



## **Sumter Stormwater Solutions**

### **Meeting Agenda**

Wednesday, January 22, 2014  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
North Hope Center  
904 North Main St  
Sumter, SC 29150

*Purpose of Meeting:* Continuing Development of Stormwater Education Plan and Decision-Making for Sumter Stormwater Solutions

*Meeting Facilitators:* Mary Caflisch & Jolie Brown, Clemson Carolina Clear

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10:00 – 10:05	Welcome & Meeting Purpose	Mary Caflisch & Jolie Brown
10:05 – 10:20	Outreach Activity Updates	Mary Caflisch & Jolie Brown
10:20 – 10:40	Shorescaping Project Update	Mary Caflisch & Jolie Brown
10:40 – 11:00	Spring Cleanup	Jolie Brown
11:00 – 11:30	Dillon Park Rain Garden Project	All Present
11:30 – 11:55	Brainstorming: Student Stormwater Video Contest	All present
11:55 – 12:00	Wrap-up	Mary Caflisch & Jolie Brown

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## **Attendance:**

Mary Caflisch	Carolina Clear
Jolie Brown	Carolina Clear
Teige Elliot	City of Sumter
Alfred Conyers	Sumter County
John Merkel	Sumter County
Dan Geddings	Sumter County
Claudia Rainey	Sumter City-County Planning
Geoff Smith	URS
Josh Castleberry	Central Carolina Technical College

## **Minutes:**

The Meeting began with a review of recent and upcoming activities.

### ***Recent Activities***

- Rain Garden Workday and Shoreline Planting – December 4, Patriot Park
- Storm Drain Marking – Nov. 20, Stillwater Subdivision

### ***Upcoming Activities***

- Storm drain marking in Lakewood Links subdivision – Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>
- Sumter Backyard Landscaping Series
  - Tuesdays, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>- March 4<sup>th</sup>, Sumter County Public Library
  - Topics: Pest Management, Gardening for Wildlife, Rain Gardens, Native Plants
- Rain Barrel Art Contest for Schools – January-April, 2014
  - Three applications received, several more expected.
- Spring Cleanup – March, date and location TBD
- Shorescaping Workshop – March, date and location TBD
- Utility Credit Workshop – date and location TBD
- Sumter Earth Day Celebration – April 12, Swan Lake
- Cherryvale Elementary School Earth Day – April 15

### ***Additional Items of Note***

Claudia Rainey is working on an update to the Sumter Greenway Plan, due by mid-February. She will be marketing the Greenway Plan throughout the year. The Greenway Plan would establish walking trails along Shot Pouch Creek, promoting connectivity and appreciation of waterways. Claudia also brought up that at a previous meeting, we said we would plant monkey grass around the edge of the rain garden at Patriot Park. Mary Caflisch and Jolie Brown agreed that this should be done at a rain garden volunteer work day in the spring. Clumping monkey grass should be used so that it does not spread into the garden excessively. Sweet grass would be a native alternative, but can get very large. Claudia also shared that Danny Hill with Kalmia Gardens has been doing a lot of work lately with removal of invasive plants. Grants and volunteer teams are available for removal projects. This might be something to consider for the banks of Turkey Creek.

Josh Castleberry shared that Central Carolina Technical College is participating in a regional water conservation forum. Water, wastewater, groundwater, stormwater, and wetlands are all included. Josh Castleberry will update the group on how they can assist as details are announced.

Deputy Horton returned the IDDE brochures that he was given. He doesn't have an opportunity to distribute them, but Jolie gave them back to the county to distribute.

### ***Patriot Park Shorescaping Update***

At a volunteer workday in December, fifteen Virginia sweetspire shrubs and fifteen button bushes were planted at Patriot Park. Some were used in the rain garden, and the rest were planted around the pond, near two outfalls and where the ditch enters the pond. The group discussed possible dates for the shoreline planting, and concluded that April would be better than March. Dan Geddings recommended this because the seeds will establish more quickly if planted when it is warmer. We still intend to borrow equipment from the Conservation District. Tommy Laney will bring his disk, and Buddy Rivers will bring his tractor. Jolie Brown spoke to both of them, and learned that the date is not important to them. They only need a few days of notice. The seeds will be spread by hand. It may be necessary to add sand to the seeds as filler. Claudia recommended that we order the different types of seed separately so that we can arrange them in drifts, rather than as a mix. This will make the planting look more deliberate and aesthetically appealing. Claudia Rainey will be in charge of the design. All of the plant species chosen are perennials. Mary Caflisch will order the seeds and erosion control blankets shortly. Jolie will see if there are any student volunteer groups that will be interested in assisting.

