

UPPER WATTS BRANCH PARK FOREST PRESERVE STREAM STUDY

Proposed Citizen Task Force Outline and Framework

The City of Rockville Department of Public Works, in conjunction with the adjacent neighborhood association presidents, is recommending a Citizen Task Force be created with participation from other City Departments, to provide input on the design and construction of Storm Water Management, Stream Restoration, or other measures to address erosion in the Upper Watts Branch Stream Park Forest Preserve.

Purpose:

The proposed purpose of this task force is to make recommendations concerning interventions to address storm water outflow and stream erosion within the Upper Watts Branch Park Forest Preserve. The task force will consider potential new storm water management (SWM) opportunities, evaluate the functioning and potential modifications of existing SWM facilities that affect the Watts Branch Stream as it passes through the forest preserve, interventions such as stream restoration to address erosion in storm outflows and along the Watts Branch stream. The task force will consider the full range of benefits and costs of alternative combinations of interventions to address erosion and other environmental problems, weighing the environmental benefits against the environmental, recreational/aesthetic, and budgetary costs of alternative sets of interventions.

Process:

The Task Force will strive to reach a consensus recommendation. Task Force members will have the opportunity to set procedural guidelines for their own meetings at the beginning of the process. A facilitator may be utilized to support this initiative. The Task Force recommendation will be forwarded to the City Manager for submission to the Mayor and Council.

Proposed Objectives:

Identify and assess the full range of benefits and costs of potential interventions, reach a consensus recommendation, educate the Task Force team members and interested citizens about the project, provide a forum for open discussion, ensure transparency and increase the flow of information, enhance public involvement, identify, understand and consider the various interests in the project.

Proposed Task Force Member Roles:

Members should regularly attend meetings, share Task Force progress with interested people or groups, work collegially with other Task Force members, present concerns and issues, and agree to act in good faith in all aspects of the Task Force's deliberations.

Task Force Membership:

The final number of Task Force participants shall be determined depending upon the level of community interest. The following is a preliminary list of proposed members:

- City's Project Manager (John W. Hollida) may serve the role as committee chair
- Task Force co-chaired by a community member

- Additional participants which may vary based upon community interest:
 - Civic Associations Executive Board Members (3 members)
 - Woodley Gardens
 - College Gardens
 - Plymouth Woods
 - Community members at large (3 members)
 - Board and Commission members (2 members)
 - Environment Commission
 - Parks Advisory Board
- City Staff Project Team (provide guidance and share information)
 - John Scabis – Engineering Supervisor
 - Heather Gewandter – Stormwater Manager
 - Mike Critzer – Parks Services Manager
 - Elise Cary – Assistant City Forester
 - Robin Ziek – Historic Preservation Planner
 - City Manager’s Office will provide leadership throughout the process
 - City’s hired consultant

Proposed Meetings:

The Task Force should consider meeting times that are convenient for the group. Staff would propose that the group meet several times throughout the design process, but the Task Force will ultimately decide the number of meetings. Staff is recommending that the meetings will be held at the Senior Center. Some of the meetings may be scheduled as follows:

- Project Kick-off (2 meetings)
 - Vision and Project Framework
 - Ground Rules
 - Responsibilities
- Stream Restoration 101 (1 meeting)
- Condition Assessment of Stream (2 meetings)
- Development of alternative sets of interventions (2 to 3 meetings)
- Assessment of benefits and costs of potential interventions and decision on recommended course of action. (2 meetings)
- Design Meetings (3 meetings)
- Field Walks (2 meetings)

Potential Outreach Strategy Ideas:

Project and Citizen Task Force Web-sites, Neighborhood Advisories, Project Newsletter, Email Listserv, Project Manager Blog and a Chat room