

NORTHERN VIRGINIA URBAN FORESTRY

QUARTERLY ROUNDTABLE

Friday, September 29, 2006
Ida Lee Recreation Center

DRAFT Minutes

Attendees:

See attached sign in sheet

Welcome

September Roundtable Host Jay Banks, Town of Leesburg's Urban Forester, welcomed the attendees at 10 a.m. He introduced Leesburg Councilmember Fernando "Marty" Martinez, (Councilmember Reid attend), who added to Mr. Banks' welcome.

Adam Downing, the current President of Trees Virginia (an organization that is the key sponsor of the Roundtable – also known as the Virginia Urban Forestry Council) updated the attendees on the accomplishments made to date.

- Reviewed how these quarterly meetings came about as outgrowth of the "Clearing the Air with Virginia's Trees" conference held Nov. 2005 at the Algonkian Regional Park.
- Reviewed the Roundtable's goals and objectives (below)

Big Picture Objective:

As a result of regular Urban Forestry Roundtable gatherings in the Northern Virginia area, a network of Urban Forestry partnerships will be broadened and enhance to effect change through collaboration by serving as a more coordinated and powerful voice on Urban Forestry Issues.

Specifically, this partnership will result:

- *in continuing education on urban forestry technology for tree commissioners, volunteers, elected officials, citizens and other stakeholders,*
- *in identification, prioritization and integration of urban forestry issues in the NoVa region,*
- *in a mechanism to initiate needed legislative changes for urban forest management, and*
- *in, at the one year mark, a packaged message to act on in coordination with all NoVA communities with one to three specific urban forestry 'things' that would allow Urban Forestry to move forward in Virginia.*

Quarterly Roundtable Meeting Format and Objectives

- *articulate local legislative issues for consideration regionally*
- *highlight local urban forestry successes and failures*

- *action items and take-home message*

Presentations

The morning session continued with two presentations, focusing on Urban Tree Canopy Goals by Gary Allen (The Center for Chesapeake Communities) and Legislative Strategies by Mike Knapp (Fairfax County Urban Forest Management Division).

Mr. Allen reviewed current strategies available to Virginia jurisdictions out of compliance with EPA designated ozone standards. One of the strategies includes making use of trees and tree cover as a voluntary component of the State Implementation Plans (SIPS). He also addressed the Chesapeake Bay Directive #03-01, which focuses on the preservation and expansion of riparian buffers.

Mr. Knapp reviewed tree conservation and preservation tools available to jurisdictions. He also presented possible legislation to expand that suite of tools, reviewing SB 236 that was introduced last year by Senator Ticer in the 2006 session. His presentation sparked a discussion on the role of jurisdictions and citizens working together on behalf of expanding urban forestry tools and ‘enabled’ actions in Northern Virginia. A summary of the discussion is included in the Action Items text.

After lunch, sponsored by Trees Virginia, Jay Banks introduced the attendees to the efforts ongoing in the Town of Leesburg. Mr. Banks gave a very informative presentation on the Town’s newly adopted Management Plan. He noted the rapid population growth in the Town, and the subsequent significant loss of forest cover as particular impetuses to gaining the political support for developing the Plan. Leesburg’s goal of achieving 40% forest cover is aggressive and will be a challenge to achieve. Many attendees asked for a copy of his work, which will be linked to the Trees Virginia web page for attendees use.

Action Items Discussion Summary

The last session focused on Action Items. The transcript below is compiled by Elisabeth Lardner (by flip chart) and Adam Downing (by laptop), more-or-less chronologically as presented. These actions item will be distilled into groups for lunch discussions at the next Roundtable meeting in Prince William County on February 9, 2007. Please remember to complete the homework assignment for the February meeting.

Roundtable Homework

Take home challenge: ACTION ITEMS

1. Each person present was encouraged to identify: missing partners, potential allies, etc. to bring with them in person or as contact information to the next Roundtable

2. Everyone should identify at least one reason why the Forest Industry actually has a vested interest in a viable urban forest and bring that for discussion at the next meeting.

Transcription of Notes from Flip Chart Sheets and Adam's computer for Sept. 29 Roundtable Action Item Brainstorming Session

Ken Reid, elected official for Town of Leesburg

- Benefit of working with direct authority
- Narrow focus of bill may be more likely to succeed
- Definition of street tree – what is it? (interplay with VDOT/Leesburg experience)
- Look at ‘public domain’ projects administratively as means for tree preservation
- Develop incentives w/Virginia Homebuilders group (contact is Mike T.) determine what appeals to Building community?
- Tie to activities in leaders’ community (Chichester, Howell) and have residents within those communities write them and put letters in the local paper (work with constituency of leaders within their districts)
- Work through administration to put legislation through
- Find Republican patrons
- Tweak definition of existing language in a bill that would expand and account for “tree definition”
- Go directly to Speaker of House and other top leaders
- Look at public domain projects/rules, such as utility, to promote tree preservation

Chris Gensic (C’ville)

- Virginia Association of Counties
- Virginia Association of PDC’s (Planning District Commission)
- Municipal League

all are potential partners/contacts

- Geographic limitations as tool - example of streambeds
- Limit bills to towns

Chair of Planning Commission from Charlottesville – Karen Firehock

- Virginia Sustainable Building Network – LEED Certification push (back door push)
- In place tools already to look at – use existing ordinances – beef up what you have in place
- C’ville looking at Special Use Permit – C’ville has a new ordinance - under 2 acre – will send copy to Barbara
- PUD – beef up tree protection language in existing PUD (*Planned Unit Development - - term used in land development that breaks from rigid zoning classifications. Instead of presenting single use zoned site plan, plan can include a variety of commercial and residential uses that could be clustered instead of adhering to traditional single lot setback requirements. Can also lead to increase in community features such as tot lots or centers, preserved vegetation, etc.*) ordinance
- Proffers – tree replacement related to grading

- Ensure tree issues within Comprehensive Plan (back-up for rezoning issues)
- Local tools: special use permits (has ordinance can share), planned new developments by strengthening building goals, but canopy goals in comprehensive plan

Paul Revell

- Wood Product Industry outreach – get Mike Knapp’s presentation on the agenda of the upcoming VA Department of Forestry, Board of Forestry and their Annual Meeting.