Geoff Smith proposed that we use hydro-mulch rather than erosion control blankets. He pointed out that it will be a lot of work to trench in and stake the erosion control blankets over such a large area. Mary will check with Dr. Sawyer at Clemson about whether this would be a better option. We also need advice on the correct type of topsoil to use. It will be important not to get topsoil with weed seeds in it. We need to verify that six inches of topsoil is the appropriate depth. Mary will consult with Dr. Sawyer and the seed company on the most successful way to layer the topsoil, mulch and erosion control blanket. She also needs to get a price estimate on renting a hydro-seeder for the day.

The group would like to offer this as a workshop for landscape professionals, with a classroom portion followed by the field demonstration. Hopefully, attendees could also assist in the installation. To increase participation, Mary will find out about continuing education credits for architects and engineers. Credits are a big incentive for professionals to participate. Mary will research what is needed to offer continuing education credits. Information should be available from the LLR. Also, Katie Giacalone has offered similar credits at a previous workshop and should be able to assist.

### ***Spring Cleanup***

The date proposed for the spring cleanup is Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup>. No one present had a conflict with that date. In selecting a location, we need to choose a site that is not too far outside of town, visible to the public with plenty of litter, on public property or in the right of way. The site also needs to be safe and accessible with parking available. Lewis Road was proposed as a possible location but rejected because the parking was too far from the creek where the worst litter is.

Winston Road was the most popular location proposed. It is a dirt road located off of 15 south, outside city limits. There are a number of trailers nearby, and a lot of illegal dumping takes place along the road. Jolie will ask the Sheriff's office to help. They may want to go through bags of trash and look for names so that they can write citations. Parking is available on the sides of the road. A creek comes through close to there. Sumter County staff will verify that we can legally access this site. Dan said that the county cleans it up periodically. Jolie will visit the site and determine if it is appropriate.

The second option for a cleanup would be by the mall. This site is in the city limits. Teige Elliot said this area always needs cleaning. A third possible site would be Turkey Creek at the intersection of Liberty and Boulevard. Turkey Creek is always full of litter in this area. However, the bank may be too steep to access the stream. There is a Department of Transportation site near to there. It may be possible to access the stream from DOT property where it is not so steep.

For our summer time cleanup using kayaks, Cane Savannah Creek at McCray's Mill Road was suggested. Jolie likes the name "Kayak Cleanup" for marketing the summer event. Another option would be to use the kayaks in Turkey Creek, accessing it from Dinkins Mill Road off of 521 South. John Merkel and Dan Geddings remarked that they had seen a large alligator there.

To increase participation, it was suggested that we offer some type of incentive at the cleanups. Perhaps everyone picking up three bags of trash could receive a t-shirt or some other prize. Currently, Jolie gives away water bottles, but there is no quota of trash required. Amanda McNulty has received funding from Keep America Beautiful, and has offered to buy us new trash reachers. Claudia suggested an extendable pool net for really hard to reach litter (such as in the middle of weed beds in the stream channels).

### ***Dillon Park Rain Garden Project***

At the last meeting, we proposed installing a new rain garden in fall 2014. Alfred Conyers, Mary, Dan and John visited the proposed site at Dillon Park in December. While we also looked at two other sites at the park, we selected a space next to the walking track that is currently a grassed swale. The site collects water from a large grassy area including a few baseball fields. While it does hold water after a rain, stormwater staff confirmed that it typically dries up in a day or two. Jolie contacted Phil Parnell with Sumter County Parks, who approved of installing a rain garden at this location. He would like to hear more details as they are determined.

