

**D&C Standards Update
December 19, 2006
Meeting Notes**

The topics for this meeting were the draft revision of Chapters 1 and 2, the new Appendix A Landscaping Requirements, and the index of Standard Details. Terry Keyes led the meeting which was attended by 11 stakeholders and 8 District staff.

Summary

This meeting had been rescheduled from Dec. 12 to allow more time for draft and review. Continued discussion of partial fill and other issues in Chapter 3 will take place at a future meeting because staff is still refining the revisions. The next stakeholder meeting will be in January. Staff plans to take the revised Design and Construction Standards to the Board of Directors in April of 2007.

Terry explained that Chapter 1 General Requirements and Administrative Provision has few substantive changes. The focus is on clarifying language. For example, references to District and City authority are more accurate. New items include a clearer definition of laterals that is consistent with its use in other chapters.

The group agreed staff needs to continue to clarify the definitions of Redevelopment (work on existing impervious surface) and Intermittent Flow (the reference to "30 consecutive days" is unclear). Enforcement has been consolidated into one place in this chapter. Terry noted that staff is encouraging electronic plan submittals, reflected in the revised language.

Chapter 2 Administrative Procedures originally defined only District procedures, but now includes corresponding City procedures that are integral to the District review and approval processes. Also new is a clearer list of design elements for water quality and quantity facilities. Terry explained that the Chapter introduces new format requirements for drainage reports that will allow faster review by District staff

Planting plans, which had been listed only in the Service Provider Letter process, are now clearly part of the Standards. The trigger for downstream analysis has been simplified to 5,280 square feet, the equivalent of 2 single family homes. A maintenance plan is required for facilities that will be privately maintained.

The group requested clarification of the Expiration of Plan Approval, and staff will check with the Cities and revise that to be more clear and fit with the other jurisdictions.

The plant maintenance period has been increased to three years. The group discussed how the 3-year period fits with replanting, maintenance and monitoring, warranties and related issues. Staff will continue to refine this language.

Another new item is the Vegetated Corridor "buyout" which allows the District and developers to negotiate an agreement in which the developers would pay the District to perform the restoration and planting requirements. If this option is used, the developer would still be responsible for identifying and securing the mitigation site. Nora Curtis advised that District policymakers have not, as yet, developed the process for this option.

Astrid Dragoy led review and discussion of Appendix A Planting Requirements. The revision clarifies that these are requirements, not guidelines. The only “guidelines” are the Suggested Plant Communities in the chart.

Astrid asked for input on the language allowing some limited use of non-native plants species in the Vegetated Corridors. The group discussed this, citing that while native plants do well in natural settings, they cannot tolerate the reflected heat in parking lots and near buildings. Some expressed concern about non-native species becoming invasive. It was suggested that the District should require ecological, economic and aesthetic justification for any use of non-natives in Vegetated Corridors. Carrie Pak added that another concern is whether native plants will work for the Low Impact Development techniques being encouraged by Goal 5 and the MS4 permit. For example, ecoroofs might function better with some non-native plants.

Peter Guillozet submitted written comments opposing non-natives, which Astrid summarized for the group. Briefly, he said: Non-natives have no ecological, economic, or aesthetic justification. Native plant communities are most appropriate for the soils and climate. Allowing non-natives will expose the District to criticism from conservationists and agencies. Many “approved” trees and shrubs have become invasive (locust, butterfly bush, Norway maple, etc.) Who will be responsible for their control. Table A-1 Remove minimum rooting size or add sizes for bare root; change 2-gallon to 1-gallon; no good arguments for 2-gallon.

To allow non-natives would be a big step, but could provide an educational opportunity. It was suggested the Standards continue to discourage non-natives except in unique situations, and perhaps require offsets with native plants outside the Vegetated Corridor. It was explained that jurisdictional limitations might not allow the District to require or approve native plantings outside the Vegetated Corridor/water quality facility.

Astrid explained there is no proposed change in planting densities because staff received no justification for a change. However, bare root will be allowed, and the on-center spacing requirement is gone. Discussion of planting density focused on water quality facility wet zones where some think too many plugs were required, but removing the on-center spacing may resolve this concern. After discussion of varying water quality facility planting requirements in different jurisdictions staff agreed to review the Appendix to see if a separate water quality facility planting section would be appropriate.

Another change is to require Vegetated Corridor plans to be stamped by a Landscape Architect or Professional Engineer. This may be more stringent than state law, and staff will review.

Mike McGough noted the need for clarification in Chapter 2 regarding the option to allow substantial completion and extend water quality facility and vegetated corridor planting by a maximum of 120-days. It is currently being assumed as a given, but the original intent was to ensure planting was done at appropriate times.

Mike reviewed the Index of Standard Details and noted new items including drop manholes. Staff will add proprietary storm filters, detention manholes, and precast area drains. Terry asked stakeholders to submit other details they would like included.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to develop draft revisions and post them on the website. The next stakeholder meeting will be in January. As the next version of Chapter 3 and refinements of the remaining chapters are available, they will posted on the website and stakeholders will be notified by email. Terry encouraged all stakeholders to continue to submit comments.