

January 6, 2011 STF WATER Work Group Summary

The Water Recommendation Work Group met a third time on Jan 6, 2011. Sustainability task force members were asked to volunteer for the water management recommendations workgroup.

Attendees

Task Force members:

Kevin Cochran
Wynne Coleman
Robin Hammond
Sherry Johnson
Karen Ringe
Sara Robertson
Michael Sanera
Suzanne Harris

Guests:

Mary Brice - Dewberry
Ed Buchan - City of Raleigh

Staff:

WECO:
Patrick Beggs
Christy Perrin

Wake County:
Bryan Coates
Tommy Esqueda
Britt Stoddard

Meeting Objective: Provide feedback on each of the draft strategies to guide revisions that will go to full Sustainability Task Force

Please see previous meeting summaries on the website: www.ncsu.edu/weco/wake

The group started with D,E, F as lettered in the October version of the water recommendations

- D. Evaluate existing building codes and design standards to identify limitations and opportunities for implementing water reclamation, rainwater harvesting, and grey water use
- E. Evaluate existing public health laws and identify limitations and opportunities for implementing water reclamation, rainwater harvesting, and grey water use
- F. Evaluate existing building codes and design standards to identify limitations and opportunities for implementing conservation development design and Low Impact Development to protect watersheds and groundwater recharge

Comments:

Underlined language was specifically suggested by a task force member

- Building code changes: Start w/ International Code every 3 yrs. This is passed to states to adopt or alter, becoming the NC Building Code. This gets passed to local governments who do permitting. They adopt and implement it. International Building Code just addressed issues with “green building codes” and provided guidance for states. NC Building Code is due to revise in 2012 - it is an opportunity to adopt changes. I foresee NC may adopt green changes. Building Code Council looks

January 6, 2011 STF WATER Work Group Summary

at them. NC HBA is not involved but does influence and lobby. There are issues about the energy code proposals, negotiations are occurring.

- Have to work with Department of Insurance (DOI) about building code. The portal for involvement is the DOI and their commission.
- Raleigh Committee recommended high efficiency toilets, but attorney said state must make that policy, not local governments. We may not be able to change these things.
- We can remove barriers, and lobby state
- Someone at NCSU did a thesis on the impediments to conservation design
- Yes, we should eliminate restrictions, but cross off “opportunities”. I don’t want to make codes more restrictive.
- Identify impediments that need to be removed, but don’t identify things to improve.
- Identify what needs to be eliminated, especially for conservation design developments
- Does the recommendation mean just identify, not change?
- Statements need to identify opportunities for incentivizing things. Does this mean removing things that limit?
- I feel strongly that “opportunities” need to remain. We create an opportunity by removing barriers. I agree we don’t need it to be heavy handed.
- Statement is too all-encompassing for me - too big - it needs to be broken into palatable pieces. Agree with remove impediments, but not additional regulations. Also it should address existing development not just new development.
- Low hanging fruit may be easy regulatorily, but it may not really be the biggest bang for your buck.
- Focus on how maybe E could be made to address existing development. The term “opportunities” is important because new standards (International Code) present new opportunities.
- Edit it to direct the county to look for opportunities to communicate to state DOI about building codes.
- A reference tool – Randall Arendt’s book studies ordinances and suggests changes (Sara R. has a copy).
- Concerning conservation development, does Arendt say to allow it or require it? Answer: Both allow and require, depending on the situation, for example, he thinks it should be required in rural area, and I don’t agree with him
- Suggestion: “Impediments to opportunities for ...”
- What if we said “to identify the best or most reasonable methods” rather than “limitations and opportunities” which is restrictive
- I agree. “Impediment” means in the way, for example a cross-connection is a concern that needs to be addressed, not necessarily an impediment.
- To clarify the big picture, if you get the pricing right, most of this goes away. Ex – older home with high flow toilet, I can save money with new toilet. I’m interested in getting the price right. Even if price is right, things in codes can prevent you from saving money.
- How many people have looked at their personal budget and water use?

January 6, 2011 STF WATER Work Group Summary

- Agree with pricing as a tool, but concern that it only affects those on municipal water.
- Well users have no incentive.
- A well owner doesn't want it to run dry. If well is not going dry, need a broader approach, could be voluntary.
- Task Force is for long-term sustainability. Need to find ways to move bar along for decades from now when water is limited. It is a problem today – codes are outdated. Pricing is not the only way.
- Need to look for improvement
- Identify opportunities to incentivize
- I would prefer not to combine D and E, but keep it separate under D, about identifying. It is important that “limit opportunities to allow” leaves options open without the language that forces it or requires it.
- Yes that works better.
- Can remove “building codes” from recommendation that covers construction design and LID.
- PB suggested using “building codes and local ordinances” as an example of what should be reviewed and leaving them in the language.
- Raleigh is re-doing their development ordinance. This is a time to look at these, maybe we could be involved. Use it as an example, see what they're doing.

j. Develop year round water conservation practices
--

Patrick suggested setting aside J as it is similar to conversations we have already had in previous meetings concerning earlier recommendations.

