

## Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group Minutes

November 2, 2020

The virtual meeting was called to order at 7:03pm

In attendance were: Caroline Haynes, Phil Klingelhofer (UFC), Jill Barker, Colt Gregory, David Howell (PRC), Teresa Leonardo, Claire O’Dea (E2C2), Alonso Abugattas, Jerusalem Solomon (PNR), Christin Jolicouer, Jason Papacosma (Arlington County DES), Matthew Bucek, Mary Glass, Josh Handler, Kara Kane, Kit Norland, Rod Simmons, Connie Sorentino (Public)

Guests: Jason Papacosma (DES Watershed Programs Manager),  
Christin Jolicouer (DES Senior Watershed Planner)

Public Comments: Two public comments (by Mary Glass and Rod Simmons) were made, followed by emails with additional background information, raising issues and concerns about impact and efficacy of current techniques. One written comment was read regarding the need for regular updates of tree inventories in order to better understand the magnitude of tree loss in the County.

### **Update on funding and timelines for stormwater projects; Discussion regarding potential overlap of stormwater projects and other amenities such as biodiversity and casual use space.**

Christin Jolicouer, Senior Watershed Planner, and Jason Papacosma, Watershed Programs Manager (both with DES) provided updates to current projects and short-term future projects. Ms. Jolicouer stated that DES has multiple objectives and that projects were chosen before any stormwater credits were available. The stormwater bond referendum (on the November 3 ballot) consisted of \$5 million and other projects need to go through the CIP process. Some money also set aside for land acquisition.

Commission members urged the County to take the broadest possible view of stormwater projects, using a biophilic lens. The focus should be on green infrastructure (as opposed to gray infrastructure) to accrue ancillary benefits such as additional open space with native trees and other vegetation, thereby increasing habitat and biodiversity, and offering additional opportunities for residents to connect with nature. Commissioners suggested that recommendations along these lines be incorporated into the Forestry and Natural Resources Plan.

### **Staff Updates**

Alonso Abugattas provided the following updates:

- Benchmarking communities for the FNRP continues to take place with results likely to be submitted in late December. Branding will be set for release in late November, as will be the engagement aspects and website.
- Commissioners were asked to review the public engagement questions as well as the questions for the November meeting of the Long Range Planning Committee on the FNRP.
- Nursery workdays continue to take place each week.
- Several restoration plantings have taken place with more planned through November.

### **Member Reports**

Teresa Leonardo (E2C2) reported that the draft revised charter for the commission has been sent to the County Board and is expected to be adopted by the Board at the November meeting.

Claire O’Dea (E2C2) stated that the ARMN deer presentation had been presented to E2C2 and that the commission is working on sending a letter to the Board.

Colt Gregory (PRC) noted that Elaine Mills is the recipient of the 2020 Bill Thomas Award. He also informed that Henry Clay Park was being renamed.

Phil Klingelhofer (UFC) is working on revisions to its charter and the commissions is also drafting letters to the Board on deer management and possible changes to the county code.