

## **Stakeholder Assessment Report for Two Stream Health Improvement Projects in the City of Alexandria**

Prepared for the City of Alexandria Transportation and Environmental Services, Stormwater

Prepared by the Institute for Engagement & Negotiation (IEN), University of Virginia

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### **Assessment Background**

The University of Virginia's Institute for Engagement & Negotiation (IEN) was asked to assist the City of Alexandria in two stream health improvement project(s) implementation. Initial efforts to implement these projects were not successful due to opposition to the original stream restoration design. In addition, City residents, including environmental advocates, were not satisfied with the City's work on engaging the public, being transparent with their stream restoration plans, and keeping residents informed on City plans, progress, and funding commitments.

IEN proposed conducting a stakeholder assessment in the form of stakeholder interviews, in order to surface stakeholder concerns, hopes, and suggestions for what might be done to support and protect the health of these two streams, as well as to learn how stakeholders might wish to be engaged to influence decision-making about these two streams. As a first step, IEN formed a stakeholder advisory group (SAG) to provide IEN guidance for stakeholders to be interviewed, the questions to be asked, and the community engagement process that might be proposed as an outcome of this assessment. The SAG comprised seven representatives of different community interests, including the City's Environmental Protection Commission (EPC), the Environmental Council of Alexandria (ECA), Seminary Ridge Civic Association, Wakefield-Tarleton Civic Association, and stakeholders of Taylor Run and Strawberry Run. Appendix Two shows the SAG members. Guidance from both the SAG and the City project team led to identification of both City staff and community stakeholders for interviews, which were conducted in February and March 2022. Appendix Three lists those interviewees. During this time, IEN delivered three different presentations to the City's Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) outlining the project's progress. Following the March 2022 EPC meeting where interim recommendations were presented, IEN developed a more detailed proposal for a consensus building approach with community engagement to address both technical and non-technical issues surrounding the stream health goals.

The following information summarizes IEN's findings from the interviews of both City and community stakeholders. Notes from the interviews are included in Appendix One.

### **Assessment Process**

As a part of the City of Alexandria stream health improvement projects for Taylor Run and Strawberry Run, IEN conducted a stakeholder assessment comprised of 17 stakeholder interviews. Guided by consultation with both the SAG and City project team, six of these

interviews were conducted with city staff and 11 with community stakeholders. Due to the continued consultation of SAG members throughout the project, members of the SAG were not included in those interviewed. The purpose of these interviews was to achieve the following:

- Elicit the range of stakeholder perspectives on the history and status of these projects, their concerns, hopes, and suggestions about what might be done to support and protect the health of these two streams.
- Gain an understanding of how stakeholders might wish the community to be engaged to influence decision-making about these two streams.
- Develop a set of recommendations for City consideration for a community engagement process to develop a community-supported strategy for protecting the two streams.

The interviews were conducted as qualitative interviews. During qualitative interviews, the interviewer uses a set of questions to guide the conversation but is not strictly bound by the questions. The goal is to fully explore with the interviewee's perspectives, concerns, hopes, and suggestions. As part of this process, to create a space where people may speak freely, interviewees are told that their comments will be synthesized with others and not attributed to specific individuals. To assure this, interview notes were logged by the IEN team in one single Google Doc without names attached. The interview questions were as follows:

- (1) What is your current role and how are you involved with these two streams?
- (2) Is there any specific history relating to these two streams, their uses, their role in the neighborhoods or community that you would like to share ... or would be important for us to understand?
- (3) What are your concerns – and your hopes – for the future of each of these streams? Taylor Run? Strawberry Run?
- (4) What kinds of information would be helpful or important for you and others to be able to participate meaningfully in creating a collaborative strategy for Taylor and Strawberry Run?
  - (a) For example, presentations about different methods of addressing stream degradation, field trips, data, etc.?
  - (b) And who would you like (or trust) to provide this information? Specific types of experts, or state agencies, or the PDC, or university scientists or engineers?
    - (i) Is there a specific person - - or type of person – that you think would be trusted by ALL participants in the process?
- (5) What are different options for the streams that you would like to be explored in moving forward? Or that you would like to learn more about?
- (6) How might we best engage the different communities and stakeholders for each stream?
  - (a) Presentations, listening sessions, open houses with experts, workshops with maps, focus groups, field trips, different languages, timing to ensure equity and inclusivity
  - (b) Taylor Run community and stakeholders – i.e., people who are impacted by it, and use it or enjoy it?
  - (c) Strawberry Run community and stakeholders?

