

**Urban Forestry Commission  
December 19, 2013  
Meeting Summary**

**Attendance**

Dean Amel  
Nora Palmatier  
Larry Finch  
Ed Hilz  
Scott Brinitzer  
Elizabeth Rives  
Alex Sanders, E2C2

**State and County Staff**

Caroline Temmermand, DPR  
Jamie Bartalon, DPR  
Vincent Verweij, DPR  
Aileen Winquist, DES  
James Meikle, APS

**Guests**

Henry Dunbar, Phoenix Bikes  
Bernie Berne

**Public Comment** – Public comments by Bernie Berne on the proposed relocation of Phoenix Bikes was heard following the presentation on the proposed relocation.

**Proposed Relocation of Phoenix Bikes Facility – Henry Dunbar (Phoenix Bikes) and Caroline Temmermand (DPR)**

Henry Dunbar (Executive Director, Phoenix Bikes) and Caroline Temmermand (Chief, DPR Parks and Natural Resources Division) provided background on the history of Phoenix Bikes and a proposal to relocate the facility from Barcroft Park to County property at the intersection of South Walter Reed Drive and South Four Mile Run Drive. The third of three public meetings to discuss the proposed move and construction of a new facility will be held on January 14, 7 pm, at 2700 South Taylor Street.

The program began in Barcroft Park as the Community Spokes Program. It was managed by Arlington County and funded through a Community Development Block Grant. Phoenix Bikes began managing the program in 2007, when County funding ended. Henry Dunbar began serving on the Phoenix Bikes Board in 2011, and then became the program's Executive Director. One of his main goals is to increase the program's visibility and make the public more aware of the benefits it provides to youth and the community.

Commission members viewed a short video on Phoenix Bikes and the services that it provides. Youth from 12 to 17 years of age learn job skills and bicycle repair/mechanics through participation in the program. Participants receive a refurbished bike after contributing 25 hours to the program. Since Phoenix Bikes began in 2007, over 400 youth have participated in the program. Volunteers have contributed over 20,000 hours of service time, 2,424 bikes have been refurbished and sold, and 235 bikes have been earned by youth participating in the program.

The Phoenix Bikes program has outgrown the capacity of its current facility at Barcroft Park. Each morning bikes must be moved outdoors in order to provide space inside the shop for repairs. The refurbished bikes are exposed to the elements throughout the day, and then moved back indoors in the evening, totally filling the facility from floor to ceiling. Recently refurbished bikes are sometimes damaged during the daily moves, and must be cleaned and dried after bad weather.

A larger facility is needed for Phoenix Bikes to be able to meet its educational mission and operational requirements. In addition to larger shop and storage areas, goals for a new building include community meeting space and public restrooms. Ideally, a new facility should be located in a highly visible area along a trail and near the community that it serves.

It is estimated that Phoenix Bikes has contributed about \$ 1 million in services to Arlington County. They are proposing to pay for the design and construction of a new facility, but asking that Arlington County provide the land. In addition to the services that Phoenix Bikes provides to local youth, the new facility that is being proposed would also provide the community with public restrooms, meeting space, drinking fountains, water bottle refill stations, and a bicycle air pump station.

Both Phoenix Bikes and Arlington County searched for suitable potential locations for a new facility. The location currently under consideration is on County property near the W&OD Trail at the northeast corner of South Walter Reed Drive and South Four Mile Run Drive. In addition to being located in a highly visible area along the trail, the proposed site is near a community where many youth are served.

The proposed building concept is for an 84 foot long building, with slightly more than 3,000 square feet of floor space. The current vision for the building includes a bicycle display area, educational bike lab, storage, public restrooms, and a meeting/community room. There is a preference for locating the building as close to the W&OD Trail as possible (while still on County land). The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority supports the concept of citing the facility near the trail; however, some nearby residents (Concord Mews and The Village of West Shirlington) have expressed concerns over how the structure will impact their views.

Caroline Temmermand displayed maps of the proposed location and photographs of the area. The exact location of the proposed facility and potential limits of disturbance associated with its construction have not yet been determined.

