

Summary of a Meeting about a College Gardens Pond and Park Study and Obtaining Grant Money to Support such a Study

Attendees: Mark Charles (Chief, Environmental Management Division, Department of Public Works, City of Rockville), Karen Carp (College Gardens resident), and Mark Pierzchala (President, College Gardens Civic Association). The meeting was held at the home of Mark Pierzchala, March 21, 2007 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm.

Purpose of the Meeting: To talk about writing grant applications for a study of the College Gardens pond, the park, and the connected College Gardens tributary of Watts Branch. This study would be for up to 5 years, before and after construction of the new Storm Water Management (SWM) pond in College Gardens Park. Karen Carp has pledged \$1000 per year for 5 years, and a grant would match (or more than match) this money. The money would be used to buy equipment or services needed by the study.

Background: The idea to study the pond has been under consideration for about 4 years. However due to the uncertainty of the eventual use of the pond (whether it would become a SWM pond or not) plus other factors contributed to a delay in starting such a study. The new SWM pond is scheduled for construction in mid- to late 2008.

Discussion: Mark Charles came prepared with many questions about the purposes of the study. There was a free-flowing discussion about possible study goals.

Main goals: To (1) compare actual pond performance versus predicted performance, (2) evaluate water quality in the pond before and after construction, (3) measure the ecological progression of the new flora and fauna after the SWM pond is built, (4) to assess community reaction to, and use of the pond and park as they change, (5) foster environmental awareness among students and to encourage some of them to take up environmental, scientific, and engineering studies, and (6) provide related project opportunities for students. While most discussion centered on scientific topics, there would also be opportunities for historic, community, political, and artistic projects.

Length of study: Before and after the construction of the new SWM pond for a period of up to 5 years. Study would start in 2007 in order to document the state of the pond before SWM construction begins.

When to make measurements: For water samples, seasonal and/or monthly measurements could be taken depending on the measurement, or measurements could be taken before-and-after significant rain events.

Where to study: Measurement points would have to be defined for water samples or a photo log. To measure water quality, it would be desirable to measure water quality at points: (1) where water comes into the forebay, (2) in the middle of the bigger pond, (3) in the bigger pond close to the exit pipe, and (4) where the water discharges into the stream.

Who studies: Depending on the kind of measurement or observation, it would be possible to involve elementary, middle school, high school, and college students, possibly using professionals for some measurements or analyses. There could be a role for community members. Some examples: some kinds of photo logs could be taken by elementary school students, sampling of water could be done by college garden residents, inventories and

other measurements could be taken by middle and high school students, and lab analyses could be done in college laboratories or by professional firms.

Interpretation of data and project reports: To obtain grant money, there would have to be interpretation of data, conclusions, and a report. Any kind of conclusion would be based on some kind of benchmark, for example actual pond performance versus predicted pond performance.

Possible granting organizations: Mark Charles was considering grant opportunities from the federal Environmental Protection Agency, the state Maryland Department of the Environment, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation partnering with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. This latter grant opportunity has a deadline of April 2. Mark will write up a grant proposal by that time based on the discussion at this meeting and other sources.