

**FINAL Meeting Summary
Rivanna River Basin Commission
Albemarle County Informational Meeting**

March 22, 2010
12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Albemarle County Office Building – McIntire Road, Room 235

Attendance

Rivanna River Basin Commission (Commission) Members

Present:

Ms. Ann Mallek, Albemarle Board of Supervisors

Others present:

Ms. Leslie Middleton, RRBC Executive Director

Ms. Rose Brown, RRBC Program Coordinator

Mr. Greg Harper, RRBC TAC, Albemarle County

Mr. Gregor Patsch, RRBC, TAC, Albemarle County

1. Call to order

The meeting began at 12:05 p.m. Since only one Commissioner, Ms. Mallek, was present at the meeting, it was not necessary to call to order a meeting of the Commission.

2. Roll call and introductions

Ms. Middleton noted that there is representation on the RRBC TAC by the planning/community development departments of every locality except Albemarle County. Mr. Harper and Mr. Patsch sit on the TAC, but neither is in the Community Development/Planning department. The TAC's organization may shift in the future, but it may still be beneficial to the TAC to contain a representative from Albemarle County's Community Department. Mr. Harper noted that he sometimes has limited contact with other departments and can only serve as representative from the Water Resources Management function of General Services Department.

3. Albemarle County information and discussion

Ms. Middleton stated that the meeting would be informational and that participants would be welcome to ask questions and gather more information about the RRBC and especially projects in Albemarle County.

Item 2: NFWF grant. Ms. Middleton explained that the grant application happened after the RRBC's January 2009 letter to localities about sedimentation from altered hydrology. The letter included five recommendations, listed on the meeting handout as tasks 1 – 5. The grant proposal was written using that set of recommendations. The grant proposal received high marks from NFWF because the RRBC is attempting to work on a watershed scale.

The NFWF project in Albemarle County is the Crozet stormwater wetland. Some funds will be

dedicated to educational signage and monitoring of effectiveness. Ms. Mallek asked if the automatic samplers would be installed soon to obtain a baseline. Mr. Harper noted that this would not be necessary because two separate samplers will collect in and out flow. Discharge from the project will flow into Powells Creek. It would be difficult to gauge the effect of the project by monitoring the health of Powells Creek because the project watershed is only about 2 percent of the entire watershed of Powells Creek at the proposed outfall. Ms. Mallek stated that this project would be a good pilot to demonstrate how well the automatic samplers work. Ms. Middleton agreed, but cautioned that the data may not be accurate or precise enough to quantify exactly how much sediment and nutrients have been reduced from a regulatory standpoint, but that the project will be adequate to meet the grant needs.

Another value is that RRBC will learn about stormwater monitoring, learn how to use the equipment, and will be more prepared to improve monitoring in the future. Ms. Mallek added that Albemarle's investment of money in the stormwater wetlands would count toward the pending Chesapeake Bay TMDL requirements. Ms. Middleton stated that the RRBC has contracted with TJPDC to coordinate the installation of the samplers. Jeff Sitler, Joanna Curran, and Joe Battiata are acting as advisors to the project coordinator from TJPDC.

Ms. Middleton stated that it would be necessary to execute a MOA between RRBC and Albemarle County before funds can be transferred for the stormwater wetlands. Similar MOAs are already in place between RRBC and Fluvanna County and Charlottesville. A handout of the Fluvanna County MOA was distributed as an example. Mr. Harper stated that the County is ready to proceed with the MOA since construction is expected to begin this summer. Mr. Harper stated that he would work with RRBC staff, the county attorney and the county's Grants Committee to get the MOA ready for approval by the Board of Supervisors as soon as possible.

Ms. Middleton stated that tasks 4 and 5 (workshops and incentive programs) are still under development. The TMDL process may be worked into these steps. The tasks will also depend, in part, on how (or if) RCS plans to continue to work with localities in their stormwater codes and ordinance review work. As one way of encouraging the adoption of "advanced" stormwater practices as described in the RRBC proposal, RRBC staff and one of the TAC Subcommittees (Rainwater Harvesting Subcommittee) have been focusing on encouraging statewide guidance on rainwater harvesting. Ms. Middleton will be crafting a stakeholder (builders, architects, and locality staff) roundtable to pose the question of how stormwater management could be improved in the Rivanna watershed. Ms. Mallek stated that it would be best to hold these roundtables after the state develops regulations and codes so that there is more investment by stakeholders in the outcome of such a meeting.

