



Clark County Environmental Services

2013-2018 NPDES Stormwater Permit STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

August 28, 2013
4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Public Service Center - 1300 Franklin St., 6th Floor, Hearings Room

V. 9.18.13

Attendees:	Don Benton, Ron Wierenga, Rod Swanson, Jane Tesner Kleiner, Chris Clifford	Clark County - DES
	Heath Henderson, Greg Shafer, Sue Stepan	Clark County – Public Works
	Holly Gaya	Clark County - PIO
	Jon Dunaway	Clark County – Fire Marshal
	Doug Ballou	NACCC
	Jeff Breckel, Pat Frazier	Lower Columbia Fish Recovery
	Barry Cain	Gramor Development
	Jim Carlson	Clean Water Commission
	Maury Harris	Salmon Creek Watershed Council
	Michele Holen	Clark County Association of Realtors
	Lehman Holder	Sierra Club
	Todd Horenstein	Vancouver Public Schools
	Jamie Howsley	BIA of Clark County
	Ryan Jeynes	City of Battle Ground, ASCE SW Branch
	Lance Killian	Killian Pacific
	James Martin II	Washington State University
	Bonnie Moore, Elizabeth Scott	Columbia River Economic Devel. Council
	Jeff Deringer	Nutter Corporation
	Kenneth Opp	Real Property Management Services
	Sydney Reisbick	Friends of Clark County
	Kali Robson	Nothing But NW Natives
	Ginger Schmidt	Hazel Dell/Salmon Creek Business Assoc.
	Gretchen Starke	Vancouver Audubon Society
Dave Cone	Evergreen School District	
Kevin Tapani	Tapani Underground	
Ryan Styger	Pacific Lifestyle Homes	
Terry Wollam	Re/Max Equity Group	

- Citizens:** Lisa Cox (Dept. of Ecology)
- Art Stubbs (Clean Water Commission)
- Earl Rowell (DES)
- Vanessa Nagel (Season's Garden Design)
- Thom McConathy

MEETING SUMMARY: [*Post meeting comments are in brackets*]

- **Welcome – Don Benton**
- **Stakeholder and outreach overview – Ron Wierenga**
 - **Outreach overview** - There are several outreach efforts including TAC, SAC, email updates, web pages, etc. We strive to have open communications with the public to hear any and all ideas about the update process.
 - **Goals for this meeting** – overview of presentation – educate members about stormwater management in our community and how the new permit will affect our development projects.
- **Stormwater [NPDES permit](#) and management presentation – Ron Wierenga (separate .pdf)**
- **Discussion with group –**
 - **Road widths in code, International Fire Code – are these changing?** [IFC](#) reviews road widths. The county recently updated our road standards in 2011. We don't anticipate significant changes in this process at this point, unless there are LID Barriers to implementation or opportunities to expand LID use.
 - **Rain harvesting – how does the “waters of the state” affect collection of rain?** A couple of years ago, a Department of Ecology (DOE) policy was issued that states collected roof runoff is NOT considered waters of the state. We don't anticipate changes with this update.
 - **How will these updates affect homeowners with creeks on their properties?** The county has several existing codes for wetlands, habitat and critical areas that already protect these features. There shouldn't be significant changes from this project.
 - **Who will be allowed to design rain gardens; will it be restricted to registered landscape architects?** By DOE definition, rain gardens are non-engineered facilities to allow for filtration and infiltration in a more garden-like setting on small-scale projects. Currently, there is not language in the DOE permit that requires a registered professional for these features, unlike bioretention facilities that require a registered engineer.
 - **Are there incentive programs to assist citizens in understanding and implementing changes (e.g. Portland's downspout disconnect program)?** At this time there are not any hands-on programs for these types of programs as they are staff / resource intensive. It could be something to be considered in the future. [*Clark County does use the [Green Business](#) program to provide assistance to businesses on sustainable practices as well as the [Green Neighbor](#) program to provide web based information for homeowners. DES partners with [WSU Extension](#) to provide training in rain barrels and rain gardens.*]
 - **How specific will our regulations get on native plants?** (Percent of one species vs. another as well as what is the true definition of native plants). There are currently no required plant lists but there will be general guidance information on plants to ensure viability.
 - **Is there guidance on the required soil amendments vs. the use of native soils?** There are requirements for protecting native soils as well as soil amendments depending on the infiltration capacity of the native soils. There are specific parameters in the permit.
 - **Do the updates affect single family residential developments?** – Yes, if they meet certain thresholds for new impervious surfaces or amount of land disturbed, as defined by the DOE permit.
 - **Road classifications** – The new regulations will require looking at the use of pervious surfacing, where feasible. The criteria in the permit may limit certain classifications from use, etc. There is a new performance standard from the state in a modeling format that will guide when and how to use the various practices. These are in a hierarchy of features and practices.
 - **Is the SAC going to interpret the permit so that it can be applied across the county?** The county is required to comply with the permit. This group will not look at changes that may affect our compliance. The SAC (and TAC) will review the permit and proposed updates to ensure that we have considered the various scenarios that will be affected by the changes and create cohesive language that allows for flexibility where possible, while complying with the permit.
 - **Why are some of the existing Low Impact Development (LID) features failing?** Generally, there are installations that have various levels of success. We do have a history in our community of failed SW facilities, such as dry wells, infiltration trenches, etc. Understanding the cause is the challenge: is the design appropriate, was it installed correctly, is it maintained, etc.? Failure of the sites is a big concern

