

**Mystic River Watershed Steering Committee
Municipal Subcommittee
Meeting Notes**

**Thursday, October 28, 2010, 11:30-1:30
Winchester Town Hall, Winchester, MA**

Introductions by George Zambouras (Town of Reading) and Doug Gutro (EPA)

- Question about the MS4 permit status
 - o The new MS4s are still expected to come out this year.

George Zambouras (Reading) presentation on Storm Water Utility Enterprise Fund

(See presentation posted with the notes for more information)

- A utility cost to residential and industrial/commercial properties based on the area of impervious surface on their property.
 - o Includes roofs, driveways and sheds
- A separate utility, but an addition to water and sewer bill
 - o Billed quarterly
 - o \$40 flat rate for single and two family homes
 - o Additional cost for multi-family homes and industrial/commercial properties (based on impervious surface area)
- Enterprise Fund
 - o Dedicated for Storm Water Operation and Maintenance
 - o Original budget with the added cost of compliance of MS4 regulations
 - o \$350,000-\$400,000 annual budget (most of which (75%) goes to cover capital expenses)
- All properties, except undeveloped properties, pay the stormwater fee
- Q: Does the fee create an incentive to reduce impervious over?
 - o Abatement program tries to promote that
 - Up to 50% abatement
 - Percent of abatement depends on the number of parameters met in the storm water policy
 - o Proper maintenance of infiltration systems is not currently enforced and is something that will be looked at in the future and hasn't yet because it's only been 3 years
- Currently, there is no outfall database to see if storm water is reduced by Best Management Practices
- The money is (will be) spent on
 - o Street sweeping
 - o Catch basing cleaning, repairs and stenciling (minimal cost)
 - o Ditch and detention basin maintenance
 - o General drainage improvements
 - o Drainage system mapping
 - The outfalls have all been mapped but not sampled
 - This is where we have the least amount of information
 - There are many historical plans but don't know what has changed through development since the 1960's

- River improvements
- Consulting services
- Equipment- sewer and water paid for half of the expenses
- Some residents have mostly responded well, but many people would rather spend thousands of dollars for infiltration systems than pay the \$40/year fee
- There was a lot of planning and analysis that went into this program in order to make sure that what they were doing was legal.

Kate Bowditch (Charles River Watershed Association), Presentation on Blue Cities Initiative

(See presentation posted with the notes for more information)

- Information regarding the process that went into the Charles River case study of storm water utility in 2007 is can be found at www.CharlesRiver.org
- Reading is ahead of the curve because when the new MS4 permits come out, everyone will be scrambling for money
- Blue Cities Initiative
 - Look at infrastructure, landuse and development near water as a basis for planning
 - 6th Year of the program
 - Restore natural hydrology, mimic nature in urban environments
 - 16% of Boston consists of streets and sidewalks, which comprises 50% of the land that Boston owns
 - The concept is to add green infrastructure on top of conventional infrastructure to capture and recharge
 - New development is not primarily green systems, it's a mixture of green and conventional infrastructure
 - One thing to keep in mind is the maintenance. Who is responsible for upkeep?
 - Portland and Seattle are good examples. They have implemented so many projects that the costs are decreasing.
 - Standardized public outreach
 - Understood and completed legal obligations
 - There are a lot of important engineering decisions of what to put in place
 - Cost, location, goals, physical factors
 - Examples of green infrastructure: rain gardens, stormwater planters, vegetated swales, infiltration trenches, porous pavement, bioswales.
- Other projects that CRWA has been involved in:
 - Town of Franklin
 - Proposed many Best Management Practices which focus on low impact development (LID) on both public and private properties
 - Spruce Pond Sub-Watershed
 - Extensive review of existing conditions through meetings, research and GIS analysis
 - CRWA will develop set of recommendations for the subwatershed
 - Green Street Type Design

- Porous pavement in parking lane and parking lots
 - Total cost was between \$18 and \$25 million for the whole town
- Allston Creek
 - Harvard University owns the property and wanted to implement their campus extension plan with green infrastructure in order to handle runoff from other neighborhoods
 - The plan never went forward
- Peabody Square, Boston
 - On Dorchester Avenue
 - Redesign square with vegetated stormwater retrofits
 - Was implemented due to support from the Mayor
 - Installed porous pavers and rain gardens which captured 15-20% of runoff
 - Were limited because the Orange Line tunnel runs right under the square.
 - Since there is no longer a Combine Sewer System in place, the MWRA was more interested in water quality.
- Stony Brook subwatershed in Boston
 - Used GIS to find areas for Open Space
 - Where GIS techniques found a large area for green space, the reality was a much smaller/narrower park surrounded by residential properties
- Chelsea Creek subwatersheds
 - Installation of stormwater tree pits on Chester Avenue
 - Tree pits are designed to infiltrate rainfall into a large vault of soil and tree roots. When that overflows, then there is a secondary vault to capture stormwater. If that overflows, then the excess goes into the conventional stormwater drains.
- The City of Boston is developing new guidelines for streets
 - Implement green technology in order to provide better access for bikes and wheelchairs
 - They are looking at every opportunity – big and small
 - CRWA chose 2 street targets to show the city what it would look like
 - Tremont Street, captures runoff from the sidewalk
 - Roxbury – Street captures runoff from street and sidewalk

Follow-Up Actions

- Martin Pillsbury (MAPC) will present at the next meeting
- The next meeting will be January 27, 2011 at 11:30-1:30 in Woburn (unless another place is offered by the group)
- EPA will post presentations from today's meetings online with the notes

Mystic River Watershed Municipal Subcommittee Sign-in Sheet
October 28, 2010

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