

# Interagency and Public Land Managers Green Infrastructure Focus Group Meeting

June 21, 2006 10:00 – 12:00 a.m.  
Auditorium, M-NCPPC, Montgomery Regional Office

## AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Presentation on Green Infrastructure (20 minutes)
3. Roundtable Discussion Questions (~ 40 minutes) Each person should take two minutes to highlight their thoughts on the following:
  - a) **Plans: What is being done that we should be aware of?**

What plans or programs are in place or under development to protect or connect forest or other environmentally sensitive areas adjacent to Montgomery County or within public land holdings?
  - b) **Opportunities: What should we be doing?**

Where are the opportunities for connectivity between jurisdictions or between public property and other lands?
4. Breakout Groups (30 minutes)
  - a) Additional Questions 1 – 3
    - i) Corridors, nodes, and gaps
    - ii) Implementation Tools and Incentives
5. Wrap-up (15 minutes)

### Desired Outcome of the Meeting:

- Agencies understand the plan goals, process, and general concepts.
- Park and Planning staff understand the linkages/relationships between this plan and other efforts underway or planned.
- A follow-up process that allows continuing input and coordination as needed/desired.

## ADDITIONAL FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Do you have any suggestions for what general principles should be considered in setting minimum green corridor widths and node sizes, and maximum gaps?
2. Do you have any suggestions for green infrastructure implementation tools?
3. Do you have any suggestions for incentives for preserving green infrastructure?
4. Do you have any suggestions for what types of areas should be included in the green infrastructure network?
5. Should any areas that cannot be connected to a larger network be included? If so, what kind?
6. Do you have any suggestions for ways to enhance the overall effectiveness of green infrastructure or natural area preservation plans?

Any feedback you can provide on the above issues would be appreciated. If you would like to take more time to consider these questions, please feel free to do so and send your responses to:

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## **Meeting Summary**

### **Attendees:**

Caren Madsen, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); David Plummer, Montgomery County Soil Conservation District (MCSCD), Sean McCabe, National Park Service (NPS); William Spinrad, (NPS); Tanya Washington, District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation (DCDPR); MonaCheri McCoy, District of Columbia Office of Planning (DCOP); Spencer Riddile, Casey Trees; David Meyers, University of Maryland (UMD); Rick Brush, Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (MCDPS); Susan Overstreet, Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning; Christine Conn, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR); Emily Clifton, Prince George's County M-NCPPC; Danae Fails, Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection; Richard Hall, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

### **General**

#### Needed Information

- GIS shapefiles from other jurisdictions

#### Map Additions

- Connections to the Potomac and Patuxent important
- Identify *Rural Legacy* properties
- Check update of State GI
- Prioritization of features and ecological importance
  - Ranking/prioritization of hubs (see State methodology)
  - Gage Importance of features
    - GIS tools
    - Risk assessment
    - Gap analysis
- Is the Green Infrastructure Plan separate from Environmental Objectives in the General Plan? (*No, it is the implementation of those objectives.*)
  - In the District of Columbia: Had to determine how to deal with the division in the DC Agency Master Plan

### **Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**

- Update of State Green Infrastructure assessment underway
- They will look at how county systems support
  - Prioritization is very useful
  - Use standard set of criteria
  - Highlight hubs of high ecological value
    - \*Will provide a map
  - Have a variety of other tools
  - Have risk assessment & gaps

- State Land Preservation, Park and Recreation (LPPR) Plan is being compiled from county LPPR Plans
  - Ready in 6 - 8 months
- Look at plans for adjacent jurisdictions

### **Howard County**

- New 2005 LPPR Plan has been completed – check Department of Recreation and Parks web site
- Howard County has designated Greenways that include State-wide regional Greenways along the Patuxent and Patapsco Rivers, as well as local County greenways (see the 2005 LPPR Plan).
- General Plan was updated in 2000
- GIS layers are available for forest cover and a variety of easements, including agricultural, environmental and forest conservation
  - Central GIS office has data
- WSSC through the consent decree has funds to acquire lands

