

## **Ballston Pond Public Meeting #4**

**November 13, 2012**

Aileen Winqvist and Gayle England from Arlington County provided a status update presentation on the Ballston Pond project. The presentation is available on the project web site. Following are some questions asked by the meeting attendees, along with answers to the questions.

**What is the Chesapeake Bay TMDL?** A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is a pollution budget, or a way to attempt to reduce pollution getting into a water body. All the sources of pollution are quantified, and then the amount

**Is the triangular paved area at southeast corner of the pond still on the plans?** Although the triangular paved area is still shown on the 50% concept plan in the presentation, that feature was removed on the updated 100% plans.

**Will the Bradford Pear Trees along the bike trail be removed? What will they be replaced with?** The Bradford Pear trees along the bike trail are invasive and will be removed as part of the project. In addition to being invasive, these trees are at the end of their life span and that particular type of tree is known for splitting and breaking as the tree gets older. They will be replaced with native trees, such as red maple. The tree stumps from the Bradford pears will be ground down to the ground surface.

**Will the bike trail be closed during construction?** The bike trail on the south side of pond will remain open during construction, but the construction contractor may need to use a flag person to control traffic at times. The bike trail on the east side of the pond will be closed for periods of time during the construction.

**What is going on with all the construction dumpsters on grassy area?** These construction containers are for a project at Avalon Bay apartment building. The County is discussing this area with Avalon Bay management.

**Are there fish in the pond, and will the pond be stocked after the project is complete?** There are probably not fish in the pond currently due to lower water levels. After the project is complete, there will be a deep water area that would provide good habitat for fish. There are no plans to stock the pond with fish, but there are fish in the local streams that may migrate into the pond. The County hired a contractor do fish sampling in 2011 and the results are available online:

<http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/EnvironmentalServices/Sustainability/page83892.aspx>

**How does the trash control device called the “water goat” work?** The water goat is a net that collects trash. The net remains underwater and is held in place with small floats that appear at the surface of

the water. The water goat will be used at the northern corner of the pond, where Lubber Run flows into the pond.

**Is there a water goat on the Anacostia River?** County staff are not aware of the use of the water goat in the Anacostia. A different type of trash collection device, called a Bandalong, is used on the Anacostia.

**Can fish get through the trash control devices?** The trash control devices are designed to allow fish and other wildlife to pass through.

**Are there beavers in the pond now? What will happen if beavers come back and build another dam?**

County staff are not aware of any current reports of beaver activity in the pond. Occasionally, juvenile beavers do visit the pond and may temporarily inhabit the area. However, given that the pond and the surrounding habitat are not sufficient to support beaver long term, the beavers usually move on to a more suitable habitat. If beavers do visit the pond again in the future, they will not be able to dam up the pond and change the water level. A device known as a beaver leveler will prevent the beavers from raising the water level in the pond.

**What happened to the bat houses that were shown in the earlier conceptual plans?** The bat houses were removed from the design after consultation with Parks staff. The Parks naturalist did not feel that the proposed location would attract bats.

**Is the existing platform on the south side of the pond going to be removed or upgraded?** No, the existing overlook will remain in its existing condition.

**What will happen in the northern portion of the park that is currently grass?** This area will be used for storage of equipment and materials during the construction time period. After the project is completed, the area will be replanted with grass and a few trees.

**Will the plants used be native plants?** Yes, the County is committed to using native plants for all County projects.

**Did one of the early designs include a boardwalk that extended into the wetland area, instead of along the side of the pond?** Yes, one of the earlier concept designs did include some boardwalks extending into the wetland. The consensus of feedback from the public was that the boardwalk on the east side was preferred, to protect the wildlife in the pond from disturbance and minimize opportunities for littering into the pond.

**Will the gate in the fence be left open all the time?** There are some gates in the fence around the pond. These gates will most likely be locked the majority of the time.