Item 3: Healthy Waters (DCR) grant. Ms. Middleton said that these grant funds are to be used to identify our local healthy waters and try to put tools in place to protect healthy waters. VCU methodology to select sites is different from StreamWatch methods. This project is the first time that significant upland (above the fall line) data points from have been gathered by VCU. Ms. Middleton worked with the TJPDC and Greene County to encourage the inclusion of some "healthy waters" protective language in the new Greene County Comprehensive Plan.

Item 4: Land Cover Map. Mr. Harper stated that Albemarle County Geographic Data Services

(GDS) staff, Tex Weaver and Damon Pettitt, have helped to review the product. Chris Bruce, from The Nature Conservancy, was designated as the project manager. Greene County will use the map for existing conditions in its new Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Mallek asked if Albemarle County would have to conduct an ordinance change or comprehensive plan change in order to refer to this land cover map as its official map. Ms. Middleton stated that it might be helpful to meet with the county's Community Development Department to present the new map and ask how this map could be best used by Albemarle County. Scott Clark has participated on the team contracting to have the map developed. If Albemarle County is considering a full review of its comp plan soon (as opposed to updating chapters), the new land cover map may be very useful.

Mr. Harper explained that the Modeling Subcommittee of the RRBC TAC is posing several questions: If stormwater were managed perfectly, would there still be unhealthy streams? Are rural areas part of the problem? Are forests also producing sediment? The Modeling Subcommittee will use the new land cover map to quantify the different categories of land use, which will help to estimate percentages of contribution to the sediment problem. Ms. Mallek stated that the latest issue of the *Farm Bureau Journal* encourages people to enact conservation practices. Mr. Harper offered to make a scan of the article and send it to meeting participants.

Item 5: What's ahead. Ms. Middleton stated that the RRBC has submitted a proposal through DCR for a Rivanna regional pilot project to undertake the first steps of a "watershed implementation plan" (WIP) for the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. The proposal includes the SWCD jurisdictions (TJ and Culpeper) and the TJPDC jurisdictions. One goal of the pilot project is to determine how multiple and overlapping jurisdictions might deal with the requirement to address TMDL goals on "the local level." The only funding available at this time is a \$5K mini-grant from DCR. Primarily, each pilot program will receive contractor assistance from Tetra Tech and facilitation assistance from Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center (CPRC). Staff at Tetra Tech can help analyze our local data with respect to with the Chesapeake Bay model numbers. Frank Dukes from The Institute for Environmental Negotiations is facilitating the statewide meetings. If selected as a pilot project, the RRBC could perhaps have the assistance of IEN for this local project.

Pilot programs will be notified within a few weeks. If the Rivanna Regional project is selected, the community could use Tetra Tech to compare local data with the load allocations generated by the model. The Chesapeake Bay TMDL load reductions (nutrients and sediments) will probably not be adequate to ensure clean-up of the Rivanna waters. Localities will not be tasked with coming up with an official response until 2011. The advantage of the pilot project is that localities can begin to consider the necessary actions and available resources for the Chesapeake Bay TMDL local clean-up effort. Ms. Middleton noted that she has invited Jack Frye from Virginia DCR to speak with the RRBC at the April 15 about the Chesapeake Bay TMDL.

Ms. Middleton added that at next RRBC meeting, she plans to propose the development of a comprehensive watershed plan to help guide the work of the RRBC and TAC. This would be more of a structural reframing than a new concept. It would provide a framework to the work of the Commission, TAC, and staff, and would tie together several projects that are already underway.

4. Other Information

Mr. Harper noted that Mr. Patsch would soon be transferred to the Office of Facilities Development to work more fully on capital projects, including stormwater-related capital projects. Ms. Mallek expressed concern that this reorganization could further weaken the emphasis on water resources management.

Ms. Middleton stated that since one requirement of the NFWF grant is to identify obstacles to implementing stormwater practices, RRBC may host a meeting with the various Albemarle County departments and staff that manage water resources – or a watershed-wide meeting of similar departments - to brainstorm about current practices, obstacles, and ways to better implement stormwater practices. Ms. Mallek noted that a watershed wide approach would help to inform county staff what other counties are doing. Mr. Patsch stated that it would be interesting to ask the question: if you could hypothetically design county departments for the best water protection, how would the county be organized?

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Attachments:

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