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## **Friends of Still Creek Meeting Summary**

Monday, November 20, 2006

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

The Duncan Residence

Greenbelt, MD 20770

### **Meeting attendees:**

Debbie Barwick

Shobha Duncan

Bill Duncan

Fred Gasper

Adam Griggs (Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin)

Harriette Phelps

Michele Touchet

Alan Turnbull (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. Reading and Approval of the 10/16/06 Meeting Summary**

The meeting minutes from the 10/16/06 meeting were unanimously approved.

### **III. Reports**

#### *Celebratory Meeting with BCWWG*

Ms. Harriette Phelps announced that BCWWG has invited Friends of Still Creek to an informal meeting at the New Deal Café in order to celebrate the one year anniversary of the two groups. The meeting/celebration will either be held on November 28<sup>th</sup>, December 5<sup>th</sup> or December 12<sup>th</sup>. The group agreed that they would prefer the December 5<sup>th</sup> date. Mr. John Galli asked whether CCRIC is invited as well. Ms. Phelps replied that she believes that CCRIC is also invited. Mr. Fred Gasper suggested that the other subwatershed groups in the Anacostia could also be invited.

#### *Water Quality*

- ◆ Mr. Fred Gasper reported that Ms. Brenda Majedi (USGS) has agreed to meet with the group in March to speak about water quality monitoring and the USGS monitoring stations in the Anacostia.
- ◆ Mr. Bill Duncan reported that he and Ms. Shobha Duncan have been meeting with the Greenbelt water quality monitoring workgroup (composed of members of BCWWG, CCRIC and FoSCr) and using simple water quality test kits to monitor various sites in the watershed.
- ◆ Ms. Michele Touchet reported that she and Mr. Fred Gasper, as representatives of the townhome owners association in Greenbelt Lake Village, have been dealing with water quality issues in the stormwater management ponds at Greenbelt Lake Village. Ms. Touchet said that the condo association at Greenbelt Lake Village has been blaming water quality issues in the ponds on geese and string algae and have engaged a professor from the University of Maryland

to assess the ponds. Dr. Weismiller (UMD) recently visited the ponds and met with Mr. Gasper and members of the condo association.

- ◆ Mr. Fred Gasper said that Dr. Weismiller reviewed the landscape and will write a report with recommendations.
- ◆ Ms. Michele Touchet said that she has been trying to involve members of the condo association with the Friends of Still Creek, but has not yet been successful.
- ◆ Mr. Bill Duncan recommended being positive and encouraging the condo association members in their efforts to learn about the water quality issues at Greenbelt Lake Village.

#### **IV. Strategic Planning Report**

Mr. Bill Duncan passed out copies of the strategic plan that was developed by the Friends of Sligo Creek, saying that their plan is a model of what FoSCr is working towards. The Friends of Sligo Creek plan is very comprehensive and deals with a number of the same program areas that FoSCr has identified through the planning process.

Mr. Duncan reported that he has fleshed out the draft strategic plan a bit more and has put some names down for potential committee leaders. He said that everything in the plan is up for discussion, and stressed that since the group is still very small, everyone is on everyone else's committee.

Mr. Duncan reviewed the draft strategic plan (available for download on the listserv website) with the group. The following is a summary of the discussion.

##### *Stream Survey and Monitoring – Mr. Bill Duncan*

- ◆ Mr. Duncan reported that he would like to hike all of Still Creek this winter and begin to understand the creek and pinpoint problem areas.
- ◆ Ms. Harriette offered the group the use of her GPS unit.
- ◆ Ms. Michele Touchet said that she would be interested in hiking the stream as well and asked Mr. Duncan whether he could let the group know when he is planning to go out.
- ◆ Mr. Adam Griggs reported that in his previous job he ran a community water quality monitoring program and has written a macroinvertebrate monitoring protocol designed for volunteers. He offered to help FoSCr develop a monitoring program.
- ◆ Mr. John Galli encouraged FoSCr to include a biological component in their water quality monitoring program.
- ◆ Mr. Griggs agreed and suggested that it might make sense for the group to go ahead and hike the stream system this winter and do macroinvertebrate monitoring in the spring.
- ◆ Mr. Fred Gasper suggested that the hikes could be opened up to the public, through notices in local papers, and could be a way to recruit new members and educate people at the same time.
- ◆ Ms. Harriette Phelps suggested that the group should also document flood events and erosion.
- ◆ Mr. Adam Griggs suggested that the group may want to look at confluences during flood events to identify which streams are contributing the highest sediment loads. He also suggested that FoSCr members take pictures of fish blockages during the stream walks.
- ◆ Mr. John Galli said that COG already has data on fish blockages in Still Creek and can give the data to FoSCr.

