

ANC 3F Parks and Watershed Committee
April 27, 2022, 7:00 pm (Zoom)

Attendees:

Erica Rosenberg; Cecelia Lane (DOEE); Jeanne Braha (RCC); Judy Buelow; Marjorie Share; Lois Forster; Barbara Bates; Cory Levine; Claudette David

Erica Rosenberg, Chair

Agenda:

A. Soapstone Valley--Lois Forster, Judy Buelow, Marjorie Share

Judy: Recap of recent ANC meeting relating to Soapstone. They said they've cut all the trees that they are going to cut, they are in the process of installing access roads to the creek. They posted many slides, which include a color-coded schedule so you know what work is going to happen at which work sites and when, depending on weather.

Helpful tips on how homeowners can prevent backup of noxious gases into their residences when work is being done in the area (which they are giving seven days prior notice of).

Marjorie: In addition, introduced Melissa McLaughlin who is a meteorologist who has been hired to put in an air monitoring system, but she has no experience with Cured-in-Place-Pipe. She explained that the cummin is the carcinogen that will be released. They also talked about the liner which is styrene free but is basically replacing the styrene with another chemical which is a benzene (not a good thing). They also showed a slide program (which is available on Forest Hills Connection). On Slide 135-46 shows the possible methods for curing. Doing state of the art air monitoring but didn't specify what that means. Ms. McLaughlin has been hired to come up with a plan and then they're going to hire a third party to make sure they implement her plan. Maybe someone from the ANC should be doing an independent analysis.

Questions about what we know about cummin.

Erica: Who would do the separate analysis that Marjorie is proposing? Is it necessary?

Judy: Also questions whether this is necessary.

Lois: We need the air monitoring of the air quality and the information must be shared with nearby residents

Cecelia Lane: Please let me know if you'd like me to follow up with my contact at DOEE who worked on the air quality permit. Will check if DOEE is doing the oversight on it.

Marjorie: That is really helpful please do. They are going to use chemicals to monitor and also door hangers to warn residents and give them a number to call. Also there have been sinkholes from the heavy equipment that are emerging. Some residents on 29th street reached out to Emmanuel Briggs and he has been responsive. Mr. Briggs comes out with his update every Monday. He talks about the heavy equipment pathways that are going in and they are starting to install bypass pipes.

Erica: Once we have Cecelia's response we might need a resolution or a request

Cecelia: Re Soapstone potholes Public space permits require contractors to put down an deposit. DDOT does inspections after construction and hold the contractors responsible for any repairs that are required before releasing their deposit.

Marjorie: Thank you, Cecilia. Great to know. And Stephen Ours has been wonderful, highly responsive.

B. Hearst--Cory Levine

Hardscape issues:

- Tennis balls flying over fence onto pool
- Paint peeling from walls of tennis court
- Hitting wall did not include appropriate drainage

Dog Issue:

- Need to find a solution to the dog walking issue, maybe a dog park
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Water issues:

- Bioretention area slow to drain, may be caused by the leaf debris or it's the groundwater
- Field is moist almost all the time, even when it hasn't rained.

Cecelia: Will look into whether she can request an inspection to test the infiltration rates to see if they match what is required

C. Reservation 630 Mini-Oasis (formerly known as Melvin Hazen) --Cory Levine

New Sign installed – “Rock Creek Park – Reservation 630” at trailhead at Tilden and Reno Rd
RCC is removing invasives along the Tilden/Sedgwick side and doing new plantings into the Fall. Some native plants are taking hold on the slope and currently in bloom.

The erosion of the stream continues. We keep working on improving stormwater retention in the neighborhood above Res 630, meaning reminding residents to choose to take remedial actions on their properties.

Cecelia: Stream Restoration Project Update –

- DOEE will apply for the funding this time next year and kick off that project formally. If we apply in the spring, we normally get the notice to fund by the fall, but it will be a lengthy process. Colleague Matt English will be heading that process and he will join for meetings as we get further along.
- Needs an environmental assessment to start the work
- (Environmental Impact Statement is a \$350k plus proposition. Will take both Money and Staff to get to the restoration)
- After talking to the park service and the conservancy – interested in a comprehensive restoration. This will include outreach campaigns to the residential community, green infrastructure on the nearby streets.

D. Connecticut Avenue Streetscape Project-Barbara Bates

- ANC Streets and Sidewalks committee was working on a resolution regarding light pollution. She wasn't at the ANC.
- DC may be planning on replacing all the lightbulbs

E. Stormwater and Water Quality Management Advocacy

Jeanne: RCC is part of the water monitoring program – they will be monitoring Soapstone and 8 other sites in the city. None of the sites in RCC pass the water quality tests (for bacteria), which is why we're working on solutions to slow the stormwater flow into the creek.

F. Park near WAMU-Lois Forster

- Joe Kish and Nick Bartolomeo (NPS)
- Clearing non-natives but there is a lot of erosion and a lot of trash (associated with a picnic table at the park)
- On the Soapstone/NPS side it is a dump, people are dumping trash of all sorts in that area. Lois is going to email both Joe and Nick to ask what they are going to do about all that trash on the slope.
- Stan Wall and Lois are still working to get through WAMU and the AU facilities to deal with this mini park once and for all. He is working to get a meeting to discuss what's happened and the lack of attention to the maintenance
- DDOT had their commercial corridor project meeting last Saturday at 10am. Ted Van Hutten is the project lead for the Van Ness Main Street project – sent him an email, with a copy of the easement – NPS holds 50 foot easement next to WAMU, and the PUD for the current WAMU building. Ted volunteers to follow up with the Zoning office = the lack of maintenance in the mini park is a violation of the agreement. The picnic table keeps moving around.
- Need some vegetation or some border (maybe not a fence) to prevent the trash dumping, homeless camps. Need to get rid of the picnic tables.
- RCC would equip neighbors with bags, grabbers and gloves to do a cleanup but RCC has been told to stay out of Soapstone for now.
- Cecelia Lane will make some inquiries. She will make a site visit over there to look at the erosion on the hillside and gage the trash situation. She will inquire if there is a way to cite/report open dumpsters.
- Claudette: Contact 311, Reach out to MOCR as well, coordinate with Van Ness Main Streets as well.

Miscellaneous

Jeanne: Race History and Rock Creek Park Series -

<https://www.rockcreekconservancy.org/uncovering-our-history>

Thanks to DOEE, RCC has funding to hire 7 fellows to work with them in targeted areas this summer.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/61128882ec63322fbd96a13a/t/62616f0ea251901291ce88c3/1650552591885/2022+Rock+Creek+Fellows+%281%29.pdf>