



City of Harrisonburg

City Hall
409 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Meeting Minutes - Final Stormwater Advisory Committee

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

5:00 PM

Virtual

1. Call To Order

Members in attendance: George Hirshmann, Rob Alexander, Dale Chestnut, and Noel Levan, William Strosnider

Staff in attendance: Tom Hartman, Keith Thomas, Dan Rublee, Kelly Adams, and Trina Mastran (Sustainability and Environmental Manager beginning February 22nd)

2. Approval of Minutes

Dale Chestnut called for a motion to adopt the August 2020 and November 2020 SWAC meeting minutes. Rob Alexander seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

3.a. Public Comment

Tom Hartman reviewed comments received from Ms. Eliza Hoover at 335 Hill Street. Her lot is located between Gay Street and E Rock Street with the front yard in a low lying area. A stormwater pipe passes through her yard and which is on a system that drains the upstream area where the City's Transit Office is located and down to the intersection of Mason and Market. The stormwater pipe at that area goes under a bank, into a tunnel and along Main Street and comes out near the parking deck. In her email she noted a coupled of dates where flooding had occurred. Ms. Hoover also mentioned discussions with City staff and as well past sewer overflows. Tom stated that City staff have met with her and her neighbor multiple times. Recently Keith met with her and advised her of the City's Drainage Improvement Program. Ms. Hoover is working on the application currently. Staff will review the application once completed and received and if appropriate will bring to the SWAC with recommendations. Dan Rublee asked if there is an HCAP Project that might be viable for this site. Keith Thomas stated that the HCAP program was only designed to treat stormwater generated on site.

Rob Alexander noted that he was concerned that Ms. Hoover stated that the communication from the City is slow and asked Tom to elaborate on how staff respond to her. Tom noted that in his follow-up with the Stormwater Supervisor that Ms. Hoover and the Supervisor know each other well and the problem is also known. Unfortunately, the City is limited on its ability to assist with the drainage because it has no easement where the storm drain which serves this area is located. Ms. Hoover's front yard does get flooded during rain events. The staff have suggested options but none they can assist with without an easement. There was an acknowledgement by Tom that it takes time for the City to process citizen requests even though they have responded first by meeting with them.

Keith noted that the City is trying to improve the application and ensure the applicant

understands the timelines and process and the City has been responsive to Ms. Hoover and continue to work with her and her neighbor.

3.b. Staffing Update

Tom introduced Trina Mastran, the new Sustainability and Environmental Manager. The position will help oversee the Environmental Action Plan as well as MS4 program and some other environmental initiatives the City does. Rob asked if there were going to be additional staff as he was concerned that the workload may be too high to address stormwater concerns from citizens. Tom stated that some of the work has been redistributed to existing staff and the work is done in a team effort using multiple City staff.

Rob noted additionally that he believed SWAC and City have done a good job in addressing the stormwater issues and looking at new opportunities to address broader environmental challenges. He also noted that it will be useful that Trina, in her staff responsibilities to both EPSAC and SWAC, share those initiatives across both committees to further develop effectiveness and efficiencies. Rob wanted to know how we are being sure that there is social equity in these programs and that the benefits of these programs are being distributed in an equitable manner.

3.c. MS4 Program Update

Keith Thomas noted that staff have finished conducting both their annual SWPPP inspections as well as City-owned BMP inspections. He also advised that staff were expecting a DEQ audit this year.

3.d. Stormwater Local Assistance Fund Applications

Keith advised that DEQ has awarded 2020 SLAF funding for the Northend Greenway stream restoration as well as the VMRC extended detention project. Staff have had several initial meetings with DEQ staff. Tom noted that Dan and his group will assist with the design on the VRMC project.

3.e. Drainage Improvement Program Update

Keith mentioned that staff have completed the on-call engineering RFP selection process. Two firms have been selected and scope of work delivered for the feasibility study for the Woodlands Drive Project. Tom noted that this is the first drainage improvement program project that has reached the feasibility study level and it will be a learning process for the staff. He indicated that he hoped to be able to present further information regarding the feasibility study in the April SWAC Meeting.