### **Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)**

- *Janet Pawlukiewicz (EPA)* → Trust for Public Land (TPL) has an green space protection effort underway
- *MDP* – updating land-use projections
  - To 2030 (in ~ 6 months)
  - Use to look at threats
- Latest land use layer from 2002
  - Working on update (available 2007)
  - Might be good to look at Virginia links
- House bill 1141 deals with
  - Adding water quality chapters to local general plans
  - Requiring conformity of other plans (e.g. master plans) with local general plan
  - Sensitive areas protection
  - Water quality protection
  - Annexation issues

A task force w/ broad scope will consider implications of House Bill 1141 on local jurisdictions

### **National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**

- Considering land use impacts on oceans
- Looking nationally at Non-point source pollution
- Non-point Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO): service provides tools to manage growth / remote sensing / models to predict non-point pollution to the Bay
  - New Chesapeake Bay NEMO
- EPA and NASA connection through NOAA

### **Prince Georges County M-NCPPC**

- Will send digital GIS layers for Green Infrastructure
- Currently developing a functional master plan for Rural Tier
  - Maria Martin (project manager)

- Consider State TMDL guidance
  - Could pull some useful strategies
- Undertaking a new revision of land conservation plan

### National Park Service (NPS)

#### **Covers many jurisdictions**

- Don't yet have a general protection plan
- Trying to get a land protection plan (from Great Falls to Mt Vernon)
  - In very early stages of development
  - Working with NOAA and Nature Conservancy
- Nature conservancy purchases
  - Focus on the gorge of the Potomac
  - Monitoring with Friends of C&O Canal
- Should make connections to Sugarloaf Mountain
- NPS C&O Canal Park covers 20000 acres
- Monocacy River important
- Working with DNR to acquire more lands
- 2003 land protection plan
- 194 scenic easements in the park, many in Montgomery County
- Have GIS layers
- Have a lots of aerial photography
- Have various data bases including:
  - Potomac island data bases
- Opportunities exist with non-profits
  - Should inventory all types of protected lands including trust holdings and deeds with restrictions
  - Look at gaps of ownership
  - Inventory critical gaps

### Casey Trees

#### **Non-profit organization to protect and enhance tree canopy of DC**

#### **Mapping green infrastructure for DC**

- Have tree inventory data
  - Street trees (2002)
  - Tree planting that Casey Trees has done in last couple years
- Now looking at big trees and tree plantings
- Developing urban tree canopy goals
  - Getting help from Baltimore, University of New Hampshire

### University of Maryland (UMD)

#### *Teaches a Landscape Ecology course – Landscape Architecture course*

#### *Developing a unit on Green Infrastructure for Fall '06*

- Greenway studies – opportunity for student work
- Will undertake Green Infrastructure work in the spring semester
- Users of data, rather than providers of data

### **Soil Conservation District (SCD)**

Forest stewardship program – Tree farms are interested and can be supportive – should gather list of properties in the Ag Reserve – many are protecting their forests. The Forest stewardship program, Forest Management, and Agricultural Easements are factors in the Agricultural Reserve.

- Public lands
  - Need better control of invasives
  - Need better control of deer
  - Private lands are often managed better
- Improve management on the lands we already own
- See opportunities for partnership with private landowners
- Work with Isaak Walton League & other private conservation groups
- Connect with large land holders about forest management – inform them of this planning effort

### **DC Office of Planning**

- Review plans w/DC Office of Planning & Parks/Recreation property management
  - Capital Revitalization Plan (redevelopment will be vital)
- National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) – development of public lands
- Task force on green building & green space
- Infill Strategies
  - Incentives
  - Impervious surface issues
  - Green roofs, bioswales, etc.
  - Green buildings
  - Storm water management
- Education
- Comprehensive Plan – check plan (may contain GI-related information)
- NCPC should be in the mix
  - Contact them for their plan
- EPA, SCS, Forest Service
  - Green education efforts
- Need GIS database that is user-friendly for green projects

### **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)**

- Brought list of State and Montgomery County forest and tree conservation programs
- Hope to use LIDAR for urban canopy cover
  - Produced in ~1 year?
- Champion tree database (including private property)
- Stream restoration projects
- Risk of infill development
  - Different story in different parts of county

