

Severn River Association Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, Tuesday, December 20, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by President Duane Wilding

No Presentation - Business Meeting Only.

Business Meeting:

Steve Barry reminded all that cups, etc must be properly policed – please use re-useable cups, not plastic or paper. Arlington Echo Environmental Center supports all aspects of Sustainability and is therefore the only public school facility to have a dishwasher. In the foyer there is an art display by Tom Wisner, the Bard of the Chesapeake Bay, including music, songs & pictures & stories & photos. President Duane Wilding thanked Steve for his hospitality.

Minutes of Last Meeting were Approved (DW moved, LisaBender seconded)

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Lynne Rockenbauch report is attached. \$67,121.96 in checking now. CD accounts will be opened as soon as possible but holiday travel is delaying that process.

Old Business:

- Land Use – Zoning Update – Dinny White was absent BobW reported that the AACounty Council passed the final bill, council complete. Several lawsuits are pending alleging violation of state law requiring adherence to the General Development plan.
- CEDS Watershed Audit – Richard Klein has produced report – we have a link to it on our website (SevernRiver.org). Saturday 12/17 the SRA Watershed Audit Committee (John Wright, Bob Whitcomb, Charlotte Lubbert, and Duane Wilding) met at the Odenton Library and looked at that stormwater management facility. It looked good.

Next the Committee visited Odenton Gateway shopping center which is under construction and had a lot of bare ground exposed. Mr. Klein sent a letter on the SRA's behalf suggesting stabilization and the site is now stabilized, having been bare less than one week. Sally Hornor asked what is the limit of land that may be cleared at one time? The limit is 5 acres and about 18 acres were cleared at this site. Mr. Klein has now drafted a letter thanking the developer for his prompt response, continuing our policy of asking nicely and working with the developer to solve problems rather than invoking the law confrontationally. Tom Guay working with Mr. Klein to send out a press release thanking the developer publicly for his prompt cooperation.

The next site visited was a commercial center with a neglected stormwater management facility. There had obviously been no inspection or follow up after construction. A facility at a large condominium was also failing – water was not draining or infiltrating.

The ultimate goal of CEDS and the Committee is to send out over a hundred letters pointing out responsibility for maintenance and offering support. All this will be done pro bono. Letters are being signed by SRA president Duane Wilding. Bob W mentioned that Mr. Klein says every property developed within the last 15 years has a Storm Water Management facility, and most need maintenance, generally due to simple ignorance. AACo has no resources to inspect or enforce such maintenance. Mr. Klein has now sent a copy of the existing law to our Committee. Education is the key, followed by embarrassment; legal action is a last resort which is seldom needed. While this seems like it could save AACo serious money by reducing downstream treatment needed, DW & SallyH said that the DPW estimates already assume that all existing Storm Water Management facilities are working properly. LisaB opined that positive recognition may help persuade others to follow suit. DuaneW suggested that Watershed Stewards may also be a resource to educate facility owners and follow up. SteveB said that the Watershed Stewards Academy has already been trying to focus DPW on source treatment, but met some resistance

because of lack of control – most of those facilities are privately owned. We get better results with persuasion, not coercion. Suzanne & SteveB met with John Peacock (DPW Highways) and asked for a copy of the relevant laws. AACo Law is on line. LisaB suggested that press releases should include contact info for help.

CharlotteL noted that none of the facilities sighted had rain barrels. She would like to reduce the cost of rain barrels to encourage wider use. Too many buildings have gutters draining to storm drains. BobW stated that Rockville City has labeled all storm drains with where they drain. John W said we have a template to spray such labels on drains (“to the Chesapeake Bay”), and could change it to say which river it drains to. Mr. Klein will be our January speaker. This is a good impetus. Bob vS moved to have DuaneW continue to send out letters to facility owners & construction sites as deemed appropriate by him and CEDS/RK. Motion passed. LisaB+BobW suggested that a Press release should mention our January meeting also. CharlotteL will call Dave Tibbetts to invite GOIA to our January mtg. LisaB asked if CEDS is the only company providing this service; the answer seems to be yes. **LynneR - ??**