K. Reduce the volume of stormwater runoff

- It sounds like a goal.
- It's vague.
- How much are going to reduce and at what cost?
- It's too open-ended - could be better to just strike it .
- Can the strategy be to implement Falls Lake and Jordan Lake Rules?
- Yes use Jordan and Falls Rules, but we have to allow local government autonomy.
- Rules require local governments to devise plans.
- But not everywhere.
- Need to reduce stormwater runoff volume and velocity. Not doing it causes downstream flooding. Reducing only the volume is not adequate.
- How much stormwater do we need to reduce and at what cost? This is too open-ended unless you can point to specific direction. The prevailing BMP 50 yrs. ago was to put water in creek so we did what the BMP said to do.

January 6, 2011 STF WATER Work Group Summary

- Yes, that was to get it off the roads, but now we're finding downstream problems with flooding and pollution.
- Is it correct that Wake County's stormwater requirements for volume are stronger than municipalities? How was it determined?
- Wake County stormwater committee: problem was framed as "Governments can use different methods to manage stormwater volume, or rate of runoff, or nothing. There was agreement that something needed to happen. The science they looked at showed managing volume is more effective.
- The County Stormwater committee what happens without stormwater regulations.
- Wake, Zebulon, Rolesville (and another town) have a volume performance standard. The Wake Stormwater Committee was about development and redevelopment.
- Conversation about how to identify problem areas:
 - Has anything been done by the county to see where there are hotspots of concern? For example runoff or flooding. To fix existing problems need to address existing development. We need to identify hotspots with biggest problems.
 - This often a part of local watershed planning.
 - Municipalities own the stormwater systems and some have ways of addressing these hotspots
 - There are broad - based maps, such as floodplain maps. These are not to identify specific hotspots though. The County is more rural, and doesn't own a stormwater system.
 - Use a build-out analysis to find potential difficulties (Flood Justification Maps based on future condition)
 - There are ways to look at hot spots, just not standardized ways to do it every where.
 - Is there are grant money or revenue source to do projects to mitigate problem areas (flooding issues)
 - In past, we've depended on outdated documents. Need money to do evaluation for hot spots every 3 yrs. Can't keep working with old data that is invalid.
 - You can geo-code complaints
 - That would provide complaint driven

Can we add subcategories under K

1. Implement the lake rules
2. Update municipality stormwater ordinance
3. Retrofit existing development (id. Potential)
 - How to selectively retrofit? Hotspots?
 - We're already undergoing a process to retrofit.
 - Implement rules? Why put it there?
 - It affects some of Wake County

January 6, 2011 STF WATER Work Group Summary

- Were they based on cost analysis?
 - A fiscal note is done without idea that these are best way to solve problem on pollution end, might be other ways to solve pollution problem.
-
- Reducing without parameters of cost and need concerns me
 - Evaluate new methods and approaches to reduce stormwater volume and rate.
 - We need to say reduce Volume AND velocity, not just velocity.
 - To reduce it without more parameters is dangerous. There are a lot of restrictions/ required for s.w. Evaluate before proposing strategies. Yes, Wake has s.w. requirement. MBA has not supported all of Jordan and Falls Lake. Not comfortable with it.
 - Agree with volume and velocity. When we worked on curve numbers for stormwater, it was a given that if you reduce volume, you reduce rate. It's good to have it in there.
 - You could add "volume and velocity of runoff for protection of property." Property issue is missing from goals.
 - This is too non-specific. How about "evaluate new approaches and methods requires reducing volume and rate of stormwater runoff that factors in cost/benefits analysis for existing and new development". I disagree with that, but do agree it is too vague. Cost/benefit analysis is too restrictive. Can you offer us a goal?
 - Instead of "reduce stormwater, what about "handle the current problem associated with stormwater runoff."
 - The state sets minimum use standards that all waters have to meet. Local governments hav to deal with waters that fail to meet state standards, set by Division of Water Quality. This could be good language to use in the rewrites. For example - manage runoff from new or existing development so as to meet existing uses. This could also be a measure of stream restoration, since we would need to manage a degraded stream in a manner to get it back to its designated use.
 - But designated Use doesn't protect property.
 - If cost/benefit analysis includes non-market valuations (water quality impacts, etc.) does it change opposition to cost/benefit?
 - To me cost/benefit analysis means if it's too expensive it doesn't get done.
 - Cost has to be in there.
 - K is about the strategy of reducing stormwater runoff.
 - It needs to consider cost/benefits as part of the evaluation.
 - To keep from degrading streams, runoff must be kept on-site. A stormwater utility or some other resource can hit all other areas (existing development and hotspots).
 - Reduce "impacts" of volume and velocity runoff.

Michael Sanera provided a re-write of strategy A that was handed out to members before the meeting ended. There was no time to discuss it. The rewrite is: A. Conduct a comparative cost analysis that

January 6, 2011 STF WATER Work Group Summary

includes all aspects of the potable water supply and delivery system in order to develop pricing models, including estimates of demand, that will facilitate the efficient allocation of potable water.

We need to address L, M, N, O. Should we meet again? Answer: YES