



ANACOSTIA WATERSHED CITIZENS

ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AWCAC)

Tuesday, January 09, 2018
Meeting: 7:30 P.M. – 9:30 P.M.
DC Dept. of Energy & Environment (DOEE)
1200 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20002

Meeting Attendance:

Members and Associates:

Dolly Davis (Washington DC, Pope Branch Park Restoration Alliance)
Marian Dombroski, Chair (Prince George's County; Friends of Quincy Run Watershed)
James Graham, Vice-Chair (Montgomery County; Neighbors of Northwest Branch)
Gabe Horchler (Prince George's County; Friends of Lower Beaverdam Creek)
Pat Jackman (Prince George's County; Washington Rowing School/Capital Trail Coalition/FQRW)
Bill Matuszeski (District of Columbia/National Arboretum)
Laura Cattell Noll (Alice Ferguson Foundation)
Trey Sherard, Vice-Chair (Washington, DC; Anacostia Riverkeeper)
Mike Smith (Montgomery County; Friends of Sligo Creek)
Ruby Stemmler (EcoLatinos, LLC)
Tom Taylor (Prince George's County; Beaverdam Creek Watershed Watch Group)
Fran Toler (Prince George's County; Friends of Dueling Creek)

Non-Members and COG Staff:

Maura Brophy (Federal City Council)
George Dill (Langston Golf 1st Tee)
John Garner II (Langston Golf 1st Tee)
Erin Holmes (Anacostia Waterfront Trust)
Aubin Maynard (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments)
Gretchen Mikeska (DC Dept. of Energy and Environment)
Steve Walz (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments)
Tommy Wells (DC Dept. of Energy and Environment)
Amanda Worsley (Washington DC; Friends of Kingman and Heritage Islands)

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Marian Dombroski, AWCAC Chair

2. APPROVAL OF THE 11/2017 MEETING SUMMARY

3. RIVER SURVEY

Gretchen Mikeska, DOEE

Ms. Mikeska explained that the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) released its Anacostia River Use Survey, which will be available online and by paper through the summer. The purpose of this survey is to learn how people currently use the Anacostia River for recreation and how they want to use it in the future. The survey is part of the Anacostia River Sediment Project (ARSP) that is being implemented by DOEE and the National Park Service. The project's overall goal is to protect public health and the environment and eliminate the need for existing and future use

restrictions on the Anacostia River. The survey can be accessed at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ANACOSTIA-RIVER-USE> .The survey will be open through the summer. Members discussed issues related to the survey, summarized below:

- More boating opportunities, including advertised sailing at Pump House.
- The CSX bridge limits river usage. Limits have both good and bad sides, boaters might not be able to reach the upper river, but it also means those areas are protected from problems that come with large speed boats.
- A DC council member has introduced a bill to create a river commissioner/Harbor Master to deal with expected increase in boating, although the bill will likely not move forward.
- Mr. Tommy Wells (Director of DOEE) joined the meeting and provided additional background information on the survey and DOEE priorities. He also announced an event to be held 1/12/18 at which Mayor Bowser will announce the establishment of a Critical Wildlife Protection Area on the south end of Kingman Island. This will preserve the Virginia Mallow, some of the oldest trees on the island.
- Ms. Mikeska stated that the next report from the Anacostia River Sediments Project has been delayed. More attention will be paid upstream (see members updates for details).
- Chair Dombroski inquired if a “topo map” of the riverbed indicating depths is available for public use. Ms. Mikeska explained she could provide the data, but all documents related to the sediment project are posted to the project website (<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/pr7t7wxadhgo658/AABJODiBaP8gtsxyyNuyEilWa>) .
- Of interest to members was the fact that it is estimated than sediment accumulates at a rate of 1” per year and that the existing Federal Channel is only required to be dredged for commerce.

4. ANACOSTIA WATERFRONT TRUST’S LANGSTON INITIATIVE

Maura Brophy, Federal City Council

Note: This report was requested by Ms. Dolly Davis, of Pope Branch Park Restoration Alliance.

Ms. Brophy gave a short PowerPoint presentation on the Langston Initiative. The Initiative is a community development effort that seeks to restore the District’s 3 public golf courses to their intended state as national recreational assets, while also fostering equitable economic, educational, and health outcomes in adjacent communities. It is expected that Langston will be the last of the 3 courses to be re-developed. The initiative is being spearheaded by the Federal City Council (FC2). To accomplish this, NPS will lease the property to FC2 in 2019. Ms. Brophy provided several examples of similar successful projects including East Lake Community in Atlanta and Gentilly and Bayou in New Orleans.

One key element for the project is community resiliency, so the following are key social impact outcome goals for the Langston Initiative:

1. Resident resiliency against market forces which threaten to cause gentrification & displacement in their neighborhood;

2. Improved quality-of-life of families of the Carver and Langston neighborhoods through benefits and amenities provided to them through the revitalized Langston Golf Course; and
3. Increased neighborhood-level organizational capacity to ensure residents equitably benefit from future revitalization efforts occurring in the neighborhood. Additional outcomes may be identified as a result of future community engagement and the community's role in shaping this effort.

