

# Severn River Association Minutes

## Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, November 13, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President John Wright

**Guest speaker:** Amy Stevens, Montgomery County Stormwater Facility Maintenance Program Manager.

Montgomery County's Stormwater Facility Maintenance Program (MCSFMP) started with a small inspection staff in 1994, but was too small to be effective until a Storm Water Utility tax was passed in 2003. It covers 500 sq mi in two major basins (Potomac and Patuxent Rivers), of which 12% (8,500 acres, or about the area of Washington, DC) is Impervious, and serves 970,000 people speaking at least 184 languages, with a population density second only to Baltimore City. It includes over 6000 BMPs (Best Management Practice facilities). The building code now requires ESD (Environmental Site Design), which is changing the program's focus since each new building now has its own BMP. Education is now more critical to ensure that each property owner knows his responsibility and how to maintain his facility.

MCSFMP inspectors are now finding that most HOAs don't have the expertise to properly maintain their facility, so MCSFMP is allowing them to transfer maintenance responsibility to the County for a fixed annual fee. Aesthetic maintenance is still the responsibility of the HOA. The transfer is in the form of a signed Maintenance agreement with Easements. 75% of the residential BMPs have now been transferred to MCSFMP. These no longer pay a fee, but are supported by the standard tax. Commercial properties are not generally transferred and have their own maintenance personnel.

The County is Divided into 3 inspection areas. MCSFMP Inspects each facility every 3 years using private contractors. Each inspection uses a one page checklist (different for each type of BMP) supplemented by photos. Confined Space Safety procedures must be followed, requiring two inspectors. The checklist is in a form suitable for use on mobile electronic devices.

MCSFMP recommends monthly trash removal for aboveground facilities, with twice a year mowing and vegetation removal for ponds. Underground facilities should be cleaned frequently to prevent blockages. Vegetated LID facilities should be maintained quarterly

Contractor training sessions are held twice a year and a Newsletter is published 4 times a year. There are frequent Property Management Company communications, with individual and direct communication to property owner when maintenance/repair is needed. Fact Sheets are distributed as needed. MCSFMP maintains several Websites with more information. Four County Inspectors work directly with property owners

The rest of the presentation gave detailed maintenance procedures for each of the most common types of BMP facility. More information is available from MCSFMP's website or by contacting SRA secretary Bob vom Saal.

### **Questions:**

Duane Wilding asked how facilities that are not in County Right of Way are maintained by the County? If it is not in the ROW, it is HOA responsibility unless an access easement can be worked out.

Ken Hatch asked if they have enough inspectors, and how inspection is funded? MCSFMP uses 3d party contractors, all paid for by the Storm Water Utility. They are doing 1600 inspections per year which seems to be adequate. Underground facilities need more frequent inspections. Inspections are not complex. County website has more information on facilities.

Is Mosquito control needed in bioswales? Proper drainage doesn't give them time to hatch. Longer holders are trouble, but usually mosquitoes come from individual property pools – blocked gutters, kids toys, &c. Ponds have predators to eat the mosquito larvae.

Do permit holders have a problem determining if a BMP is in fact Best? ESD is preferred – builder must prove that's impossible before they are permitted to use conventional BMPs.

Blocked low drains are the most common BMP problem. Trees on a dam cause trouble – roots cause leaks. The State only inspects high-hazard dams (failure could damage property & people) – stormwater dams are not usually considered High Hazard and are thus not inspected.

## **Business Meeting:**

**Minutes of the October Board Meeting** were Approved .

**Treasurer's Report** – Treasurer Lynne Rockenbauch reported:

	As of Nov. 1, 2011	As of Nov. 1, 2012
Checking:	\$30,836.24	\$27,552.28
Investments:	<u>\$35,863.25</u>	<u>\$45,050.83</u>
Total:	\$66,699.49	\$72,603.11

The net worth of the SRA has increased by \$5903.62 in the past year. All income and expenses to date are within our budget. Community memberships are up from last year, but individual memberships at the Benefactor level are down, so our net income is about the same.

**Old Business:**

- Dick Spencer – met with Richard Klein a week ago, will give P & Z inspection results. Inspected Belvoir Farms BMP – found trees on dam. Waverly Farms has 2 designs to review & Decide.
- The SRA will receive the 2012 Environmental Award from the County Democratic Central Committee on December 6th. We are invited to accept the award.
- On Oct. 22, Richard Klein and others accompanied County Councilman Dick Ladd on a tour of BMPs in the Ben Oaks area and some other locations showing good and bad present stormwater controls. They also discussed future ESDs which will need more inspectors.
- Ann Jackson reported on SRA's Stormwater Action Fund – there are no applicants now and all are encouraged to apply. The Fund helps with both designs & construction. So far they have aided 3 designs, but none have gotten grants to build.
- We need to prepare next year's budget – all inputs welcome – talk to John Wright.
- Priest Point – the developer is still getting AACo approvals. The SRLT agreement is complete, but final transfer is held up pending construction permits. Boundaries between the easement and the construction site are still fluid pending permits. (Note – there are 200-300 developable properties larger than 10 acres in the SR Watershed). Bob Whitcomb pointed out that the South & West/Rhode Rivers have greenways – Severn has less contiguous easements so no greenway.
- Operation Clean Stream – Maureen Burke working with Bob Whitcomb for next year's. The date is April 6, 2013 – site not selected yet. Dick Spenser asked why not 4/13 which is National Clean Stream Day? Bob advised that 4/6 is Chesapeake Clean Stream Day.
- The Annual Membership Letter has been approved and will go out soon. There was a discussion of what Logo to use for decals which will be available for purchase.- “Since 1911” was adopted. Cost is \$1166 for 1500 decals – enough for next year also. Motion by Lee Meadows, seconded by RvS – passed.
- Community News – Lee Meadows – Exec Committee published guidelines for DNR to implement. An Eastern Shore law firm is trying to block TDMLs – several small counties have signed on. They allege the cost too high - \$300/house. SRA is endorsing inspection of BMPs.; there are many other endorsements from Riverkeepers & Audubon Soc, etc. We are seeking volunteers for grant-writing, Oyster coordinators, others. The EC is planning a direct mail in spring to targeted audiences for fundraising.

**New Business:**

- Duane Wilding – Coastal Resources is interested to get information on our stream restoration needs. – contact John Wright.
- Kurt Riegel has several items for our next newsletter (The LOG), but still needs more. The deadline is about now.
- Mike Robinson asked if the new crematorium at Veteran's Highway near Benfield Road will emit heavy metals? Kurt Riegel advised that the flue gases are cleaner than the average fireplace.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:45 PM.**

**Next Meeting:** will be on Tuesday, December 18, 2012 at 7:00pm at Arlington Echo. The topic will be reports on the results of two remediation efforts supported by the SRA.

Respectfully submitted,                      Bob vom Saal