##### *Initial Cleanup and Stabilization – Ms. Michele Touchet*

- ◆ Mr. Duncan suggested that Ms. Touchet put together a calendar of upcoming cleanup events.
- ◆ Ms. Michele Touchet asked how often the group would like to have events.

- ♦ Mr. John Galli suggested that the group plan on organizing a cleanup event in conjunction with the Earth Day cleanup organized by the Anacostia Watershed Society.
- ♦ Mr. Bill Duncan suggested an event every 6 weeks to 2 months would be good.
- ♦ Mr. Galli cautioned the group against having too many cleanups, saying that people get burned out pretty quickly just picking up trash. He suggested holding a variety of events (bird walks, tree plantings, bike tours, hikes, etc.) to keep a broad range of people involved.
- ♦ Ms. Michele Touchet said that she can ask Mr. Doug Bolt, a great local birder who has led walks for the BCWWG, whether he is willing to lead a walk in Still Creek in the spring.

#### *Communication and Public Relations*

- ♦ Mr. Bill Duncan asked whether Mr. Alan Turnbull or Mr. Fred Gasper would like to take the lead on 'Communication and Public Relations,'
- ♦ Mr. Fred Gasper suggested that he and Mr. Turnbull could both work on communication and public relations as it relates to community outreach and advocacy.
- ♦ Mr. Galli said that it would be great if the group could have all of this mapped out by March, as COG is working with AWCAC to hold an Anacostia subwatershed group workshop sometime in March or April, during which FoSCr will have the opportunity to make a presentation to the other subwatershed groups and to speak about FoSCr's top priorities.

#### *Organization*

- ♦ Mr. Bill Duncan said that the group still has a number of things to do (including develop bylaws and elect officers) in order to become a 501(c)3 non-profit.
- ♦ Mr. Adam Griggs said that he can be resource to help out with that process, as he is currently helping a number of other watershed groups apply for 501(c)3 status.
- ♦ Ms. Shobha Duncan asked whether the group can receive funds before becoming an official 501(c)3 non-profit.
- ♦ Mr. Alan Turnbull said that as a non-profit group incorporated in Maryland, FoSCr can receive funds, but most grant giving organizations prefer to award grants to 501(c)3 organizations.
- ♦ Mr. Fred Gasper announced that the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area is offering a number of \$2,000 mini-grants. Mr. Gasper said that he will forward the information to the group.
- ♦ Mr. John Galli said that the group could also apply for a mini-grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to pay for water quality monitoring supplies, printing, or other needs.
- ♦ Mr. Bill Duncan said that the group needs to identify funding priorities.
- ♦ Mr. Adam Griggs reported that the Chesapeake Bay Trust is raising the maximum amount awarded through mini-grants to \$5,000.
- ♦ Mr. Fred Gasper encouraged all of the group members to begin thinking about funding sources and funding priorities.

## **V. Outreach and Public Relations**

Mr. Bill Duncan said that now that the group has developed a plan, it is time to recruit more volunteers. He passed out a volunteer recruitment message that he put together. The recruitment message calls for volunteers at various levels of commitment.

Mr. Fred Gasper reported that he has spoken with an editor from the Washington Post about doing a story on the Friends of Still Creek and the rise in subwatershed groups in the Anacostia. He said that if the Washington Post is not interested in writing the story, he will suggest the story to the Gazette, the

Journal or the Greenbelt News Review. Mr. Adam Griggs suggested that if the editor isn't receptive to the story idea, Mr. Gasper could contact a reporter who has written environmental stories in the past.

## **VI. Planning for Quarterly Meeting**

Mr. Duncan said that the group should begin to think about holding a larger, quarterly meeting to draw in more people. The following is a summary of the discussion about holding a quarterly meeting.

- ♦ Ms. Harriette Phelps said that Dr. Margaret Palmer (UMD) gives very good presentations about stream restoration, and suggested that the group could invite her to speak.
- ♦ Mr. John Galli suggested inviting someone like Mr. Paul Wilson (DNR), who has recently surveyed Still Creek as part of the WRAS study. Mr. Galli said that another option would be to invite someone from Prince George's County DER to speak about the bioretention project that they recently completed along Kenilworth Avenue.
- ♦ Mr. Alan Turnbull suggested that the group could hold a Valentine themed meeting in January with the title "The \_\_\_\_ That We Love," and pick a project like the Kenilworth Avenue bioretention to feature. He also suggested the title "The New Kenilworth Avenue Landscaping Explained."

## **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 January 8, 2007. The group agreed to hold the January and February meetings on the second Monday of the month.