- (7) What would success look like to you? In terms of the streams? For the communities? For equity and inclusivity?
  - (a) Taylor Run success?
  - (b) Strawberry Run success?
- (8) What else might be important for us to know in order for us to design a successful collaborative, equitable, and inclusive decision-making process for Alexandria?
- (9) Who else would you suggest we talk to?
  - (a) at the city level?
  - (b) other stakeholders in the community?

IEN conducted all 17 interviews and, where possible, two staff were present at all interviews. A considerable amount of common ground emerged during these interviews. While there was a range of views about how the city might protect stream health, all interviewees expressed a willingness to work out solutions for the streams in a way that could be supported by the community and City.

Similarly, many similar concepts and ideas emerged from the interviews, indicating significant common ground. All interviewees were open in discussing the history of the effort to date, the history of community tension over these restoration projects, and the management of information by the City. They also shared a desire for protecting stream health and preserving city infrastructure, recreational opportunities, and the conservation of homeowner property. The following is a synthesis of findings and common themes from these interviews. Detailed notes from the interviews are shared in Appendix One.

## **Key Findings**

The overall key findings from the interviews, below, reflect common shared perspectives rather than actual quotes from stakeholders. They are not presented in any priority order, and each is a synthesis of numerous comments.

- Taylor Run contains good biodiversity and unique environmental components.
- The City did not conduct a transparent community engagement process regarding the stream projects.
- Adopting a minimal intervention yet holistic approach to stormwater impacts and stream health will be essential for progress.
- The original natural channel design (NCD) was not acceptable to the community due to the loss of biodiversity and tree canopy cover that would be incurred.
- A smaller group of technical experts collaborating with an informed community should come together and resolve the stream restoration design issues.
- Other City departmental staff and their expertise were not utilized effectively with these projects.
- The community understands the importance of maintaining city infrastructure that exists along Taylor and Strawberry Run, with a conservation-minded approach to protect the diverse habitat of these streams.
- City residents want to be engaged with these projects and desire continued involvement.

- Civic associations can play a leadership role in the community engagement process.
- An expanded community engagement process is needed to heal from past engagement processes.

In addition to the above key findings, the following are a synthesis of interviewee concerns, interests, informational needs, and additional ideas relating to the future of the two streams. Concerns and interests can be aligned and often overlap, as reflected below. For each topic a short summary of interviewee comments is provided, and bulleted points reflecting interviewee comments are offered as a further window into their perspectives. These bulleted points are either a synthesis of combined interviewee comments and/or direct quotes.

## **Stakeholder Concerns**

The stakeholders interviewed overwhelmingly emphasized the value of Taylor Run, and, to a lesser extent, Strawberry Run. The concerns reflected in the interviews were focused largely on disagreement about the approach to take to improve these areas, and frustration with the community engagement process to this point.

### **1. Engagement Process**

There is the perception of a lack of acknowledgement from the City about the value of Taylor Run in terms of ecosystem services and also the limited amount of natural space City residents can access within the City's borders. Given the rarity and uniqueness of such a natural area within Alexandria, many stakeholders noted frustration that the original plans proposed by the City would likely have dramatically altered the character of Taylor Run to the detriment of the City and its residents. Several interviewees noted that the space is used as a living classroom for local teachers and students, serving as an educational resource in a way that would be irreplicable elsewhere in the City.

- "TES (Transportation and Environmental Services) has been very condescending about the tree loss and dismissive of the ideas of trees as critical infrastructure."

There is a broad perception that the City has operated without transparency in their process which has left many stakeholders feeling disappointed and distrustful. Some examples mentioned include long periods without updates regarding the projects, instances where presentations from the City were provided without the opportunity for public comment, questions, or input, and in cases where feedback was solicited, lack of communication about how the input was used. Stakeholders expressed overwhelmingly the desire for improved communication with the City, and opportunities for more regular engagement in addition to information sharing.

- "I hope the City could have a more fluid relationship with the Community, identify shared values, and involve scientists with expertise in these streams."
- "There has been little communication from the City since the legislative session last year"
- "What happens to the suggestions put forward, how are they vetted? If they weren't accepted and included, we'd like to know why. How many times do you want us to show up and then we don't know what happens to our input?"
- They can say "we had community meetings, we had community input." "But you feel like the staff just does what it wants to do."

