

Minutes
CA Watershed Advisory Committee
April 7, 2009
Final

The regular meeting of the Watershed Advisory Committee (WAC) was called to order on Tuesday, April 7, 2009, at 7:10 pm in the Board Room at the Owen Brown Community Association. In attendance were Members Rob Schweinfurth (Chair), Brian England (Vice Chair), Mark Charles, Monica Schmitt, Jane Dembner, Jeff Campbell, Tom Mataya (arrived 7:14pm), Debbie Cappuccitti (arrived 7:16pm), Atal Eralp (arrived 7:20pm). Also in attendance from Columbia Association staff were Sean Harbaugh, (Staff Liaison), Jan Clark, and Antoinette Eckstrom. Mark Southerland with VERSAR was present as well as several community members. A list of those community members present is on file with these minutes.

Approval of Agenda

Rob asked to add a brief discussion on the Watershed Policy to the Agenda. Clark asked to add a request from Columbia Association, Community Services Division to Other Business. Campbell asked to add a brief discussion in reference to the delivery of the minutes to Other Business. The amended agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of March 3, 2009 Minutes

Campbell made corrections to the minutes as follows:

Early Action Projects:

Campbell moved for CA to partner with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay on this initiative.

Village Board Update:

Campbell – Long Reach had concerns about rain barrel colors.

Other Business:

Campbell shared that he attended Maryland Department of Natural Resources training for the Maryland Biological Stream Survey (MBSS) and Stream Waters. Volunteers are collecting macro-invertebrates in the Patuxent watershed this year. He encouraged participation in Columbia since this is an opportunity to get professional identification of invertebrates to assess water quality at no cost to Columbia.

Action Items:

Harbaugh was asked to affiliate Columbia Clean up with Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.

The minutes of the March 3, 2009 meeting were approved as amended.

Watershed Policy

At the March 3, 2009 WAC meeting a goal was set to prepare a draft of a watershed policy for the Columbia Association. Committee members were asked to participate by sharing their thoughts. England took a first cut at putting some ideas together for elements of a Watershed Policy (see attached ideas). Those ideas fit under the following categories:

- Overall goals to develop and implement a long term plan
- Development of a budget for the plan
- Policy that reflects the vision and goals of the CWMP
- Specific elements of the policy
- Policy that addresses working with stakeholders

Dembner motioned to form a task force to develop a draft Watershed Policy. Schmitt seconded. The vote was 7-1-0. Campbell voted against.

England, Charles, and Cappuccitti volunteered to serve on the task force and a goal was set for a draft to be distributed to WAC prior to the next meeting.

VERSAR Update/Watershed Management Plan

Harbaugh distributed a summarized list of the comments received from the WAC review (see attached). Discussion of the draft Columbia Watershed Management Plan (CWMP) included the following key points.

- Cappuccitti would like to see a more quantified or measurable approach to the plan. She felt the report needs a better explanation in reference to the long term commitment to the CWMP.
- Schweinfurth's primary suggestions were that a watershed policy be adopted shortly after acceptance of the CWMP by the CA Board, and that CA continually looks for opportunities to improve water quality and quantity conditions.
- Campbell suggested bullets to be added to the summary (see summary of comments document)
- Southerland agreed to take the WAC's suggestions and expand on the CWMP based on comments received
- England motioned to review the revised Executive Summary and CWMP at the May WAC meeting.

Mataya seconded the motion. The vote was 7-1-1. Dembner voted against, Eralp abstained.

Early Action Projects

Green Fest

Key points of the wrap-up discussion were.

- Schweinfurth connected with a good number of residents. He also attended the Howard County Sustainability Summit as part of the event and it provided a good overview of sustainable initiatives by Howard County.
- Thanks to Schmitt and Huestis for doing a great job on the display. It attracted a lot of attention. The fish and game were big hits at the display as well.
- The "Google" maps of the Columbia subwatersheds could not be viewed until internet connection problems were resolved in the early afternoon
- Cappuccitti lead 2 watershed tours that attracted a total of 25 people.
- A suggestion to label the watersheds and not the villages on the map on of Columbia was made.

