

Master Plan Meeting May 16, 2016 – Lake Accotink Park

There were about 70 attendees, including:

Supervisor Herrity

Park Authority board members for Braddock, Lee, & Springfield, and At-large

Representatives of FLAP & Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley

Representatives from Stormwater Planning Division were on hand to provide expert answers to attendee questions.



Frank Graziano of WSSI presented a PowerPoint summary of studies done so far. There were five basic options put forward, designated as A to E, along with some pros and cons of each:

- A. Continued dredging every 15 years or so
- B. Installation of a forebay to capture most sediment as it enters the lake, with annual or biennial dredging, plus whole-lake dredging every 30 – 40 years
- C. Installation of a series of steel barriers upstream to provide a “beaver dam” type function, but with little reduction in lake dredging
- D. Dam breaching with stream channel stabilization to hold existing sediment in place – no lake
- E. Dam breaching with stream channel stabilization to hold existing sediment in place – plus a berm on the north bank to create a smaller lake

Following the presentation, attendees were assigned to eight groups for discussion. The groups reported on their questions/concerns/suggestions as follows:

- Group 1 – Is stream restoration upstream a solution? What are the costs? Who decides? Are there lessons from comparable projects? What impact will there be on other parks? Esthetics? Mosquitos? How about dams build by real beavers? How will flood control be affected? Will the EPA mandate dam retention?
- Group 2 – Option “D” is unacceptable because of lack of sediment control. Options “B” and “C” could be combined. What are the biodiversity impacts? Could dredge spoils be hauled out by train instead of truck?
- Group 3 – Options for the lake need to be integrated with the rest of the Master Plan and with regulatory mandates. What are the costs? Will sediment end up in Pohick Bay if not captured in the lake? Option “E”, with a Huntley Meadows-like park might be the best of both worlds.
- Group 4 – Could dredge spoils be disposed of by sale, donation, or be used to build beaver-type dams? Marsh filtration to remove pollutants should be considered. Options “B” and “E” are favored.
- Group 5 – Keep the lake at all costs. Disappointed visitors were a common observation during the 2008 dredging. Option “B” is favored. Upstream sediment controls, such as reforestation should be included. The lake is a community treasure.
- Group 6 – What will be the impact of planned DPWES projects? Don’t send sediment problems downstream. Wildlife conservation should be a driver. What are the costs? Would dredging deeper lessen frequency? Would Options “D” and “E” provide wetlands boardwalks?
- Group 7 – Keep the lake. No to Options “D” & “E”. The lake is a very special treasure of Fairfax County, a place to observe Nature in action. What are the costs? The EPA and TMDL may require retention of the lake. Dredge spoil disposal needs more study. Repair costs of the dam itself need to be a factor. Everyone is responsible for sediment control.

- Group 8 - Are there lessons from comparable projects? What are the wildlife impacts? Will wetlands produce mosquitos? Could dredge spoils be hauled out by train instead of truck? Option "E" is interesting.

Next steps:

- Comments are accepted through June 30, 2016 at parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov
- TMDL study results should be available by the end of 2016
- After analysis of the TMDL, a final study will be done.
- Future meetings and public participation remain to be determined.