

Final Meeting Summary
Technical Advisory Committee
Rivanna River Basin Commission
November 10, 2008
9:00 am
The Nature Conservancy
490 Westfield Road, Charlottesville

Review and adopt meeting agenda

Kristel Riddervold had to leave the meeting early and in the interest of time, suggested postponing the presentation on the Meadow Creek restoration project to a later meeting and moving the topics on rainwater harvesting to the beginning of the meeting. The City is looking at implementing rainwater harvesting on several City projects and have also received several site plans from developers that would like to use rainwater harvesting to meet stormwater management requirements. She is seeking assistance and advice on how to review and approve site plans like this. The agenda was approved with these revisions.

Update on development of technical specifications for rainwater harvesting systems

Ridge Schuyler updated everyone on the work that he and Alyson have been doing on rainwater harvesting as an informal subcommittee of the TAC. They have been working on two main tasks: 1) tackling hurdles to rainwater harvesting, and 2) developing a technical specification and calculator for sizing rainwater harvesting systems.

The first task stems from the letter the Commission sent to the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) regarding obstacles to implementation of rainwater harvesting systems. Ridge followed up with Duane Roadcap of VDH about this, and Duane offered to help bring together staff from the state and local health departments, DEQ, DCR, and those in charge of building code rules to work together to develop a set of guidelines to disseminate to the localities. A memorandum of understanding may also be developed as part of this. Hopefully this will clarify the rules and guidelines for various uses of harvested rainwater, so that all localities will have the same understanding of the rules and will be better able to readily approve these systems.

Alyson and Ridge have also been working with Diane Frisbee and Sarah Lawson (Rainwater Management Systems) to develop a rainwater harvesting specification and calculator for system sizing. Ridge mentioned that rainwater harvesting systems can be used for beneficial use and as a stormwater management tool. The problem is that if you are using rainwater harvesting for stormwater management, the goal is to keep the rain tank empty so it can capture the next storm. If you are using rainwater harvesting for beneficial use, the goal is to keep the tank full so you have more water available for use. Because rain tanks can be expensive, it is necessary to optimize these two uses to make tanks as small as possible while still being able to meet both needs. The calculator tool will optimize these uses, and is designed to meet the proposed stormwater management regulations currently under development. An early version of the calculator has been completed and was submitted to Tom Schueler with the Chesapeake Stormwater Network who is working on development of BMP specs to be included in the new VA stormwater management handbook. The new stormwater management regulations should be

out for public comment in the spring and the regulations and manual should be final in about a year. The calculator needs to be refined and tested before the manual comes out. Finalizing the calculator will require some additional funding, and Ridge has submitted a proposal that might help fund this.

Kristel mentioned that the City is going to Council next week with a stormwater utility. They want to be able to offer incentives and credits for things like rainwater harvesting but don't know how to calculate those credits. Ridge replied that the City could adopt the current calculator as the performance standard. Though it isn't required now, it could be used to determine credits since the calculator would require systems to do better than the existing regulations. Kristel added that they also need to address gauging the volume of rainwater being used in the home and going into the wastewater system, since treatment of that wastewater will not be paid for if it is not gauged. John Martin mentioned that in Albemarle County landowners are allowed to have auxiliary meters to measure the amount of water being used for irrigation. This water use is being charged at a lesser rate since it does not have to be treated as wastewater. This means that landowners are paying much less to use water for irrigation, which might make it harder to make the argument that they should be using harvested rainwater for irrigation because it will save them money on their water bills.

Formalize Rainwater Harvesting Subcommittee

The TAC formalized the Rainwater Harvesting Subcommittee to continue working on these tasks. In addition to Ridge and Alyson, Kristel, Holly, and Leslie would like to serve on this subcommittee. Kristel volunteered to be the temporary chair and the subcommittee will appoint a permanent chair at its first meeting.

NFWF grant

Diane and Ridge explained a pre-proposal that was submitted on behalf of the Commission. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, in partnership with EPA and the Chesapeake Bay Program, is seeking proposals for the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund. Grants will support demonstration of innovative approaches to expand the collective knowledge about the most cost effective and sustainable approaches to dramatically reduce or eliminate nutrient and sediment pollution to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The grant amount is \$200,000 – 1 million, and a total of up to \$12.9 million will be awarded. The grant requires a 1:1 match. Pre-proposals were due October 31, and Diane presented the idea to the Commission at their October meeting and they agreed to submit a pre-proposal. Diane, Leslie, and Ridge completed the pre-proposal with assistance from the staff of the localities. The pre-proposal describes a comprehensive watershed approach including five strategies that stem directly from the recommendations the TAC recently made to the Commission about how to address the threat of altered hydrology. The strategies include:

1. implementing innovative *quantity-reducing* stormwater management practices on government facilities in each of the four localities;
2. monitoring of each of these demonstration sites and monitoring of three additional practices on local government sites to verify practice effectiveness;
3. undertaking an inventory of additional government facilities where retrofits can be installed;

4. convening workshops and a symposium to educate the private development community in conjunction with local planning and resource management staff about the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of these innovative strategies; and
5. developing an incentive program in each locality that will spur the implementation of these practices on private property.

