

-Draft-

Friends of Still Creek Meeting Summary

Monday, October 16, 2006

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Greenbelt Park

Greenbelt, MD 20770

Meeting attendees:

Shobha Duncan

Bill Duncan

Fred Gasper

Harriette Phelps

Robin Martin (National Park Service)

John Galli (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments)

Kate Levendosky (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Bill Duncan welcomed the meeting attendees and asked all present to introduce themselves.

II. Greenbrook Lake Cleanup Report

Mr. Fred Gasper reported that the cleanup on October 7th was very successful. Thirteen people participated, including some students from the stream cleanup club at Maret High School in Northwest DC. The group removed several hundred pounds of trash from the lake and shore. Mr. Gasper noted that Mayor J. Davis stopped by the FoSCr booth at Schrom Fest to thank the group for doing such a good job. Ms. Michelle Touchet volunteered to write a thank-you note to the group from Maret High School.

III. Schrom Fest Report

Mr. Bill Duncan reported that FoSCr had a display at the Schrom Fest for a few hours on Saturday, October 14th. He said that many people visited the FoSCr table, including Mayor Davis, Delegate Anne Healy, Greenbelt City Councilmember Ed Puten, and Greenbelt City Councilmember Rodney Roberts. Mr. Gasper noted that Mr. Rodney Roberts pointed out a few errors on the map of Still Creek.

IV. Greenbelt Park Bridge Replacement Report

Ranger Robin Martin reported that the first bridge replacement was successfully completed a few Saturdays ago. She said that originally, it was scheduled to take the whole weekend, but it went so well that everything was completed in one day. Eight volunteers and four park staff participated. There are pictures of the new bridge on the Greenbelt Park website. The next bridge will be replaced on October 28th. Mr. John Galli asked whether the trail system is going to be upgraded after the bridge replacement.

Ranger Martin replied that trails are being upgraded in advance of the bridge replacements. She also noted that the \$10,000 grant from REI made the bridge replacements possible.

V. Water Quality Monitoring Report / Future Forums Discussion

Mr. Bill Duncan reported that the Water Quality Monitoring Forum that was organized by BCWWG on September 30th was very interesting. Mr. Duncan said that he and Ms. Shobha Duncan joined the Water Quality Monitoring Committee, which was formed at the September 30th Forum. On Saturday, October 14th they tested water quality at the following three sites in the Still Creek Watershed, 1)Greenbelt Lake Village, 2) Nashville Road, and 3)Paint Branch Parkway. Mr. Duncan said that he will write up a summary of their results and post it to the listserv.

Mr. Duncan suggested that FoSCr could consider hosting an informational forum on stormwater management, similar to BCWWG's water quality forum.

Mr. Bill Duncan said that the representative from MDDNR at the Water Quality Forum discussed a technique for assessing stream health that involves a visual survey. He said that DNR recommends that volunteers participate in a 2-3 day training course. Mr. Galli said that Mr. Ken Yetman at MD DNR would be the contact person for the stream assessment training and recommended that the group consider sending some members to the training. Mr. Duncan said that he is interested in walking all of Still Creek this winter and assessing stream conditions. Ms. Harriette Phelps suggested that the group should get a GPS unit in order to pin-point the location of problem areas. Mr. John Galli said that a detailed topographic map could also be used. Ranger Martin commented that a detailed topo map of Greenbelt Park was developed by Quantico Orienteering. She volunteered to provide Mr. Gasper with the information about how to obtain a copy of the map.

Mr. Fred Gasper reported that USGS has a water quality monitoring station along the Northeast Branch and real-time water data from that station is available on the USGS website <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/uv?01649500>. Mr. Gasper contacted Ms. Brenda Majeda, USGS, about speaking to FoSCr about water quality monitoring. Ms. Majedi agreed to meet with FoSCr, but probably would not be able to attend an evening meeting. Mr. Galli suggested that FoSCr should invite other Anacostia subwatershed groups to participate in a meeting at which a USGS representative could talk about the monitoring stations in the Anacostia watershed and how subwatershed groups can use the USGS website and interpret the data. Mr. Bill Duncan offered to ask the BCWWG water quality committee whether they would be interested in attending such a meeting on a Friday afternoon.