Ms. Temmermand noted that Arlington County has not yet received an official letter of intent from Phoenix Bikes regarding the proposed relocation. However, Arlington County and Phoenix Bikes feel that it is important to share information with the public very early in the process in order to gather and respond to feedback.

Ms. Temmermand listed several ongoing planning considerations associated with the current proposal. They include:

- Focusing activities to the street side (S. Walter Reed Drive) of the proposed building
- Impacts to trees and tree replacement

- Parking
- Traffic
- Trail users
- Responses to public feedback

A third public meeting on the Phoenix Bikes relocation proposal will be held on January 14. Phoenix Bikes will submit a letter of intent to Arlington County and raise funds for design and construction. Next steps could include the development of a 20+ year agreement between Phoenix Bikes and Arlington County, and submission of building plans and a Use Permit application (if required) by Phoenix Bikes. It is anticipated that the entire process will take about two years.

Dean Amel asked whether a tree inventory has been conducted at the proposed site. Caroline Temmermand explained that an inventory has not yet been conducted since plans are not far enough along and the exact location of the proposed facility and potential limits of disturbance associated with its construction have not yet been determined. She noted that an inventory will be conducted after the design consultants have identified the proposed limits of disturbance. Jim Meikle noted that storm water management and compliance with the County’s Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance will be factors influencing the proposed design. Caroline Temmermand added that civil engineering work has not been completed, but guidance will be to keep as much stormwater on site as possible.

#### Public Comment and Commission Discussion:

Dr. Bernard Berne provided public comments on the proposed relocation and construction of a new facility for Phoenix Bikes. He is very much opposed to constructing the facility at the proposed location, which he feels is an inappropriate site for the following reasons:

- He does not feel that it is appropriate to permit a non-profit organization to construct a facility on public property.
- Construction will impact many trees and destroy a forested area adjacent to a designated “No Mow” area.
- He feels that constructing a structure/facility adjacent to the W&OD Trail will detract from the experience of trail users.
- He believes that, if a new facility is located on public property, it should be located on a mowed area (as opposed to a forested area). He believes that there is sufficient non-forested open space available in Barcroft Parks to construct a new facility.

UFC member Nora Palmatier stated that she agrees with many of Dr. Berne’s comments. She is very much opposed to using wooded public open space for construction of a new structure. Ms. Palmatier noted that you “lose nature” when you lose/build on open space.

Dean Amel stated that he is also opposed to building a new facility at the proposed site. He agreed with Ms. Palmatier’s statement about the loss of limited open space, adding that, once open space is gone you don’t get it back.

Scott Brinitzer commented that, if community interaction at the new facility is a goal, the proposed location will be highly visible and conducive to such interaction.

Dean Amel asked whether it was possible to locate the new facility beneath the transmission power lines. Caroline Temmermand responded that it is not permitted.

Dean Amel recommended that a tree inventory should be conducted prior to the January 14 public meeting. Nora Palmatier volunteered to mobilize Tree Stewards to conduct an inventory and bring the results to the public meeting.

Larry Finch asked whether it may be possible to locate the new Phoenix Bikes facility in an existing County building. Caroline Temmermand informed the commission that this option was explored, as well as other potential locations. However, limited availability of County-owned buildings and the demand for their use do not make this a viable option at this time.

Dean Amel commented that it seems like the County is only considering sites to locate Phoenix Bikes on “free” County land. He feels that open space is not “free” land, and that there is a large cost associated with losing the long-term benefits that it provides if it is lost to construct a facility. He added that once open space is lost, it is lost forever. He recommended that the County should explore other options, such as purchasing or leasing non-County owned buildings, perhaps along Four Mile Run Drive in the vicinity of the proposed site. Although there would be up-front costs associated with this option, the loss of County open space would result in ongoing costs to the County from the loss of benefits open space provides.

Nora Palmatier asked for clarification on the degree of support that Arlington County has for the current proposal and the relocation of Phoenix Bikes in general. Specifically, whether this effort is specifically supported by DPR, the County Manager’s Office, the County Board, or other “official” County backing.

