

Hickory Ridge Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting August 6, 2018

Present: Deborah Wessner, Iris Mars, Etarae Weinstein

June minutes were approved.

Discussion of various requests for WAC service and things to keep in mind:

- Creating a dry stream bed (without RAC approval) on the 100-year floodplain – landscaper apparently was not aware, plus, the owner needs to have a permit from the State of MD.
- Cul-de-sac owners of a specific location where the six houses around a cul-de-sac island were co-owners of the island. Owners wanted to pave it over; County said it was doable, but need to use the same paving. We WACcies think converting it to a rain garden and changing the flow so water goes in vs. around the island is a better solution. Or, to plant a tree or something.
- Neighbors fighting over drainage into each other's properties and creating erosion holes; the solution is to redirect the downspout.
- Owner curious about rain gardens, but she doesn't have a problem, or, the runoff problem is something that is caused by neighbor and would not be mitigated by a rain garden. Rain gardens are to collect rain from impervious surfaces, and, it's very unlikely the owner can get County reimbursement if the owner builds a rain garden to collect the neighbor's stormwater.
- Bamboo removal: bamboo is invasive, but one owner liked the protection it provided from errant soccer balls.

Review of Projects:

- **Stenciling:** Iris provided assistance and loaned supplies to Cynthia Alden for her townhouse stenciling project.

Iris tested 10 primers on two drains on Bright Plume. She obtained 1-quart containers of primers from Lowes and Home Depot. After checking out Sherwin Williams, she decided it is too expensive for our usage; better to get a good all-around primer to paint concrete and metal that's commonly available at Home Depot and/or Lowes.

Test results:

- Trial 1: primers, then highway paint over
 - Bullseye 123: minor rusting
 - Kilz2 Latex: moderate rusting
 - Rustoleum Rust Reformer: worst rusting, plus, turns black and needs two coats over it
 - Kilz Premium: minor rusting
 - Rustoleum Clean Metal: minor rusting
- Trial 2: primers, Kilz Premium on concrete, then Sherwin Williams exterior over it. Primers have not been on as long (two weeks), so uncertain about results.
 - Rustoleum Hi Performance Metal Primer: no rusting; goes on rust colored; may need two coats of topcoat if you want it bright white
 - Behr Marquee: moderate rusting
 - Kilz Complete: no rusting
 - Behr Paint/Primer in One: minor rusting
 - Behr Premium Plus Multisurface: can't see – car blocking it now

Iris stenciled 6 more drains.

- Used the KilzPremium primer. Estimate minimum 5 drains per quart.
- Used the Sherwin Williams topcoat.
- One drain really rusted: will monitor how the combination of primer and top coat hold up.
- Blue highway marking paint seems to stick okay to the semigloss topcoat.

Iris will contact Anne about whether the Board wants to be involved with stenciling on the Hawthorn Center property (2 rains). This could create a good photo op to print in the online Log.

Iris will also ask Anne about being put in touch with scouts to possibly involve them in stenciling. Alison Sultan (Board member) has kids in the cub scouts. Iris discussed challenges in planning dates with the unpredictable weather. There are two clusters of drains on Sunny Spring that the scouts might be able to do: north by Misty Arch Run, and south before the south exit of Bright Plume onto Sunny Spring.

Iris plans to finish up Bright Plume (5 drains) and parts of Sunny Spring as time and weather permit.

Log article: Deborah has some edits to incorporate. Deborah thinks holding publication until (if!) the Board does a photo op with the stenciling, and then it can go, with photo, into the online edition.

- **Pull and Plant:** Deborah is working with John McCoy to get a date for one or more Pull and Plants this Fall: Sundays, September 16 and/or October 7, are being considered depending on John's availability. Pulling and Planting will be held in the same area that we tried to get to in the Spring and were rained out. This is the

Clary's Forest Open Space area on the path off of Watch Chain Way south of Flywheel Court.

- **Communications:** We will hold off on mentioning anything involving the WSA in assessments as WSA is going through a review process for the home assessments. Deborah is still trying to get "Fats, Oils, and Grease" (FOG) into The Log.
- **Rain Garden Photo Shoots:** Etarae has been out taking photos. Iris has not yet done so; Deborah will send (or resend) Iris the list of owners who said "Yes" to having their yards photographed. Iris will get out and photo what she can see and put on Facebook on the HoCo Stormwater Management page, when she gets a chance (the weather has not been cooperating, either).

Do we want to create a benchmark for the number of rain gardens in a neighborhood and encourage other neighborhoods to meet the benchmark? How do we define a neighborhood? This is a focus on single family homes. Should we pick an area to focus on? Less than 10 percent of HRV overall has a rain garden.