Carolina Clear will purchase the plants for the rain garden. Sumter County will do the excavation. Because the site already collects water naturally, an engineered design is not necessary. The next steps include doing a soil test to determine what amendments are needed and selecting plant species. It may be necessary to remove some soil to maintained the correct depth after soil amendments and mulch are added, and we will have to determine what to do with this soil. Claudia recommended using a much smaller plant pallet than was used at Patriot Park, including only species that we know will do well. This way we can expect better plant performance and a more unified visual appearance, and care will be simplified. It is also important that we create a maintenance plan, so that we do not have to completely rely on volunteers for care of the garden. Jolie will talk to Steve Hostetler about maintenance; she also needs to talk to him about maintenance of the Patriot Park shorescaping area.

Geoff pointed out the importance of sampling at rain garden installations in order to demonstrate pollutant removal efficiencies. Can we collect data at the Dillon Park site? The group did not feel that this would be worthwhile because there was not a lot of pollutants in the runoff draining towards the site. It mostly drains from unfertilized fields. There might be pet waste, but little else. We discussed whether this was a worthwhile site, and concluded that it is very visible for the public, and would showcase rain gardens for homeowners well. It would also be easy and inexpensive to install. The water already drains to the site naturally and seems to percolate well. The site does hold water after rain events, but that goes away in a day or two. We could consider installing a garden at Swan Lake in the future. Fire departments would also make good sites for future rain garden installations because they could be used to treat the runoff from truck washing.

### ***Brainstorming: Student Stormwater Video Contest***

In the Year 6 Education Plan, the group stated that we would create a stormwater video contest. The goal of the contest is to promote awareness of stormwater issues and to actively engage youth in stormwater outreach. We looked at a contest being held by the City of Raleigh in 2014 as a model. Raleigh's contest restricts participation to high school students and mandates a video length of exactly 30 seconds. We decided to open our contest to elementary, middle, and high school students. Josh pointed out that because our goal is awareness, there is no reason to limit participation. Winners can be chosen from different age categories. Students may enter as individuals or groups. In addition to advertising targeted to teachers, we will advertise the contest to students directly by putting up flyers at community centers. We discussed the timing of the video contest, and decided to start the contest in the Fall of 2015. Entries would be due by January 2016. We don't want to have the contest in spring because we already have the rain barrel art contest at that time. We don't want to start too early in the fall because teachers are too busy at the very beginning of the school year. We will release the contest entry forms in late September or October so that students and teachers can have the rest of the fall semester to work on the videos. Waiting until 2015 to start the contest will give us a year to develop the contest and begin promoting it with teachers in Spring 2015. Right now we need to focus on growing the rain barrel art contest.

If the length for the video was set at 30 seconds, this would give us the option to use it as a real TV commercial. Mary will check with the school media departments about what file formats to accept. The group agreed that the videos should have some kind of a theme. The first idea was to use the "We all live downstream" motto as a theme. Geoff suggested that in order to tie in to the new MS4 permit, we should identify a specific target pollutant and have the contest focus on that. This could be tied into other school programs we do, such as anti-littering. The 2015 contest could focus on litter, and each subsequent year we could choose a different pollutant.

### ***Landscaping Ordinance Update (Claudia Rainey)***

After several years of effort, the planning department's Landscaping Ordinance was passed in the final reading by Sumter City Council with a 6 to 1 vote. The ordinance has not been voted on by the County Council yet. An important purpose of this ordinance is to "Reduce storm water run-off, control soil erosion and reduce the hazard of flooding." The ordinance sets requirements for the minimum buffer width and number of trees and bushes to be used in street landscaping, parking lots and between parcels. The requirements provides for protection of existing trees, which are counted towards the required number if they are a minimum of two inches in caliper, in good health, in an appropriate area, and not invasive. To encourage Low Impact Development principles, in parking lots, the zoning administrator may consider reducing the width of landscape islands and the number of plants required if the site design also reduces the total pervious area. The ordinance encourages draining parking lot runoff into infiltration islands. Up to 30% of spaces in parking lots can be for compact cars. Permeable paving is required in critical root zone area of trees. The ordinance includes a list of recommended plants, as well as a longer list of invasive species, which are not allowed. No non-native species are allowed to be planted in stormwater retention areas.

With no further business, the meeting concluded at 12:05 pm.