Caroline Temmermand explained that there has not been a County Board resolution to relocate Phoenix Bikes; however, multiple County Board members have requested that staff work with Phoenix Bikes to help them find a new location.

Ed Hilz commented that visuals used in the current presentation make it appear that Phoenix Bikes is part of DPR. He does not feel that the County logo and DPR labels should be included in the presentation material. Caroline Temmermand clarified that Phoenix Bikes is not part of DPR, but their mission is supported by the County and they receive about \$8,000 per year in County funding.

Mr. Hilz also asked whether allowing a non-profit organization to build or operate a facility on property is setting a precedent. Henry Dunbar and Caroline Temmermand responded that it does not set a precedent, and is the case with the Arlington Animal Welfare League, ASPAN and others.

Mr. Hilz asked whether the County has considered allowing Phoenix Bikes to operate in the space on Four Mile Run Drive where the old Parks and Natural Resources operations building

was located adjacent to Jennie Dean Park. Caroline Temmermand noted that many uses are being considered for the old building site, which will be part of the master planning process for Jennie Dean Park. She noted that if a decision were made to co-locate a Phoenix Bikes facility at this site it would likely be a six to eight year process before a building could be completed here.

Dean Amel asked whether some UFC members will be able to attend the January 14 public meeting and report back to the commission at its January 23 meeting. Nora Palmatier confirmed that she will attend the public meeting and speak about UFC concerns regarding loss of trees and open space.

James Meikle thanked Phoenix Bikes on behalf of APS for the programs that they offer, which have resulted in a real increase in bike ridership.

### **Draft Stormwater Master Plan Update – Aileen Winqvist (DES)**

Aileen Winqvist (DES) briefed the commission on Arlington's draft Stormwater Master Plan (SWMP) update. The plan was originally created in 1958 and last updated in 1996. A primary focus of the master plan and the County's stormwater management program in general is compliance with state and federal regulations.

Arlington adopted a Watershed Management Plan in 2001, which focuses on environmental quality (not just traditional stormwater infrastructure). A dedicated Stormwater Fund was created in 2008, and a new Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit was received in 2013. The new MS4 permit has more stringent pollution control targets that the County must meet. Stream restoration projects and watershed retrofit projects, as well as credits received for improvements at the water pollution control plant, are key to meeting the more stringent regulations. In order to comply with new state regulations, Arlington will also adopt a new Stormwater Management Ordinance in spring 2014.

The following technical studies to support the SWMP have been completed or are underway:

- Stream assessment study – County-wide analysis completed in 2011.
- Storm sewer capacity analysis – completed for the 7 watersheds most prone to flooding. Analysis of remaining watersheds is continuing.
- Watershed retrofit analysis – County-wide analysis completed in 2013.

The County's stream assessment study found that 40% of Arlington's streams are in severely eroded condition. Streams were prioritized for restoration projects based upon the degree of erosion and infrastructure issues. The next restoration project is proposed for Gulf Branch stream.

Ed Hilz commented that the draft SWMP doesn't mention that trees perform a stormwater management function. Vincent Verweij agreed and noted that he is working with DES staff to incorporate language into the draft plan that highlights the benefits that trees and tree canopy provide.

A storm sewer capacity analysis has been conducted for 45% of the County's storm sewer system's pipes that are 36 inches in diameter or greater. The study identified 107 potential upgrade projects. Upgrade projects are expensive to construct. Upgrades to 7,319 linear feet of pipe is estimated to cost \$4.5 million. Three studies for flood control and six flood control projects are estimated to cost \$7 million.

The County's watershed retrofit analysis identified 1,176 potential sites for retrofit projects. These are primarily "Green Streets" projects, rain gardens and other above ground solutions with the potential to treat run-off from 615 acres of impervious surface. The study identified 159 high priority watershed retrofit projects, with a projected total cost of \$20 million. By comparison, 5.4 miles of high priority stream restoration is projected to cost \$22 million.