VI. Strategic Planning

Mr. Duncan said that he met with Mr. Alan Turnbull to review the SWOT analysis that the group conducted at the last meeting, identify critical issues for the group and draft a strategic plan. He shared with the group the following critical issues.

- We have an ongoing shortage of people to accomplish our goals. How does Still Creek effectively reach out and attain new members?
- Knowing how and where to deal with storm water runoff in a fully developed watershed.
- We need to craft messages and conduits to reach the various constituencies within the watershed. (Neighborhoods, schools, business parks, shopping centers, etc.)
 - The park does not look imperiled to the average visitor.
 - However, the fact that Still Creek is in the national park and is visited from far and wide is an opportunity to develop a more geographically diverse base of supporters.
- We do not yet know enough about the stream and the science of streams to know just what to do.
- We need to see ourselves as an executive committee monthly and begin to plan for quarterly larger meetings with outreach, training and planning (format TBD).
- We need a plan to “go live”.

The following is a summary of the discussion about the critical issue areas.

- Mr. Fred Gasper agreed that outreach to communities in the watershed is critical. He said that by the next meeting, he will draft a letter to the Greenspring Homes HOAs, Trinity Church and the Lanham Boys Club, encouraging them to join in the group’s efforts in whatever capacity they would like.
- Mr. Galli asked whether the group has an official logo. He suggested that developing a logo and a letterhead may be useful.
- Mr. Gasper said that he will ask Ms. Michele Touchet whether she is interested in designing a logo, as she is skilled in graphic design.

Mr. Duncan presented to the group the following draft strategic plan.

Critical Issue Areas:

Program: Developing a comprehensive program to address the conditions of Still Creek.

Stream Survey and Monitoring

- Water Quality
- Conditions Survey
- Partners
- Consultants

Initial Clean-up and Stabilization

- Ongoing Activities

Develop a Recovery Plan

- Learn what can be done/vision of optimum
- Short and Long Range Planning

Outreach to the Community

- High Schools
- Neighborhoods
- Business Parks
- Churches
- Membership

Advocacy

- As part of Recovery Plan
- Monitor development
- Work with Partners

Organization: Internal planning and management of human and financial resources; external networking with other organizations.

Board Development and Election of Officers

- Hold Election Meeting
- Pursue 501c3
 - Bylaws
 - Process?

Budgeting, Fundraising and Fiscal Management

Networking with Other Organizations

- Local Watershed Groups
- Resource Organizations (COG, CBF, NPS, REI, etc)

Communication and Public Relations

- Greenbelt News Review

The following is a summary of the discussion about the strategic plan.

- Mr. Galli noted that FoSCr can start receiving money (donations, grants, etc.) now, as an incorporated organization on the path to becoming a 501(c)3.
- Ms. Shobha Duncan replied that the group will be unable to give donors a tax-exempt receipt until it officially becomes a 501(c)3.
- Mr. Gasper reported that he called the Greenbelt News Review to alert them to the Greenbrook Lake cleanup. He said that he plans to contact the Washington Post about doing a story on the creation of local subwatershed groups, like FoSCr, that are focused on improving the environmental conditions of a small area.
- Mr. John Galli commented that the draft plan that Mr. Duncan and Mr. Turnbull put together is excellent. He suggested that the outreach and/or advocacy sections should include outreach to politicians and government officials that have the power to leverage funds or enact legislation that would benefit Still Creek.

Mr. Duncan suggested that the following people may be good candidates to lead group efforts in the associated program areas:

- Mr. Alan Turnbull – Political Networking and Advocacy
- Mr. Fred Gasper – Community Outreach
- Ms. Harriette Phelps – Technical/Scientific Advisor
- Ms. Shobha Duncan – Membership Retention
- Ms. Michele Touchet – Event Planner
- Mr. Bill Duncan – Creek Conditions, Recovery Plan, Organization and Planning

Mr. Duncan said that he will work on taking the strategic plan to the next step by the next meeting. He suggested that public relations, logo development, message development, assessment of stream conditions and planning a large quarterly meeting in January are some of the next steps for the group to focus on.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Greenbelt Park Ranger Station on November 20th.