be issued after the EPA issues its new rules for the Chesapeake Bay?

A: We anticipate, based on historical practice, that any new standards will be applicable to new development and redevelopment but will not normally apply to existing development.

Q: How does a stormwater pond remove nitrogen and phosphorus from stormwater?

A: By retaining stormwater for an extended period of time, a pond allows sediments to settle to the bottom of the pond; these sediments will include pollutants. There will also be some plant uptake of dissolved nutrients. Grasses and other wetland plants take up the nutrients in order to grow, and animals eat those plants, keeping the nutrients in the biocycle rather than allowing them to drain into the bay.

Q: Do you measure nutrient removal through monitoring?

A: In an area as large as Fairfax County, monitoring would be very expensive. Instead, we use well-established models to calculate the amount of nutrients removed by various means such as stormwater ponds.