Alex Sanders asked whether the County anticipates a need to increase stormwater fees in order to meet treatment targets. The stormwater fee is part of the tax rate, and averages about \$70 per household per year. Ms. Winquist anticipates that there may eventually be a need to do so, but some flexibility to meeting targets is provided by "nutrient credits" gained through upgrades to the water pollution control plant.

Nora Palmatier asked who is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of stormwater retrofit projects. Ms. Winquist replied that DES is responsible for maintaining retrofit projects on streets. Jamie Bartalon added that DPR is responsible for the maintenance of projects in County parks.

A public meeting on the draft SWMP will be held in January. The plan will be presented to the Planning Commission as an informational item in March, advertised for public comment in April, and go back to the Planning Commission and County Board as an action item in May.

Alex Sanders noted that E2C2 has established subcommittees to review various sections of the draft plan. He will share E2C2's comments with the UFC.

Dean Amel announced that the UFC will also comment on the draft plan, especially as it relates to trees.

Jim Meikle noted that APS is now being required to develop their own stormwater management program and obtain their own permit. However, APS doesn't have a dedicated revenue stream for stormwater management. They are submitting a budget proposal for staff to manage stormwater compliance.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the November 21, 2013 UFC meeting were approved with minor edits.

## Staff Reports

- Jamie Bartalon reported that County Board Vice Chairman, Jay Fiset, has expressed concerns about trees that have overgrown their grates in the Rosslyn-Ballston (RB) corridor. Although Site Plans approved within the last ten years or so only include tree grates if necessary for pedestrian clearance, many tree grates remain. Maintenance of the tree grates in the RB corridor was a responsibility of the County's SmartScape Team. However, since that team was eliminated during the budget process several years ago, the maintenance of grates now falls to DPR's Tree Maintenance Team.

Vincent Verweij worked with several Tree Stewards to inventory the condition of grates in the Ballston area in the fall. DPR's Tree Maintenance Team has begun to remove grates that are impacting trees as resources and the need to address tree-related safety concerns permit. Efforts will continue to remove grates as resources permit throughout the winter. Mr. Fiset inquired whether Tree Stewards would consider monitoring the condition of tree grates as an ongoing volunteer project. Jamie Bartalon will continue discussions with Nora Palmatier on establishing an ongoing monitoring program.

- Jamie Bartalon and Nora Palmatier participated in a conference call with Dr. Eric Wiseman (VA Tech) to discuss ways to track the success of the Tree Distribution Program and the Tree Canopy Fund Grant Program. Dr. Wiseman will investigate whether a graduate or undergraduate student is interested in conducting a survey to quantify the impacts of these programs. The survey may gather information on survivorship, planting location, and follow-up maintenance of trees planted through these programs. It may also include questions on the human aspects of the programs, such as whether participants gained a better understanding of the benefits of trees, whether they gained knowledge of tree planting/maintenance practices, and how they feel the programs may be improved.
- Jamie Bartalon announced that a new handbook for Arlington County commission members and staff liaisons is being produced. County Board liaisons will likely attend commission meetings to discuss the new handbooks and guidelines within the next couple of months. The new County Board liaison for the UFC is likely to be Mr. Jay Fiset. Commissions will be asked to review their charters, update them if appropriate, and format them to fit a new standard template.
- Vincent Verweij reported that he and other DPR staff have planted 30 American chestnut seedlings in various locations within Arlington. The seedlings are from stock that may be resistant to chestnut blight. Their health and survival will be monitored.
- Mr. Verweij also reported that VDOT has committed to spending about \$200,000 to plant trees on the hills that they created in the Washington Boulevard/Arlington Boulevard interchange. Mr. Verweij reviewed and provided comments on the list of species proposed for planting.

## **Commission Member Reports**

**Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group** – Caroline Haynes’ Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group report is attached.

**Park and Recreation Commission** – Caroline Haynes’ Park and Recreation Commission reports on the November 26 and December 17, 2013 meetings are attached.

