



Sumter Stormwater Solutions

Meeting Agenda

Wednesday July 27, 2011
1:00 PM – 3:00 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 Facilitator: Mary Nevins, Clemson Carolina Clear

1:00-1:10	Welcome & Meeting Purpose Introductions	Mary Nevins, Carolina Clear
1:10-1:15	Outreach Activity Updates	All present
1:15-1:30	Carolina Clear Mass Media Updates	Mary Nevins
1:30-1:45	Patriot Park Rain Garden Project Update	Peter Wilson
1:45-2:15	River Sweep 2011 – Cleanup Event	Mary
2:15-2:45	Radio Advertising with Miller Communications	Peter Wilson
2:45 – 3:00	Wrap-up	Mary Nevins

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Notes from the Meeting

Attendance:

Peter Wilson	Sumter County
Teige Elliot	City of Sumter
Pearce Atkins	City of Sumter
Claudia Rainey	Sumter City-County Planning
Geoff Smith	BP Barber
Mary Nevins	Carolina Clear

Recent events

- Iris Festival – May 28, Swan Lake
- Santee Riverkeeper Waterbody Rally – May 28, Lake Marion
- Dan Geddings with the City of Sumter publishes a weekly naturalist article in the Manning Times, and a recent article was related to stormwater.

Upcoming events

- Rain Garden Planting - August 12, Patriot Park. Master Gardeners invited to participate.
- Presentation to Chamber of Commerce Environmental Committee - Sept. 15, Sumter Chamber building
- River Sweep Cleanup - Sept. 17, location TBD
- Rain Garden workshop - Patriot Park, date TBD

Mass Media Updates

- The new Carolina Clear billboards are on display now! Several Solutions members reported seeing one on 378. The billboard is on the east side of Sumter, heading back towards town, this side of Dabs crossroads. The billboard company will be providing Carolina Clear with estimated daily views shortly.
- TV Commercial (“Downstream” campaign) will begin running on Time Warner Cable soon. Rotations should begin August 1 and run through the fall.

Other Recent and Upcoming Items of Note

Pearce Atkins is no longer with the Soil & Water Conservation District and is instead working with the city to review stormwater plans. He is still interested in putting on a training class for professionals, focused on establishing grass and other erosion control BMPs on construction sites. Mary Nevins offered to support this program as far as finding a venue, handling advertising and registration, and other logistics task, as Pearce was concerned that his new responsibilities might not give him enough time to organize this workshop. He envisions it as more of a discussion panel with question & answer sessions.

Pearce & Teige recently visited the Cove subdivision. They commented that the vegetated swales and other BMPs were looking really good. We may want to do a news release of some sort. They said Shayne Gaymon would be the contact person for additional information and permissions.

Peter Wilson stated that the County had completed its inventory of all catch basins. Mary asked if restaurant grease was an issue they were seeing in their inspections, but Peter said no. The primary issues related to illicit discharge are washing machine discharges (on properties with septic tanks), litter,

and sewer line issues. Mary mentioned that she had prepared illicit discharge brochures but was waiting to distribute them until the hotline number could be included. Peter said that the county had a brochure it was distributing. Mary will contact Dan Geddings for a copy of the brochure.

Susannah Smith who was with the planning department has moved to Virginia. Michael Herr & Donna McCullom will be taking over floodplain management. Last year the planning department had been working on FEMA compliance issues related to modifications of Turkey Creek. The current status of that project is that surveying work is being done, and DOT is moving forward on bank stabilization and have put the job out for bid. NRCS is funding the project. There is no education needed related to this project at this point. However, Lakewood subdivision along Turkey Creek would be a good place for more storm drain markings or cleanups. Mary will contact churches and schools in that neighborhood for volunteer groups. To work more closely with homeowners associations, Mary should contact Barron Hight, who is the neighborhood coordinator for HOA's.

Rain Garden Project

Peter Wilson gave an update on the Patriot Park rain garden installation. The garden is completely installed, except for the plants. It uses a "text book design" making it a great example for others to learn from. The intention was for the site to be closer to a wetland garden, with constantly moist soil, but not standing water. The county wanted to avoid it becoming a "cat-tail hole" which is what is happening to the stormwater wetlands on the upper side of the parking lot. The underdrain is an important feature. It is composed of a 2ft x 2ft trench filled with 57 stone to act as retention, with a drain pipe wrapped in filter fabric on top of that leading to the catch basin next to the pond. Above that is 1½ ft of top soil then a layer of mulch.

The garden is currently operating as it should. After a recent storm, the county added rip-rap at entrance from swale. This was because the swale was not sloped quite steeply enough, resulting in a sharp drop off at where the swale meets the garden. This is causing a little erosion there, but the rip-rap should dissipate the force of the water and resolve that issue. When the plants are installed that will also help. Claudia suggested choir fabric (an erosion control product made from coconut husks) which degrades so that you can plant in it.

A volunteer planting day is scheduled for August 12. The Master Gardeners have been invited to participate. Mary will bring light refreshments for the volunteers (juice, muffins, etc.) When the plants are installed, we will also add compost and additional mulch. Claudia will double check the list of plants, to make sure they all like "wet feet" as the garden will stay fairly damp.

