



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Town Hall
405 Martin Luther King Jr.
Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Booker Creek Working Group Meeting Notes

Chair John Morris

Chair Pamela Schultz

Vice-Chair Jeanette Bench

Doug Frederick

Antonia Sebastian

Shugong Wang

Chad Pickens

Miguel Rojas Sotelo (absent)

Michael Dupree

Louie Rivers

Noel Myers

Monday, December 6th, 2021

6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

1 Welcome and Review of the Agenda

The chairs welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda.

2 Introductions

Noel Myers identified himself as the representative from the Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board and apologized for being unable to attend previous meetings.

3 Announcements

Co-Chair Pamela Schultz spoke of attending recent workshops on nature-based solutions and an NC State Stormwater Control Measure inspection workshop. At these webinars, it was relayed that there may be grant money for green infrastructure from the recent federal infrastructure bill.

4 Review Mayor's Charges & Council Feedback

There was a discussion of the Mayor's framing questions being useful for identifying specific tasks but the mission should be more general. The mayor was present and added that communication is vital to ensure understanding of the information.

5 Adopt Mission statement

There were two primary points of discussion: adding meaning to the word "equity" and whether the mission statement should be framed to the Booker Creek Watershed or to the community at wide.

Since the members of the committee were selected from the Booker Creek Neighborhood group, there was concern that representation from other neighborhoods were not a part of the workgroup. Workgroup members also stated that the conclusions should be generally to shape the stormwater program at large. No agreement was reached.

6 Presentation from Leslie Vanden Herik: Mecklenburg Soil and Water Conservation District

Leslie presented on the Urban Cost Share Program. Some of the key points discussed were:

- The program works in 6 towns.
- It is funded through grants by the US EPA, NC Land and Water Conservation Trust, and Mecklenburg County
- The objective is to address erosion and other non-point source pollution.
- The program reimbursing costs up to \$15,000 with the reimbursement dependent on the costs of the practice.
- There is a required 5-year maintenance agreement
- There are 6 approved practices: stream restoration, riparian buffer, critical area planting, swale/grassed waterway, bioretention/rain gardens, and pet waste receptacles. Stream Restoration is the most common practice. Bioretention and rain garden are difficult to find sites that qualify.
- The program no longer funds rain barrels, invasive plant removal, compost bins, nutrient management, or tree and shrub establishment because these are not practical in achieving the stated goal and/or due to challenges to get residents to perform maintenance.

7 Presentation from David Kroening: Charlotte Mecklenburg Storm Water Services

David presented on the decision framework that guide their Capital Improvement Project (CIP) selection. The two general categories for CIPs are flood mitigation and water quality.

The flood mitigation projects are prioritized according to a ranking system. A flood risk score is assigned to all flood prone buildings. The effectiveness of the project is evaluated according to risk reduction techniques. A viability index is determined that accounts for feasibility and compliance. This index was used to determine the number of projects and total costs to reach the residual risk (i.e. an acceptable endpoint). These projects mitigate the flood problem by reducing risk but not eliminating flooding. The current funding is \$2.6 million annually but they are requesting \$8 million annually in the next budget cycle. They have completed all the low hanging fruit so the next set of projects will be more costly.

The program assesses its effectiveness by evaluating the return on investment. They track flood losses avoided and cumulative stormwater investment. Additionally, pre-mitigation building elevation data is maintained. After a flood event, flood inundation is estimated, and pre-mitigation impacts are calculated based upon depth/damage curves with additional losses for vehicles, emergency responder costs and lot improvement

The water quality projects utilize a similar approach by ranking a stream's ability to support aquatic life. The ranking requires a field score assessment which is labor intensive and time consuming, so they utilized a surrogate desktop analysis. The analysis identified that the program would require \$500 million to provide the stream restoration to the 220 miles identified. This work can't be optimized, and the cost will only increase with inflation.

All the work is voluntary requiring the permission of landowners.

7 Public Input

The Town needs to provide a raking system for streams.

8 Working Group Discussion

Due to time constraints, the chairs requested that working group members email key takeaways from tonight's presentation and ask staff to compile them in the meeting summary. There was not time to discuss future agenda items.

There was a discussion about meeting more regularly due to the scope of the group's mission and the timeline. The next steps are to ask staff if that is possible.

9 Adjourn