Kings Contrivance Reforestation

The March 21st event was a huge success. A total of 44 residents volunteered and helped with the plantings. There were 7 WAC members present. Two-hundred fifty (250) trees representing 10 species were planted. Schweinfurth stopped by the planting site a few days ago and noted that the trees seemed to be doing well and were beginning to bud. Clark said CA would try to water them during droughts in the first year.

Harbaugh mentioned a future project may be a curb cut and creation of a stormwater management structure to catch runoff from the parking area adjacent to the Amherst House.

Future Reforestation Events

Clark would like to set up a fall reforestation project for the area around Hopewell Pool. This location would be a highly visible site with easy access. Clark explained that upcoming reforestation projects would be funded through CA operating funds and grants. Charles recommended CA apply for one large grant that would fund all the reforestation sites identified in the CWMP.

A resident, Irene McDonald, spoke to the WAC and asked both CA and the WAC not to underestimate volunteers desire to help with reforestation projects that are less visible with more difficult access, but that have a greater impact on improving watershed conditions.

Campbell asked whether the Hopewell Pool project was in the reforestation inventory outlined in the draft CWMP and if not why a location that was not recommended in the plan was chosen. Charles asked whether CA intended to include reforestation projects recommended by the CWMP reforestation inventory in future tree planting efforts and CA staff indicated that recommended sites in the CWMP would be included in future efforts.

Schweinfurth recommended CA look at sites in the CWMP and continue this discussion at the next WAC meeting.

Columbia Clean Day

Harbaugh reported on the upcoming project, Columbia Clean Day. Each of the villages will be holding an event on that day, April 18th. Schweinfurth and Schmitt have volunteered to participate that day. Campbell asked if the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (ACB) had been contacted to participate in the project and Harbaugh said that he had not had an opportunity to contact them.. Schweinfurth asked Harbaugh what promotions had been done for the event and Harbaugh listed several outreach efforts.

Lake Elkhorn Stabilization

Harbaugh gave an overview of the type of concerns CLEER had reported at Lake Elkhorn. Harbaugh would like to have a group from the WAC evaluate the type of remedies for shoreline erosion. England asked if there was a plan in place for all the lakes in Columbia. It was suggested Harbaugh continue to work with CLEER to further define remedies.

Other Business

Save the Planet Day

Clark brought a request to the WAC from the CA's Teen Advisory Committee asking whether WAC would like to participate in the event. The event is billed as a mini Green Fest and is planned for Saturday, May 30th, from 10am-2pm at Lake Kittamaquidi. There will be vendors, a shredding truck, and possibly tree give-aways. WAC could have a booth and set it up similar to what was presented at Green Fest. Consensus of WAC was that CA should participate in this event. Charles and Schweinfurth volunteered to attend and Schmitt may be available.

WAC Meeting Minutes

Campbell would like the minutes to be distributed sooner and suggested that they be sent to the WAC a week after the meeting. After discussion, Campbell motioned that the minutes from WAC meetings be distributed to committee members no later than the close of business on the 10th business day following the meeting. Charles seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0-1.

Harbaugh announced that Eckstrom was resigning from taking minutes for the WAC and that her work with the committee was much appreciated.

WAC Goals

Eralp suggested that the committee focus on the big picture in reference to the goals of the WAC. He is concerned that small projects may distract from the larger goals. Eralp distributed information on

functions of an advisory committee and had concluded that the WAC group was inline with the scope of other advisory committees. Charles thanked Eralp for sending the information on functions of an Advisory Committee. The committee will continue this discussion at the next meeting.

Future Agenda Items

- Watershed Policy
- Revised CWMP
- Save the Planet participation
- June reports to the villages

Adjournment

England motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm. Cappuccitti seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Antoinette Eckstrom

Action Items

- England, Charles Cappuccitti to work on the Watershed Policy and submit a draft for review prior to the May meeting
- Harbaugh to work with Southerland to update CWMP based on WAC comments and distribute the revised plan prior to the next WAC meeting
- Clark will provide more information on future reforestation projects
- CA will sign-up for the Save the Planet Day and Charles, Schweinfurth and possibly Schmitt will attend the event of May 30th at Lake Kittamaquidi
- WAC minutes to be distributed to WAC no later than 10 business days following the meeting
- Harbaugh to work with CLEER to further define stabilization efforts for Lake Elkhorn