



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

Noel Myers

(absent)

Chad Pickens (absent)

Miguel Rojas Sotelo

Michael Dupree

Louie Rivers

Monday, January 10, 2022

6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

1 Welcome and Review of the Agenda

The chairs welcomed the group, took a roll, and reviewed the agenda.

2 Announcements

Pamela provided logistical announcements. The meetings are proposed to last 2 hours and are scheduled every 3 weeks. There will be 5 proposed meetings to occur between now and April. The next meeting will be on January 21, 2022 at 6:00 PM. Resources, including past meeting materials, are available on the Town website at www.townofchapelhill.org/BookerCreekStudies.

3 Discussion Question

John presented three questions for the group to respond to either during the meeting or by emailing their thought to Sammy after the meeting's conclusion.

1. What ideas are promising?
2. What additional information is needed?
3. How can we improve our meeting?

4 Meeting Recap

Pamela presented on her key takeaways from presentation given by staff from Charlotte-Mecklenburg County. She was impressed by the visual to relate losses avoided and flood risk reduction.

5 Town Staff Presentation

Alisha Goldstein, a stormwater engineer for the Town of Chapel Hill, presented on the comprehensive vision for the Town's stormwater department. The guiding document for the department is the Stormwater Master Plan which was developed over the course of several years with stakeholder involvement.

The presentation provided an overview of staff and their roles, a history of the stormwater program, and the objectives and initiatives for specific stormwater goals. The goals highlighted were to address

stormwater quantity, stormwater quality, protection of stream buffers, and regulatory mandates. Alisha conveyed the current programmatic activities that the department needs to prioritize to meet the requirements of their MS4 NPDES Phase II permit. Lastly, the budget for the department was reviewed.

The working group had follow-up questions/comments regarding the mapping of stormwater infrastructure and flood risk, the prioritization of selecting capital improvement and drainage projects, the provision of the FEMA BRIC application, community mapping to assess drainage issues, and educating the public regarding stream buffers.

6 Presentation of the Durham Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Program

Michael (Mike) Dupree presented on several initiatives undertaken by the Durham Soil & Water Conservation district (SWCD) to address water quality mitigation from existing development, workforce development, and environmental justice and sustainability.

The Durham SWCD utilized CCAP money to implement 19 strategies in targeted neighborhoods. The focus was on older neighborhoods and to concentrate the density of practices within that neighborhood. He presented on a stream bank stabilization project, indoor air quality improvement, and cistern use. In low-income neighborhoods, the projects were funded 100% due to the county allocating \$20,000 annually.

The workforce development program was implemented in conjunction with local schools during the year and Durham Tech over the summer to educate and train students and teachers on stormwater practices. The students and teachers were paid. The curriculum utilized was developed by the NC School of Science and Math.

Edit: This version of the meeting notes corrects an inaccuracy in this section. The first draft referred to "stream restoration" rather than "stream bank stabilization."

7 Open Discussion

Points made during the discussion include

- A scientist or engineer should speak to the group about flooding and design with real numbers.
- The group should acknowledge the pitfalls of green infrastructure in considering recommendations. These pitfalls include the difficulty of working with transient populations, maintenance upkeep, and how to incentivize large complexes.
- Town should provide a transparent assessment of projects with respect to how they are prioritized and their cost-benefit.
- Approaches will be different for existing and new development.
- The project should be reviewed to understand if they address flooding.
- Projects are more effective if they remediate flooding issues on the flooded properties rather than upstream from those properties.
- Build bottom-up not top-down approaches to community issues
- Request to see the land use change over time.

8 Public Input

- A resident expressed the need for more public outreach to engage people and suggested postcards.
- A resident along Ridgecrest showed photos of his backyard during the recent 3+ storm

event. His property is upstream of the Booker Creek Basin but he feels the project didn't help flooding. He has floodproofed his house through the construction of flood walls and a sump pump to protect his finished basement.

9 Adjourn

Related Resources

- FEMA's BRIC grant
 - The [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\) grant](#) is administered by FEMA and supports states, local communities, tribes and territories as they undertake hazard mitigation projects, reducing the risks they face from disasters and natural hazards. The first round of applications was due in January, 2021.
 - More information about the Town's flood-resilience applications will be available at www.townofchapelhill.org/bookercreekstudies
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Community Input
 - ARPA is the American Rescue Plan Act passed into law in March 2021 to help towns and cities recover from the pandemic. The Town of Chapel Hill will receive a total of \$10,668,497.
 - How do you think the Town should spend this money? [Fill out the survey](#) to let us know!
- Local Green Infrastructure Case Study
 - During the meeting, Louie Rivers mentioned their research paper titled, "[Green infrastructure site selection](#) in the Walnut Creek wetland community: A case study from southeast Raleigh, North Carolina."
- Green Infrastructure Site-Selection Pilot Process in Chapel Hill
 - During the Spring 2021 semester, Stormwater intern Carson Mays worked with Alisha Goldstein on a project to identify green infrastructure opportunities in Chapel Hill. The purpose of this project was to pilot a process for identifying GI opportunities in the public Right of Way (ROW) to manage runoff from the road.
 - The project is titled, "[Planning Green Infrastructure in Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Using green infrastructure to address social vulnerability to extreme heat and impervious surface coverage.](#)"
- Town Surveys
 - The [Trash Tracker](#) survey invites the community to submit locations of trash around Town. Stormwater staff use this data to coordinate litter cleanups.
 - The [Tree Planting Database](#) invites the community to follow the progress of the tree planting program and to submit recommendations for future planting locations.
- Stormwater Volunteer opportunities and upcoming events
 - Want to host a **litter cleanup**? The Stormwater Office is here to help! We can provide supplies, help you choose a location, and coordinate trash pickup after your event. Email Sammy at sbauer@townofchapelhill.org for more information.
 - **Storm drain markers** remind folks to keep pollution out of the storm drain. Even

grass clippings, loose leaves, and pet waste can pollute Jordan Lake and drinking water sources. Help us get the word out by marking local storm drains and distributing door hangers! For more information, check out [Stormwater's Public Education and Participation page](#) or email Sammy at sbauer@townofchapelhill.org

- The first annual **Orange County Creek Week** will be March 12-19, 2022. The goal of Creek Week is to provide opportunities for folks to nurture their connections with our local waterways. Chapel Hill Stormwater is partnering with the Town of Carrboro, the Town of Hillsborough, UNC, OWASA, and Orange County Soil & Water to provide a host of events and resources that celebrate our creeks. Want to get involved? Reach out to Sammy at sbauer@townofchapelhill.org