Iris thinks the focus should be tied into stream health. We need to have some kind of monitoring program in place. Pat Smith in Hawthorn took Streamwaders training; Iris is hoping to do this in 2019. Perhaps after we get enough knowledge of what kind of monitoring we can do, we can come up with an outreach program to educate people draining into a stream how they are contributing to the problem, and share data on stream health. Or, invite them to join the surveys.

Deborah printed info on the numbers of homes in HRV:

| Type of Home | Clary's Forest | Clemens Crossing | Hawthorn | Total |
|------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------|-------|
| Single Family Detached | 658 | 649 | 343 | 1650 |
| Single Family Attached | 910 | | 336 | 1246 |

- **Plastic Straw Reduction Campaign:** Etarae? Deborah has contacted several owners, e.g., Mad City. It's better to do outreach to smaller places because larger ones, e.g., MacDonalads', may have billions of plastic straws on hand and won't switch to paper until they use them up. Starbucks is leading the way. Reducing plastic is continuing to come up in the news. Deborah is thinking about doing outreach to Atholton HS. Some places can't use paper straws, e.g., Howard County General Hospital, because their patients require bendable straws and the plastic ones are stronger.
- **Native Meadow Project:** Iris explained that it may not be feasible to get this done due to the need for local approval and, if the current RAC has to approve a

development on Open Space, it might not be approved. Meadows are messy, and the RAC members have a strong preference for tidy projects. CA probably mows them once a year. Iris still needs to investigate other meadows and native pollinator gardens and get things documented. Deborah said to just throw it on Jan Clarke, as she did that for the native garden at Hawthorn Center; however, Iris explained that Sean Harbaugh said that requests for Open Space modifications need to come through the village office. The meadow project in Long Reach needed Board approval (got it) to get support to overcome neighbor's objections. Last month, Iris sent the HRVWAC team a survey draft to review.

- **Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant:** we don't have a project defined now that could qualify for the grant, but, we could apply in the future. We are more likely to get a grant if we have worked out the project plan and budget. Possible projects:
 - Native meadow: would need to be funded with grants, plant donations, tree coupons, and sweat equity from the community. CA would maintain. The cost of maintaining it would be part of HRV's budget; the cost of preparing the ground might be part of HRV's budget; the cost of the plants and supplies should be covered through a grant.
 - Film series: pay an intern from HCC's film and TV program to put together a film series to talk about the different issues related to stormwater and the effects downstream:
 - Great Pacific (and other) Gyres: how they are created, how they are cleaned up;
 - Storms, Dams, Floods and Pollution: effects of sedimentation loads and potential dam failures on rivers and the Bay; Conowingo, Baltimore Harbor, beach cleanup efforts – lots of photos from the recent flooding; intern would need to track them down and get permissions;
 - Plastic and Wildlife: effects of plastics on wildlife – trapping and injuring, poisoning, reefs;
 - Plastic and Human Health: drowning in trash, breakdowns in environment, chemicals, energy to produce and recover; in the food chain.
- **Palooza:** Iris had contacted River Hill (Bruce Eberle, on RH WAC and WSA steward, and Lauren Marcus, listed as the RHWAC chair). Iris is interpreting the lack of response from either of them as meaning they are not interested in having us co-sponsoring. HRVWAC is not planning a separate Palooza this year.

Miscellaneous:

- Deborah thought showing maps of nearby streams while out on home site visits could be beneficial for helping the owner see where his house fits in the watershed.
- CA native garden tour: Deborah will get info on the schedule and share with the HRVWAC.
- Guidelines in re non-allowable plants: CA overall doesn't have a master covenant; each village has own RAC and guidelines. Some "no" plants are in some villages but not in all. We could develop a uniform recommendation for problem plants and their management and train the RACs.

For example, some people plant English Ivy as a ground cover. The plant can escape into neighbors' yards, and when it climbs trees, it transforms to its reproductive form and can spread by seeds. Therefore, the covenants could be modified to require that the ivy be constrained to the owner's property and not permitted to grow up trees.

Leyland cypress is often used for screening; however, it has problems in that it grows too fast and outgrows the space it was originally planted in.

Iris will look into guideline modifications and come up with a draft.

- HRV is over 40 years old now. Older homes with the original plants may have overgrown shrubs that are declining. When it's time to pull them out and rejuvenate the landscaping, the owners can replace with natives. This might be a good Master Gardener program vs. a Log Article: "Rejuvenating Your Aging Landscape". Iris will look into whether the MGs can do this.
- Deborah is interested in developing a winter program for kids with hands-on activities related to recycling.
- Oak Trees dying on Martin Road: Iris reported this to Tell HoCo. Deborah is concerned that the problem might be infectious and spread; she contacted an arborist about trees on her property.