3.f. Harrisonburg Conservation Assistance Program (HCAP) Updates

Keith mentioned that there has not been a lot of activity with the SWCD in this program

since last meeting. There is one approved project for permeable pavement; the project should begin this week. Outreach efforts have been put on the back burner, but staff plan on picking up that effort by April. Finally, staff are working on a program participant survey to obtain feedback from participants who both completed and did not complete the program.

3.g. Mountain View Drive Stream Restoration Update

Keith noted that staff have met initially with all nine landowners regarding the easements across 23 parcels and obtained 16 of the 23 required parcel easements for the project. Staff are working out the details with the remaining property owners. Once all easements are obtained the project will go through required process to be advertised for bids. A meeting with the engineering consultants will be held in the next week to begin finalizing project documents. Tom noted that potential bidders will have to meet pre-qualification requirements due to the nature of this stream restoration project. Qualified bidders will have shown they have experience with this type of work and be vetted in order to be able to bid on project. The timeline is to have project out to bid this summer with work beginning in the fall and planting in the spring. This project was previously awarded SLAF funding that has a stipulation to have the money committed to construction by the end of this fiscal year.

3.h. Northend Greenway Stream Restoration Update

Completed tree planting in the buffer and added additional trees near the shared use path to provide shade. We are in final project documentation stage with Momentum Earthworks, the project contractor. Once the City has all requisite documentation it can request reimbursement from SLAF funding. Tom noted that it looked good, and that Momentum worked well with staff. Rob also noted the amenities provided, which were not stormwater related, looked nice along the trail. Tom noted the Northend Greenway Steering Committee provided the funding for the amenities like urban wood benches, a kiosk with a map in English and Spanish, and bike repair station.

3.i. Other Business

Blacks Run PPEA - Stream Restoration Project

City received an unsolicited PPEA on Blacks Run from a stream restoration firm in August. After staff evaluated it and put it out for solicitation. The City received one competing proposal. Staff then hired a 3rd party consultant for stream restoration to provide a report regarding which project is the most viable. This report was received two weeks ago. Staff have already conducted first round interviews with both firms. Tom noted that Stream Restoration Projects help the City to meet its pollution reduction requirements. He noted he hoped to be able to share more information regarding the project at May's meeting.

Urban Forestry updates

Keith reviewed current activities at Northend Greenway which included: tree planting at southern end of greenway. Additionally, staff were able to use of portable sawmill for onsite demonstration. Kelly Adams has posted video of sawmill on the Public Works Facebook page. City staff have started 2000 plant plugs in the greenhouse for the City's pollinator program. Consultants are working on the City's Urban Forestry Management Plan which will help staff to better maintain our urban trees and to promote the Urban Forestry

program.

Rob asked Keith where the City's Social Media is located. Keith stated the Public Works Facebook page which includes Stormwater efforts and as well the City publishes the Stormwater Newsletter which includes related Tree efforts especially for stream restoration.

Rob asked Dan whether there was any legislation coming up through the General Assembly related to stormwater. Dan stated there was no significant legislation and mentioned VAMSA (Virginia Municipal Stormwater Association), a group of local government officials and private consultants who are represented by council, regularly tracks stormwater legislation of interest to local governments. There is a proposed bill for \$50 million in future SLAF funding to assist in improving the Chesapeake Bay for localities.

Rob inquired as to whether there is funding for staff to present stormwater initiatives/projects at conferences. Tom stated that the issue regarding attending conferences is related to COVID and not funding. The City has a travel ban in place due to COVID. Most conferences have migrated to online to virtual conferences. He also noted that the conference that he and Rebecca Stimson (prior Environmental Compliance Manager) were to attend last May to present a City project was cancelled due to COVID.

3.j. Next Steps

May 5, 2021

August 4, 2021

November 3, 2021

4. Old Business

5. Adjournment