Responding to questions, Ms Brophy explained that there is the idea to include a foot bridge over the river to Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. For the bridge to proceed, there would have to be a land swap between the Arboretum and NPS, which is under discussion. A brief discussion followed, summarized below:

- The clubhouse is considered historic, so planners are exploring the possibility of making it into a museum of African American golfing.
- The initiative will not include new housing. Planners are aware the community is very concerned about affordable housing.
- If the initiative moves forward, FC2 would receive a 60 year lease for the property.

5. YEAR OF THE ANACOSTIA

Erin Garnaas-Holmes, Anacostia Ambassador

Mr. Garnaas-Holmes explained 2018 is a big year for the Anacostia River corridor in Washington, DC and Maryland. The open space along river was preserved as park land in an act of Congress on August 31, 1918 – 100 years ago. At the same time that we celebrate the legislation that preserved Anacostia Park, we will also cheer the completion of DC Water's Anacostia River Tunnel, which will substantially improve water quality in the river. Meanwhile the DC Department of Energy and Environment and the National Park Service will make the final decision on the most effective way to clean up the riverbed, and the Major League Baseball's All-Star game will be hosted at Nationals Park on the waterfront in July. In response to these occasions a large group of stakeholders have joined forces to make this the Year-of-the-Anacostia. There is a website where anyone interested can post events (<https://www.yearoftheanacostia.com/>).

Action/Outcome: AWCAC members would like to identify and host an AWCAC sponsored event for Year of the Anacostia.

6. AWCAC MEMBERSHIP

Chair Dombroski requested that, at our March meeting, the membership vote on whether or not to change our name to Anacostia Watershed Community Advisory Committee. Also asked membership to consider revising the BYLAWS concerning membership.

7. PARTNERSHIP CHAIRS MEETING RECAP

Marian Dombroski, AWCAC Chair

Chair Dombroski explained that Vice Chair Sherard and herself met with the Steering Committee (SC)

Chair Adam Ortiz (Director of Prince George's County Department of Environment) for a wide-ranging discussion. Vice Chair Graham was unable to attend. Chair Ortiz mentioned that he and Vice Chair Graham had worked together in the past and regretted that he was unable to attend. Chair Dombroski set up the meeting to help align the overall Partnership goals and those of AWCAC. Mr. Ortiz suggested AWCAC members had useful institutional knowledge and encouraged members to bring up issues to the MC and SC. Mr. Ortiz also recommended that AWCAC consider eliminating the word "citizens" from their title. This suggestion will be considered by AWCAC membership. Other topics discussed included AWCAC goals, use of non-native species in park restoration, trail maintenance and the anacostia.net website. Meeting agenda attached. Of immediate concern to AWCAC members was the design of the proposed bridge over the Anacostia to the Arboretum, and its potential impact on the many boaters currently using the river north of Benning Road.

8. MEMBER UPDATES

Members

- Mr. Bill Matuszeski expressed a concern that results of the ARSP Remedial Investigation and Feasibility study (RI/FS) had been pushed back, and thus the Record of Decision (ROD) would be later than expected. Ms. Mikeska explained that data is still being collect and, per request, the comment period for the ROD would be added.
- Mr. Gabe Horchler explained there has been a groundswell of opposition to proposed an amendment to the Approved Greater Cheverly Sector Plan which would add to the TOD a part of the riparian area along Lower Beaverdam Creek. This area is the site of a nature trail built by volunteers from the community over the last 12 years. Cheverly Citizens recommended rejection of the proposed amendment in a public hearing of the Prince George's County Council. 59 speakers from the 200 Cheverly members in attendance presented oral testimony at the hearing. One representative of the developer who requested the proposed amendment to the already approved Sector Plan, spoke in favor of the amendment. During the comment period subsequent to the public hearing 214 letters, 347 postcards, and 561 exhibits were submitted. (AWCAC letter of opposition attached).
- Ms. Davis announced that PBRA will hold a "Day of Service" event in Pope Branch Park. Anacostia River Keeper partnered in this event.
- Ms. Fran Toler explained that she made a FOIA request to the Army Corps of Engineers to learn more about the Colmar Manor Community Park Dredge ponds over continued concerns over public health. These ponds store sediment from the annual dredging of the Bladensburg Marina.
- Ms. Laura Noll announced that April 14th AFF would host the 30th anniversary Potomac cleanup. They are currently providing site leader training across the region. They will also host events on April 22nd.
- Ms. Mandy Worsley of River Terrace announced the newly formed Friends of Kingman and Heritage Islands. They are now creating their first board and already have a list serve with over 100 people.
- Mr. Sherard announced this would be the Anacostia RiverKeeper's 10th anniversary as a standalone organization.

- Mr. Tom Taylor explained a coalition of groups in Greenbelt, MD, had finished a large Raingarden in Still Creek Watershed and would host a ribbon cutting April 22nd.

9. Meeting Adjourned