**Planning Activities** – Karen Kumm Morris’ report on planning activities is attached.

**Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC)** – Ed Hilz provided the following link to the agenda and the report for the Dec 18, PFRC meeting:

<<http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/Commissions/PublicFacilitiesReviewCommittee/page86074.aspx>>. At this link, under "Wednesday, December 18" click on "Agenda" and "Report" to access the information.

He also reported that the PFRC discussed whether additional trees can be planted along McKinley Road as part of the McKinley Elementary School expansion/renovation project. Plans to narrow the road and widen the sidewalk between 9<sup>th</sup> St North and 11<sup>th</sup> Street North may result in more space for tree planting.

The PFRC supported “Option 3” to expand the school building at the northeast and southwest corners. A preliminary tree inventory has been conducted, but more information on trees will be provided at the January PFRC meeting. Mr. Hilz also noted that there is some uncertainty about whether APS or Arlington County owns a portion of the property at the southwest corner. Ownership is being investigated.

Mr. Hilz commented that replacement trees planted at Ashlawn Elementary School were strategically located to allow relocatable classrooms to be moved.

**Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (E2C2)** – Alex Sanders’ report on E2C2 activities is attached.

**Champion Trees Committee** – No report.

**Tree Stewards** – Nora Palmatier’s report on Tree Steward activities is attached.

**Tree Canopy Fund** – The Tree Canopy Fund Grant Program will be discussed at the January 23, 2013 UFC meeting.

**Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC)** – Elizabeth Rives’ NCAC report is attached.



**Columbia Pike Form Based Code Advisory Working Group** – Steve Campbell’s Columbia Pike Form Based Code Advisory Working Group report is attached.

**Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable** – No report.

**Virginia Department of Forestry** – No report.

**Arlington Public Schools (APS)** – Jim Meikle reported that four trees which were originally designated for preservation were removed from the grounds at Ashlawn Elementary School as part of the school expansion project. Plans presented to the public indicated that the trees would remain on site. A decision was made after the public presentation to remove the trees when it was determined that grading necessary to comply with stormwater management requirements would significantly reduce their likelihood of surviving. Mr. Meikle noted that APS failed to notify the community about the change in preservation/removal status for the trees.

Ed Hilz noted that an APS representative also stated at the December PFRC meeting that they should have informed the community about the change in plans and decision to remove the trees. He added that the PFRC now more clearly understands that plans presented to them aren’t necessarily at the same level as final permit documents.

### **New Business**

The agenda for January’s UFC meeting will include a discussion of Tree Canopy Fund/Tree Distribution Program coordination, review of the 2013 UFC Work Plan and the development of the 2014 work plan.

## **Attachments to December 19, 2013 Urban Forestry Commission Meeting Summary:**

### **Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group – Caroline Haynes**

Jason Papacosma, Arlington County Watershed Programs Manager with DES, provided updates with respect to NRMP recommendations number 3, 7 and 9 including progress on the new Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit, the new storm water ordinance, the revised Resource Protection Area (RPA) maps, and the status of the Four Mile Run “living shoreline” approach.

The new MS4 permit will be implemented in three stages in order to reach the required specific pollution reductions in increments of the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL): 5% by 2017, 35% by 2022, and 60% by 2027. This establishes what can be thought of as a pollution budget for the Chesapeake Bay, including mitigation methods such as tree plantings, biotic monitoring, watershed retrofits, storm water wise landscaping, and training.

New state-wide storm water regulations will be issued in July 2014 and Arlington County is working to implement a new storm water ordinance to comply with the new regulations. (You will hear lots more about this from Aileen at the UFC meeting.)

The GIS update of the RPA maps indicate that approximately 400 properties will be affected by the more precise analysis and DES anticipates extensive outreach to property owners before guiding the new RPA maps through the approval process.

### **Park and Recreation Commission**

#### **November 26, 2013 Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Report:**

Liz Birnbaum, Arlington County Joint Four-Mile Run Taskforce Co-Chair, provided an update on the Four Mile Run project. She recounted the saga of securing funding for the in-stream restoration project only to have the design blocked by Corps of Engineers flood capacity requirements. The current “Plan B” will create living shoreline buffers which will enable the project to move forward before the federal spending authorization expires in 2015.

