

BALLSTON POND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #3: October 18, 2011

Summary of Comments

Attendees:

Name	Group Representing
Robert Atkins	Bluemont Civic Association
Robert Morgan	Waycroft Woodlawn Civic Association Alternate
Conor Marshall	Ballston-Virginia Square Civic Association
Lisa Larimar	Energy and Environment Commission
Mary Ann Lawler	Urban Forestry Commission
Jenn Truong	Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment

Committee Members Not Able to Attend:

- Rick Epstein, Parks Commission
- Suzanne Sundberg, Bluemont Civic Association Alternate
- Alex Sanders, Energy and Environment Commission Alternate
- Anne St. John, US Fish and Wildlife Service

RKK staff presented an overview of the revised concept design, based on feedback received at the first two stakeholder and public meetings.

Discussion of Revised Concept Design

What will happen with the chain link fence that is there now? Some sections of it will be replaced a new decorative fence. The areas where the fence is less visible will remain chain link, but the areas that are closer to the trail will be a decorative fence.

What concept is this revised plan closest to? The revised plan is a combination of concepts A and C mostly, as those were the most preferred concepts at the stakeholder and public meetings. There are elements from each that were combined into the new design.

What boardwalk areas would be built as part of Phase I? The boardwalk along the east side of the pond would be built as part of the first phase. The boardwalk would be intended mostly for walkers. The boardwalk will have a 42 inch railing and will vary from 8 – 15 feet wide. The preferred concept includes the construction of bat boxes underneath this boardwalk.

What type of trash controls will be installed? Currently, the plans are to have two types of trash control devices in the pond. The first would be at the entry point where water flows into the pond. This device is called a “watergoat” and is a floating boom that collects the trash in a net. A maintenance area would be created near this top section of the pond to allow the trash to

be removed, and to also allow access for maintain the weir and removing sediment from the sediment trap at the northern area of the pond. The second type of trash control device will be a trash rack, which will be installed at the southern part of the pond near the outflow. This would be a rack that will collect trash and can be lifted up for removing the trash.

What types of plants will be used? RKK described the native plant list to be used and that this list has been approved by Arlington County. RKK explained that all plants are native to Arlington County.

How many trees will be planted? At this time we do not have exact counts on numbers of trees, but we do have the types of species that will be planted. The forested wetland area will have approximately 35 trees planted on it. Other trees will be planted along the edges of the pond. Some new trees will be planted in the grassy area north of the project, along a new maintenance access road. As the designs are further refined, we will have more exact numbers of new plants.

Will the existing overlook remain? Yes, it will remain in that location.

How long until the pond fills up with sediment again? It is difficult to estimate definitively how quickly sediment might build up in the pond. It depends on the source of sediment upstream. However, the creation of the setting pond by the weir at the northern end of the pond will create an area where sediment can collect and be removed.

Is funding for maintenance set aside? The maintenance for this facility will be handled through a maintenance contract that the County has in place for stormwater facilities.

What is the approximate construction schedule? RKK staff described work beginning late in fall of 2012. This work will consist of the invasive management and removal plan and will continue into the spring of 2013. The heavy construction within the pond will occur during the summer of 2013. Plantings will follow in the fall of 2013 and the spring of 2014.

How will invasive plants be removed? RKK staff pointed out that after discussion with County staff regarding how to remove the extensive invasive plants in the area, the project schedule has been adjusted to allow for removal and treatment of all the invasives in the area. The removal and treatment of invasives will take place in the Fall of 2012, with some follow up treatment in the spring of 2013 for any new invasives that re-grow. Construction would then start in the summer of 2013. Some removed trees may be re-used on site for turtle basking stations.

Are the chemicals used to treat the invasive plants safe? The chemicals used to treat the invasive plants are very specific to the type of plant that they will remove. They are safe for use in aquatic environments as they are quickly taken up by the plants, and they are not dispersed through the water or the environment. While the chemicals are in use, public access to the area will be limited. These chemicals are also used by the National Park Service and other agencies for invasive plant control.

Ideas for Interpretative Signs

- One kiosk with a general explanation of what the pond is, what function it serves, and how it fits into the watershed would be good. A good location would be by the southern corner.
- Some smaller signs around the pond about the types of plants, trees, animals and pollinators that people may see at the pond would be good at key locations
- The signs should have information about where the water goes.
- Some information about the history of the area would be interesting.
- A display case that the different schools or civic associations could use to display different items might be interesting.
- It would be good to update the County bike map with information about the pond and what people can see there (as a destination)
- Don't lose the natural character of the place with too many signs and kiosks
- For the interpretive signs, look for a material that doesn't fade. The committee liked the example of the paving stones that show the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which is located by the National Aquarium in Baltimore (slide 14). They felt that something like that could be done in the small plaza area by the southern corner, perhaps showing just the Lubber Run watershed and the location of the pond within the watershed. It could be done with paving stones or perhaps with a plastic material (such as Curatherm) bonded to the ground.
- Shapes of fish or other wildlife along the railing could be a nice feature.