Mary will get an educational sign produced similar to the one at the public works rain garden. Peter suggested using the construction plan as a sign as well. This is a great idea because it will show details of the garden's design and increase its value as a model for homeowners and professionals. We would also like labels with plant names to stick in the ground. In the Fall, we can plan a full workshop on rain gardens for homeowners.

Education Opportunities for Professionals

Peter brought up that the county needs to implement a credit application on stormwater utility charges to commercial properties. Currently, commercial properties are being charged a flat fee, but in the next billing cycle, this will change to a charge based on pervious area. It does not take into account any BMPs. The credit system would allow properties employing BMPs for retaining stormwater runoff to receive a credit reducing their utility fee. The property owner will need to show that water is actually being retained and infiltrated. A technical analysis will be necessary to show this. The credit is for properties that go above and beyond the mandated BMP's, so more than just the required pond. Education is needed to make commercial property owners aware of the credit. Information on the requirements should be tied into the site planning process, to let engineers know about options and

benefits before the plans are completed. In addition, we need to let developers and property owners know how to apply. We need a forum to do this. The group discussed a workshop that would cover basic information about the utility fee credit application process, the requirements for the credit, and specific design information about one or two BMPs that could be used for credit, such as pervious pavement or bioretention. Pearce mentioned a conference for professional audiences held in Blythewood in 2009 that would be a good example of a forum to share this information. Mary attended this conference and will contact Michael Criss with Blythewood for information on speakers.

Mary asked whether the reduction in the fee would be enough to justify the required technical analysis. Geoff Smith said that in other communities a typical stormwater fee for a Big Box store might be \$400-\$500 per month, so having the technical analysis would be worthwhile to get the fee reduction for a large store/property. A good example of a commercial property implementing BMPs that would get credit is Sumter Pediatrics. They recently installed a new parking area that incorporates permeable concrete around the trees.

The group wondered what would happen if stormwater requirements become stricter in the future. If developers must go beyond county requirements, if those requirements changed, how would that affect what qualifies for a stormwater utility credit. It was asked if it was likely that the planning department would ever require pervious surface. Claudia Rainey stated that no, they would not, unless council requires it, and council will not require it unless the planning office tells them to.

Next we discussed possible opportunities for showcasing site designs and BMPs that could be used for stormwater utility credits (bioretention, pervious pavement, etc.). The recent redesign of Exhibition / Civic center was a missed opportunity. The new Judicial Center is an opportunity coming up. Claudia was included in their planning conversation, but felt that her suggestions were ignored. Pearce Atkins stated that the site does not require a retention pond, but needs water quality BMPs. The city is encouraging the developers to try some kind of bioretention, but they are not cooperative at the moment. The design firm has yet to submit plans to the city or contact Pearce about design options, but needs to before can get permit. Mary mentioned the possibility of getting engineering advice from Clemson, if the design firm would be willing to listen. She will talk to Claudia for additional information, then contact the developers as soon as possible to get the conversation going. Peter requested to hear what is said, as well.

River Sweep Annual Cleanup Event – September 17

We need to select a site for the River Sweep cleanup. Previous Cleanup sites have been Shot Pouch Creek (Broad St. @ Miller St.) in Fall 2010 and Hatchet Camp Branch (Cane Savannah Rd.) in Spring 2011. The site we choose for Fall 2011 needs to meet the following criteria:

- Located in either the City or County, but not too far out of town
- Visible to public, plenty of litter so that we can have a visible impact
- Safe & accessible – i.e. no steep banks or busy highways
- Public property or right of way
- Parking available

One possible venue suggested was the ditch behind Sumter Mall. Mary will investigate this site and see if it is appropriate. A tire dump site on Turkey Creek was mentioned, but it the group decided it would not be good for a volunteer project.

Advertising Possibilities with Miller Communications

Peter Wilson told the group about a recent conversation he had with Miller Communications about paid radio advertising. Miller owns several stations broadcasting throughout Sumter & Florence. Miller would handle the production. All they would need would be an outline of what we wanted them

to talk about. Miller has actors & personalities to do the commercials in a professional way. For \$3000, we would get 300 1-minute spots. These could be spread out over whatever period of time we chose. We could also choose what stations we played the spot on (although each separate station would count as a spot), and what times of day. We could even choose back to back slots for additional impact. If we get more organizations involved, we may be able to increase the impact of the commercials for the amount of money spent. For example, the City and County might split the cost, or, since the stations broadcasts in Florence too, so we could partner with Carolina Clear's Florence-Darlington Stormwater Consortium.

The focus of the radio spots will probably be illicit discharge messages. We can also do event announcements. The 300 spots can be divided among multiple messages, if we choose. The City of Sumter has a communication department that may need to approve any message we send. Sumter County does not. We need to think about how many times per day, week, etc. the spots should run for good impact. Karen Hyatt with Sumter County Solid Waste uses radio spots with Miller to advertise her recycling program. Mary will see how she usually sets up her adds (how often, etc.) and what kind of feedback she has received. The group would like for Miller to do presentation on our options in the next few weeks. Mary will set this up. We need to design soon so that we can use the advertising for the River Sweep cleanup event. Attendance at cleanup events has been low in the past, so this would be a perfect test of the radio advertising for recruiting participants.

This concluded the meeting. The next meeting will be in September. Thanks, everyone, for your participation!