amongst the group. Sites can be successful in design and installation, but maintenance and operations will be a key component of this puzzle. There is a high risk for failure when something is new, but we are using feedback from stakeholders to verify how to minimize risk.

- ***The various pollutants to be removed require various treatment techniques to be successful.*** Traditionally, construction sites strip the “native” soils and store offsite. This practice will need to change to protect native soils. When you alter the native soils it changes the watershed.
- ***When will Clark County look into limiting the use of certain fertilizers, pesticides, etc.?*** Not as part of this process, but our [Green Neighbors](#) and [Green Business](#) programs are striving to educate the public on reduction of chemicals and use of more natural practices. The new permit has specific requirements to “build awareness” and “effect behavior” to specific audiences, such as landscapers, property managers, etc. Typical meetings for public outreach bring the citizens who are already willing to make a change, therefore future education efforts should try to reach a broader audience with specific examples.
- ***What are the opportunities to educate about limiting lawn and using plantings and landscaping?*** Could Clark County consider balancing incentives to protection (such as implementing a tree ordinance similar to City of Vancouver)? In minimum requirement #1 of the permit, there are requirements to “maintain native vegetation” as well existing municipal code such as critical areas, habitat, etc.
- ***Incentives - how do we get people to do what we need them to do?*** We don’t have enough money in our existing fee program (\$19-\$33/year) to provide discounts. If we raise the rate, we could look into incorporating a discount program, as some other communities have done. An educational outreach program is successful but reaches a limited audience.
- ***Maintenance and Inspections - The Homeowners Associations and property managers maintain their own stormwater facilities.*** When inspections note there is a problem, there needs to be better support in determining a solution. There is concern about narrowing streets; would rather narrow the sidewalks. Identify multiple uses where feasible. There are more private stormwater facilities in our community. As we move towards LID, we will increase the number of facilities to individual properties. We’ll need to make sure that the inspection program can support homeowners to be successful.
- ***When LID doesn’t make sense (such as joint bioswales) is there flexibility to use another technique?*** If the site development (e.g. subdivision plan) doesn’t appropriately address the stormwater is then passes the problem on to the individual lots. We will need to clarify development approvals to minimize risk to home builders. Need a good set of details for features that support common sense while minimize costs to get an engineered/stamped drawing (that then becomes expensive on the small projects). The proposed small project manual will hopefully address these issues. When builders have a time delay or additional requirements, it makes it difficult to complete on time and budget. Currently, it is tough to justify the cost to put in LID for homebuilders that needs to be able to sell. They typically use downspout dispersion as a runoff technique.
- ***Will Clark County be talking to other jurisdictions for examples?*** We are coordinating with other jurisdictions (there are 6 other Phase 1 jurisdictions in western Washington). Our design manual contractor has expertise in other WA jurisdictions. We will also look at regional and national examples.
- ***There are several examples of sustainable cluster developments around the county including [Serenbe Community in Georgia](#).*** Many of these developments include LID. [[Prairie Crossings](#) in Illinois is another example]
- ***Schools have some unique sites that can be challenging to develop/redevelop*** - Codes tend to squeeze out the flexibility that is needed. Schools need flexibility to develop good solutions for tight site development projects and unanticipated challenges. Schools are public funded, the life cycles costs and maintenance are key to the long term success (to understand the true cost of a development project).
- ***Fish need clean water so these can be good steps, but need to be done in a realistic manner*** to get the desired results without creating burdens. Set people up to succeed.
- ***Stormwater is a common concern in attracting businesses to our community due to our local soils***, but it is challenging. Flexibility in codes can’t account for everything. Maintain open communications.

End of summary