

FINAL

Thursday, November 15, 2007

To: The Rivanna River Basin Commission

From: The RRBC Technical Advisory Committee

Subject: TAC November 13 meeting summary

The focus of Tuesday's Technical Advisory Committee meeting was to have a brainstorming session on what is known about management strategies for addressing altered hydrology. The intent of the meeting was to discuss and identify gaps in the TAC's collective knowledge of practices and determine next steps.

The group began by discussing roadblocks to implementation of management practices such as low impact development (LID). Some of the obstacles discussed included Virginia code provisions that hinder reuse of harvested rainwater in homes, ignorance of builders, engineers, and plan reviewers about practices, concerns about maintenance of practices and effectiveness over the long-term, potentially higher cost for implementing these practices, longer time required for permit review, lack of ordinances and guidelines that encourage these practices, increased complexity in modeling and design, and a lack of consistency in ordinances and practices among localities in the watershed.

The group then talked about the need to better understand the effectiveness, cost, and maintenance requirements of various practices in order to better understand the roadblocks to implementation and determine which practices should be promoted. The group talked about synthesizing what is already known about practices and testing some practices locally to gather region-specific information. There was some discussion of available data on practices, such as work being done at the University of Georgia, the University of Washington, and in Australia. Though there is some information about effectiveness of management practices, it appears that this information has not been synthesized. There was also further discussion on Biscuit Run as a potential site for testing practices. Monitoring locally will provide information on effectiveness of practices taking into account the specific characteristics of our region (such as soil type) and will also show developers and the community that this can be done.

The TAC also talked about the possibility of hosting a workshop with developers, engineers, permit reviewers, and others to share the information the TAC gathers about management practices and discuss roadblocks to implementation.

Three next steps came out of the meeting:

- 1) Conduct a literature review to compile what is known about management practices.
- 2) Monitor practices locally, by working with a developer to encourage them to install practices at a new development (such as Biscuit Run), talking to sites who already have plans to install practices (such as the Waldorf School), or monitoring existing developments that have practices installed (such as Guildford Farm).

3) Work to export this information to the entire Rivanna watershed and beyond.

To begin the process of conducting a literature review, Greg Harper volunteered to spend 10 hours over the next few weeks gathering research on management practices. TNC offered to post to the weblog information they have gathered on this topic. Hopefully Greg's review will give the group an idea of the amount of information available and the effort it would take to compile it into a synthesis document. This will help inform the TAC's decision about whether it is necessary to hire someone to conduct the literature review and prepare a synthesis document.

The TAC decided to meet next in early January, and TNC will contact everyone with possible dates.

Respectfully submitted by Samuel H. Austin, TAC Chair.