- Membership renewals – need more reasons to join. John W said the Watershed Audit is good start. A company named Waterworks does fundraising letters for environmental groups. We need to do a better job with more frequent newsletters, maybe hire writers. We only published 2 Logs in 2011; it should be 4/yr. Quarterly is good target. John W has a writer in mind, at \$250/issue. Volunteers preferred, but this is an alternative. John gives the writer a broad outline of idea, and the writer makes it an article. Bob W pointed out that there is not enough response to KurtRiegel’s requests for articles. CharlotteL noted that most communities are now sending minutes by email. DuaneW said we need to find out who wants it electronically, as many of our members still do not have email or prefer hard copy that they can display on coffee tables. BobW said we lost many members when we went to electronic Log mailings. LisaB suggested we send the Log to community Rep’s and presidents, and ask them to forward it to their community. DuaneW would like to see less dues & more donations. BobW said we need to focus more on communities – phone calls and other reminders to get more renewals. Maybe individuals should no longer be members, just donors. Committee will meet to discuss options.
- SRA Stormwater Action Fund – Ann Jackson. The Committee met and agreed to propose 2-part grants, 1 for design funds up to \$1K to get them started prior to grant submittal (present system), and up to \$1500 more matching funds for construction pledged when grant application is done. The Pines community is interested in a living shoreline project. Motion to approve changes, (AnnJ/BobW) passed. Member communities only.
- Watershed Stew Academy – the SRA sent \$1,000 donation as decided at our last meeting.
- Bill 79-11. SRA testified, bill tabled, now scheduled for January 2.

New Business:

- Community News – (opportunity for Community Reps to share happenings in their community) – No news
- Bill Rynone, AACo Society of Professional Engineers said their winter meetings will include presentations on the following topics of interest to SRA members:
 - 11 January 2012 - Andrew Gohn, MD Energy Administration, Wind Energy (410-260-7190)
 - 8 February 2012 - Allen Graves - Innovations In Fire Trucks 410-222-8332
 - 14 March 2012 - Ron Zarrilli, Marine Construction Projects, 410-798-6715
 - 11 April 2012 - Mark Mendelsohn, Rebuild and Potential Use Of Poplar Island, 410-962-9499
 - 9 May 2012 - Christopher Rice, A discussion of all electric cars, 410-260-7207
- They meet at 6:30 on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Pot Belly in the Annapolis Mall.
- The Merrill Foundation made a \$250 donation as they have in past years.
- 2012 Budget was presented and modified. DW moved, LB second, passed. Revised budget is attached.

- Other Business –There was no other new business.
- Ann Jackson mentioned that the Shipleys Choice Dam removal project is in a public comment period until 12/23. The Greater Severna Park Council is concerned about tree cutting. Steve B said this was being done by the contractor, AACo lacks a manager. Removing the dam, which is not working now and could pose a hazard in a major storm event, and stabilizing the soil and stream. It is not an infiltration project, just stabilization and quantity control. AACo doesn't want to change it now – the design is complete and construction is starting. Staff at DPW is not always green – Ron Bowen doesn't want to overrule them. DuaneW called Ron and will follow up. Comments to ACE – Ann J has one letter sent to date, asking for informational hearing. – she will follow up. DuaneW will ask DPW for an Underwood style design. Mike Robinson said the concern is that the dam could block debris, build up pressure, fail and flood out West Benfield Road. We need more information. DuaneW suggested no formal comments to ACE – just ask Ron Bowen for information. LisaB pointed out that the contractor may not be aware of alternatives. BobW mentioned that this is downstream from the Bear Creek Restoration project. It is pretty far along – they are seeking permits now. SteveB pointed out that Ron Bowen was meeting monthly with the Severn RiverKeeper and the South River Federation to keep them abreast of projects in their watersheds. SallyH suggested we have a presentation annually at one of our regular monthly meetings giving the status of DPW projects in AACo. SteveB said there is a lot of sediment behind the dam and its failure could be serious. CharlotteL said that several photos are circulating of big sediment spills in other areas – hillsides fell in, etc. SteveB said that 3 hillsides have come down between The Narrows and the Rte 50 Bridge. He filed a complaint with AACo Dept of Inspections & Permits about erosion control violations. There is a permit pending and a Stop Work order was issued. They plan to cooperate, but there has been no real action. He will keep following up. Violations abound – I&D only responds to complaints, they have no budget for proactive enforcement. Severn RiverKeeper Fred Kelly has been tracking these violations, and is also seeking a grant to recreate the bog in Clements Creek.
- Tom Guay suggested the SRA should sponsor boat to look for violations. This would duplicate the Severn RiverKeeper's mandate. No motion.
- BobW – A new group “Clean Water, Healthy Families”.org is lobbying for green issues. It is headed by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and also includes Clean Water Action, The Audubon Society, and others. He suggested the SRA should join. DuaneW will investigate and report back.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Next Meeting: will be Tuesday, January 17, 2012. Speaker will be Richard Klein of Community Environmental Defense Services, discussing the Watershed Audit being carried out on behalf of and working with the SRA.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob vom Saal