The total project amount is \$3,164,400, and \$998,000 was requested from the grant source. Matching contributions include in-kind and cash matches from the localities, the Commission, The Nature Conservancy and the Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District. The Commission's cash match would be \$125,000. Invitations for full proposals will be issued December 1, awards will be announced in April, and projects should begin between May and September and be completed within 2-3 years.

Discuss appointment of Grants Subcommittee

The group discussed whether or not to appoint a Grants Subcommittee to oversee the NFWF grant if the Commission receives it, and to identify additional grant funding opportunities. Ridge mentioned that Diane has accepted a new position with TNC and as of mid-December will no longer be able to serve as secretary and project manager for the Commission and TAC. TNC will not be hiring a replacement for Diane at this time. Ridge said that TNC has offered these services for a time, but now that the Commission is up and running and has real recommendations to implement and a possible grant to manage, it may be time for the Commission to consider hiring a part-time project manager. Several TAC members felt that the TAC should not be doing grant administration since this is not a technical role and it would be impossible to manage a grant by a group of people meeting monthly. The TAC discussed several options for replacing Diane, including 1) the Commission could hire a part-time staff person to complete the project management duties and to serve as secretary to the Commission and TAC, 2) the Commission could hire a part-time Executive Director to do the above and also to have a fundraising element (both private and grants), 3) the Commission could appoint secretaries to the RRBC and the TAC from among the membership and hire a part-time staff person to focus on project management and fundraising, or 4) the Commission could try to spread the secretarial and project management duties among itself and the TAC and not hire a staff person. John Martin suggested that the Commission's Executive Committee meet prior to the next Commission meeting in January to review options and develop a proposal to discuss at the January meeting. It was also suggested that Diane write up the scope of the activities she has been completing and the amount of time spent on the activities, so that the Commission can determine the monetary value of this work. Diane will work on writing her job description and contact Sally Thomas to determine how the Commission should proceed and whether an Executive Committee meeting should be held soon. The TAC decided to talk further about appointing a Grants Subcommittee after the Commission decides whether to hire a paid staff person and what the role of that staff person will be.

Discuss appointment of Workshop Subcommittee

One of the TAC's recommendations to the Commission was to host a workshop or series of workshops to educate developers, planners, engineers, and others about BMPs and identify obstacles to their implementation. The TAC discussed whether to appoint a Workshop Subcommittee to help develop the content and structure of these workshops. The goal for this

subcommittee will be to determine what the developers, planners, engineers, etc. would need to make implementation of these BMPs more ubiquitous. Subcommittee members can work with the localities to determine what is needed and the subcommittee can then design workshops to meet those needs. Examples of workshop content may include technical presentations, ordinance review, etc. John Murphy added that StreamWatch has also written some grants to do education of planners, engineers, etc. so that they are aware of the StreamWatch data and are using it. This might also feed into the workshops the TAC designs. Louise Finger, Greg Harper, John Murphy, and Dan Ratzlaff offered to serve on this subcommittee. It also may be a good idea to have a representative from Charlottesville and Fluvanna County on this subcommittee since the content of the workshops might be different for the various localities and the locality staff members would provide important input into the workshop design.

Confirm Existing Subcommittees

Sam reminded the TAC that the Modeling Subcommittee consists of Greg Harper, Dave Hirschman, Ridge Schuyler, Rochelle Garwood, and Sam Austin. Greg Harper is the Chair. This subcommittee is working on refining modeling efforts to determine the contribution of various land uses to the altered hydrology problem and the impact of implementation of site-level practices on overall watershed hydrology. Joanna Curan asked to join this subcommittee, and suggested that Todd Scanlon also be appointed.

The Monitoring Subcommittee consists of Tamara Ambler, Jeff Sitler, John Murphy, Sam Austin, Ridge Schuyler, Kristel Riddervold, and Dan Ratzlaff. Tamara Ambler is the Chair. This subcommittee is looking into monitoring goals, needs, and potential study designs, and plans to prepare a proposal to share with the TAC describing options for monitoring. Christine May asked to join this subcommittee.

Discuss TAC and Subcommittee meeting frequency

The TAC decided to begin meeting every other month, and subcommittees will meet monthly. At each TAC meeting, subcommittee Chairs will provide a subcommittee report. The TAC also decided that subcommittee Chairs would notify all TAC and Commission members of subcommittee meetings in advance so that interested members could attend if they were available. The TAC also might post meetings to an online calendar, either associated with the TAC weblog or perhaps on another site. John Murphy offered to look into an online calendar for posting meetings.

John Martin also mentioned that Preston Bryant, Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources, agreed to give a presentation at the next Commission meeting. Diane will follow up on this and work with the Commission and TAC to determine the schedule and content for this presentation.

Set next meeting date and consider setting regular meeting date

The next TAC meeting was set for January 12 at 9 am at TNC. Diane will send TAC members an email with a poll to determine the best date for bimonthly regularly scheduled TAC meetings in the spring.

Compiled by Diane Frisbee and respectfully submitted by Samuel H. Austin, TAC Chair.