#### **December 17, 2013 Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Report:**

In addition to hearing a presentation on the projected expenses and revenues of the Aquatic Center, we heard the presentation on the Phoenix Bike building proposal. After the presentation, there was a lengthy discussion by Commission members voicing strong support for the Phoenix Bike *program* but strong opposition to the proposal to construct a building on park property for a private enterprise. This was linked to the larger discussion about taking over existing park property for affordable housing. There is a great deal of concern from the Park and Recreation Commission that as the population continues to grow, we need *additional* parks and open space

and that carving out pieces of existing open space sets a very bad precedent. There was discussion about the need to establish guidelines for the use of existing park property. Several members suggested that the Phoenix bike shop might be better combined with some of the upcoming development projects (as a community benefit) going in along Glebe Road or Columbia Pike and that would still have ready access to the bike trail.

It was noted that the kids that participate in the program come from across the County, so an alternate location would be feasible.

FYI -- The mature trees in the area under consideration at the intersection of Four Mile Run and Walter Reed was referred to as "over grown" in the presentation.

### **Planning Activities – Karen Kumm Morris**

Last week, Victor Dover, a nationally acclaimed town planner and consultant for the Columbia Pike Plan, spoke at the County's Urban Design Speaker Series. He said that the Number One thing that communities should do to improve the environment and character of their community was to plant street trees. And, as we have seen in the Columbia Pike Plan, he delivers as well.

Also, the Realize Rosslyn planning effort held a forum in November and many people listed planting more street trees with upgraded planting details as a high priority of the open space plan for Rosslyn. This statement is now listed in the summary document that will inform the actual writing of the Plan.

This is all good news. Imagine Columbia Pike and Lynn Street transforming someday into tree lined boulevards!

The Community Planning Department's Urban Design Speaker Series is worth attending if you have an interest. Next speaker is **Shyam Kannan, WMATA Director of Planning**, scheduled for Jan. 23, 2014, 6-8 pm.

### **Environment and Energy Conservation Commission – Alex Sanders**

E2C2 received an update on the Stormwater Master Plan from DES staff. We've learned about two controversies at our meeting on Monday- the loss of trees in the Ashlawn school project and the proposed Phoenix Bike shop expansion. We'd like to learn more about both of these projects.

### **Tree Stewards – Nora Palmatier**

Tree Stewards are thrilled that two staff from Arlington Public Schools are signed up for the course and look forward to lots of volunteering in partnership with the schools.

TS Hugh Robinson is coordinating a small cadre of members who will provide tree pruning maintenance on public trees in partnership with Arlington County staff. The first pruning event/on-the-job-training is Thursday at Fairlington Community Center with Patrick Wegeng's staff. Hugh will be the point person to find volunteer activities and report work back.

UFC members should reserve Saturday, March 8 to assist in staffing the Home Show at Walter Reed Comm. Center. TS and UFC will be providing education on protecting trees during construction. The pamphlets are being purchased as part of the TCF Education grant to TS.

### **Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee – Elizabeth Rives**

Ms. Rives was away during the December NCAC meeting, but a brief report from her alternate is provided below:

NCAC voted by 28 to 1 with 2 abstentions to recommend the list of six neighborhood conservation projects to the County Board for funding.

The list of recommended projects goes to the County Board for funding, probably in February.

Neighborhood reps were asked to send a civic association email to the County Board and Manager in support of a \$12 million bond for NC projects for 2014.

### **Columbia Pike Form Based Code Advisory Working Group – Steve Campbell**

County staff reviewed the UFC suggestions made in our November letter to the County Board. To read staff responses please go to the link found below. Staff responses can be found on pages 2-5. In my view the worst outcome from staff's review is the elimination of the requirement in the FBC for developers to remove invasive plants from Preserved Natural Areas on their property. In its letter UFC advocated for the more effective requirement of a 3-year removal program and the result is no requirement at all.

[http://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=2&clip\\_id=2678&meta\\_id=115395](http://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=2678&meta_id=115395)