### **Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS)**

- Green Infrastructure is not just a County issue – good to include adjacent jurisdictions
- Need to review decisions with others regionally
- Agricultural Reserve uses are changing to smaller and more specialized operations – not always agriculture in the traditional sense
- Developed areas are a problem – especially how to handle redevelopment and infill situations
  - Need to look at urban guidelines
- Montgomery County has some challenging issues
  - Agriculture
  - Infill/redevelopment – Down County green space
  - Look at ways to make improvements – how do we work all the pieces into the big picture?
- Need to recognize not all land owners are focused on protection
  - Need incentives

### **District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)**

- Capital Open Space initiative
  - Involves DPR, the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), and NPS
  - State of the District Report:
    - Expected September 2006
    - Need to consider barriers to access & linkages (gaps)
    - Need to connect with other agencies and approach planning holistically
- District is working on an Agency Master (late fall 2006 - early 2007) to consider, among other issues, open space issues

*\* Get Ed McMahon as speaker*

- *Responsible development*
- *Maximized green space is good for development*
- *He has a Powerpoint presentation on the internet showing a more green configuration of site design*

*\*Meet again when alternative mapping scenarios have been developed*

### **Responses to Additional Focus Group Questions**

7. Do you have any suggestions for what general principles should be considered in setting minimum green corridor widths and node sizes, and maximum gaps?

#### **Prince George's County M-NCPPC:**

- a. In areas where development is desired – 50ft. minimum corridor width. In areas rural in nature – 200ft. minimum corridor width

**DNR:**

- b. Look at continuity, connectivity and unique/sensitive habitats & RTE's. Minimum criteria should be science-based.

8. Do you have any suggestions for green infrastructure implementation tools?

**Prince George's County M-NCPPC:**

- There are some strategies that weren't included in Prince George's County's Green Infrastructure plan that would be included if they were to do it over (they will send some suggestions)

**DNR:**

- Direct mitigation responses to restoration of Green Infrastructure gaps
- Consider requiring conservation as a mitigation response
- Review Conservation Act fees-in-lieu – Use funds to conserve and restore
- Require Green Infrastructure assessment for all development and highway planning

9. Do you have any suggestions for incentives for preserving green infrastructure?

**Prince George's County M-NCPPC:**

- Make it a requirement for increased density for developers

**DNR:**

- Develop tax incentives or payments to private landowners. These could be structured to pay for ecological services – such as water quality and supply, and carbon sequestration.

10. Do you have any suggestions for what types of areas should be included in the green infrastructure network?

**Prince George's County M-NCPPC:**

- Areas that protect/restore/enhance water quality
- Areas that protect/restore/enhance habitat
- Also consider water quantity/quality – stream corridor restoration

**DNR:**

- All state-identified Green Infrastructure elements and connections

11. Should any areas that cannot be connected to a larger network be included? If so, what kind?

**Prince George's County M-NCPPC:**

- It depends. If it's an important area that's surrounded by agriculture on all sides, and it's possible that the agricultural area could get developed and as part of that development, the developer could be required to restore the stream corridors...then consider including it.

**DNR:**



- Yes. First evaluate what the barriers/gaps are. Is it surrounded by 100% developed land? If not, potential to connect exists. Also, consider “SLOSS” (Single Large or Several Small) theory – depending on species, some isolated habitat patches should be included.

12. Do you have any suggestions for ways to enhance the overall effectiveness of green infrastructure or natural area preservation plans?

**Prince George’s County M-NCPPC:**

- We must begin to address water quantity/quality by restoring streams through geomorphologically-based (e.g. Rosgen-like) methods
- Improve stream coverage (GIS shapefile) for the County – Know where all the streams are.

**DNR:**

- Consider Baltimore County Forest Sustainability Strategy. This covers many implementable actions for targeting, prioritizing, protecting, enhancing, and connecting forest patches. It looks at economic sustainability issues also. Contact: Don Outen
- Make connections with water quality and water supply/Tributary Strategies.

**Montgomery County DEP:**

As far as rating hubs/areas for priority of protection or restoration, the Montgomery County Interagency Forest Conservation Team has some criteria that may be a useful starting point. Contact: Laura Miller