Judy Okay

- Suggestion to distill Dave Nowak’s presentation on Air Quality/Trees to layperson terms for distribution to legislators – focus on the economic impact, etc. (specifically eco-system analysis reports)
- Don’t overlook media
- Distill Nowak stuff so it can be handed to legislators and be understood (key = \$)
- Don’t overlook the power of the Media
- Target three key subcommittee members (prior No Voters on Senator Ticer’s bill in last session) to educate (8 to 6 negative vote on Senator Ticer’s bill so didn’t move out of committee)
- Line up citizens groups before THEIR legislators

Myron Carlson

- Lesson learned = neighborhood citizen action group

Gary Allen

- Lead by example at local level – share those examples with each other
- Develop list of local champions who in some forum have identified with this issue
- Recognize these (builders) who are doing good sustainable work – get them into the media in positive way
- Work with kids
- Participate in environmental lobbying day at General Assembly – day in January or February
- Lead by example at the local level
- Develop a list of

Adam Downing

- Match semantics – ‘clear-cutting’ example – better term ‘land clearing’ so not to inadvertently alienate folks
- match semantics/definitions so we don’t needlessly alienate

Environmental Lobbying day in Jan/Feb

Brent Reynolds, Civic Association President

- Building industry compensation
- Ken Reed as contact
- Roundtable needs advocate/ally in industry to speak on behalf (Hazel) appeal to their kids and grandkids
- Tie to value of woodlands for specific uses such as hunting (model of Ducks Unlimited and Wetlands)
- ‘Template’ all and put on web site so not having to reinvent/redo – lead to cooperation
- Media link
- Who/why donates (wood industry, etc.)
- Look at Fairfax Federation and how they track legislation
- Educate Circuit Court Judges (example – they hear cases related to stormwater overflow litigation)
- Compensate, plan for that, wood industry
- Find an ally in competing industries
- Educate Judges
- Education grade schooling
- e-mail to everyone meeting summary

Fairfax Releaf Vice President – Rose Purple

- Science Teachers involvement
- Tap into elementary science teachers to plant trees, get active (education system may lead to influence in Richmond – [various teacher lobbying groups, etc.]

Nancy Streuple

- PTA’s – active play, unstructured play movement
- Back to School nights for information distribution
- Last Child in the Woods (book) ‘nature deficit disorder’
- Trees Clean Air.org good web site resource for technical, public policy, general public, research studies
- PTA groups
- Active play, unstructured play.. “Last Child in the Woods”

Purcellville Commissioner/Trees are Good

- Proposal for 3000 Trees by 3000
- Citizen value as individual advocate – great value – sometimes if come in under known advocate name (organization such as PEC – opinion is discounted)
- Government prohibition on employees lobbying
- Challenge to citizen group is to carefully craft message – avoid being pigeonholed
- Virginia conservation Land Need Assessment DCLNA – good resource, produced by DCR (Laura Grope – NVRG Commission)
- private property rights

- think of it (land development) as raw product – that is regulated; what is safety/look of final product?

Laura Grape, NOVA Reg. Commission

- Virginia Conservation Lands Needs Assessment, DCNR div. on natural heritage

Julie Flanagan

- Be mindful of private property rights in Virginia, consider how that can interact with tree conservation
- Consider land in terms of working with or being a raw material may need some regulation –if it is regulated; what are safety issues related to final product? (traditional areas of regulation rational)

Attendance List

Gary Allen	Chesapeake Commission
Myron Carlson	City of Manassas
Diane Davidson	Lake Barcroft Association
Bonnie Deahl	Town of Purcellville
Bruce Dewar	Leesburg Tree Commission
Adam Downing	Virginia Cooperative Extension
John Dudzinsky	Town of Herndon
Larry Finch	Arlington Urban Forest Commission
Karen Firehock	UVA
Julie Flanagan	Prince William Co.
Chris Gensic	City of Charlottesville
Laura Giese	Wetland Studies and Solutions Inc.
Laura Grape	NOVA Regional Commission
Craig Greco	Town of Purcellville Tree Beautification Commission
John Groothuis	Town of Leesburg Tree Commission
Kim Hosen	PW Conservation Alliance
Earl Hower	Town of Leesburg Tree Commission
Buck Kline	VDOF
Mike Knapp	Fairfax County Urban Forestry Management
Jeff Lange	Dewberry
Elisabeth Lardner	L/KLA, Trees Virginia Board Member
Philip Lelle	WCFR-TS
Bruce McGranahan	Loudoun County
Judy Okay	Chesapeake Bay Program
Lee Phillips	Town of Leesburg
Kathleen Prichard	Town of Leesburg Tree Commission
Rose Purple	Fairfax Releaf
Ken Reid	Leesburg Town Council
Paul Revell	VDOF
Brent Reynolds	RFCA
Marilyn Rogerr-Renner	Pres. Soc. of Loud. Co.
Sue Russell	Purcellville
Tim Stern	City of Wnchester
Nancy Streuple	USDA FS Urban Forestry
Kelley Wagner	was with VDOF, LUD CO
Kristen Westfall	Town of Purcellville Tree Beautification Commission
Ben Wharton	FCPA
Barbra White	VDOF