- “Trying a lot of options for outreach and posting it physically in these places (at the high school, in Chinquapin Park, at the churches), not just online. There are going to be some people on both sides of this who are very entrenched. Reaching and engaging everyone else would be important to come to a consensus. Not just addressing the loudest people in the room.”

Initial frustrations and breakdown in communication for all parties has impeded constructive dialogue for moving forward. All interviewees are passionate about this issue and feel that they have the best interests of the City at heart. Like all projects, the plans for Taylor Run and Strawberry Run were impacted by the pandemic, which contributed to the challenges in communication between parties. Many interviewees were optimistic that a good working relationship could be established moving forward with effort, intention, and transparency.

- “It’s unfortunate that there are some very vocal minority opinions that have been in many different contexts disparaging of City staff. The struggle is that when City staff attempts to facilitate, cooler heads don’t prevail. City staff gets [criticized] quite a bit and they work very hard to do good work for the City.” Because some folks are biased against them, it would be helpful to have a third-party facilitator for discussions.

There is a lack of understanding on the part of stakeholders regarding the parameters of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) funding and what steps might be required in order for the City to use it. Several stakeholders mentioned the DEQ funding in their interview, noting that they had inquired but not received a response to their inquiry, or others who thought they were aware of the parameters offered their interpretation, which varied from interviewee to interviewee. *This represented a specific point of frustration for those stakeholders who are aware of the extent to which this funding influences the outcome of this process.*

There is concern that engagement to this point has not reached all communities, particularly those that have been historically underserved. A few interviewees noted that engagement on this front typically centers around those who have the time and knowledge on this topic, and who might already be familiar with organizations like the EPC where they can learn more. Some interviewees observed that the process could benefit from the inclusion of voices who aren’t typically engaged, but who are just as invested in the health of the City.

- “Alexandria is extremely transient. Some really vocal residents will be gone in three years. Others who have lived here forever won’t say a word. Immigrant populations often live in apartments, anecdotally they stay here longer than the higher earning professionals. It’s very difficult to reach that community, but they need to be engaged. We have a significant Ethiopian population, so we started posting more in Amharic. More work like that is called for.”
- “The African American community has often been pushed around. They were displaced in the 60s for Fort Ward Park. It’s important to engage with that community, we’re talking about long term residents.”

## 2. Safety

The concrete slabs, dead trees, and eroding areas could impact the safety of area users. The concrete also detracts from the aesthetics of the space. Many interviewees noted that there are lots of ways that Taylor and Strawberry Run could be improved that don’t involve stream

restoration. Most frequently mentioned were the concrete slabs in both areas which can be unwelcoming to new visitors and impact the safety and aesthetics of the spaces.

### **3. Presenting and Using Unbiased, Science-based Data and Other Expertise**

Many interviewees expressed concern that the City relies heavily on engineering expertise and discounts or fails to utilize the experience of the City's Natural Resources staff. The Natural Resource staff are broadly recognized by stakeholders as knowledgeable resources who are experts in the fields, and the perception that they have not been consulted throughout these processes has contributed to the distrust felt by many stakeholders. This point combined two common themes that resonated through the interviewees: 1) disagreement about the data being used (where Natural Resources staff might have refuted data or offered points of information not being considered, if they had been consulted), and 2) frustration about the treatment of those involved who are seen by many as obvious resources for this decision-making.

- "We're being told the streams aren't that healthy, but from my perspective there's no data to back it up."
- "The City has used models developed for other streams that do not apply to these streams."
- "The City has relied on its own people with vested interests who are good engineers but who are not biology experts. These projects require a deeper understanding of the science pertaining to these streams – on biodiversity, birds and other animals, plants, and human health."

### **4. Options to Address Increased Stormwater Surges in Taylor Run and Strawberry Run and the Resulting Impacts on the Sewer Line, Erosion, and the Environment.**

The stormwater volume of the streams exceeds their capacity which has negative ramifications for each space and will be further exacerbated by climate change and development. This point was mentioned by several interviewees who felt that any implementation of natural channel design would be erased by the extreme stormwater flows, and that it would be more logical to invest in stormwater measures upstream (retention ponds, bioswales, etc.) that would alleviate the volume.

Stream restoration requires significant maintenance to remain viable and some are concerned that the City might not commit sufficient attention or resources to that effort. A few interviewees noted this point in conjunction with the question about the DEQ funding (above), speculating that maintenance of any project using the funding would only be required in the short term and not maintained in perpetuity. There was concern that the City would have to allocate resources to maintain any stream improvement work and that other City departments were resource-limited, such as City Parks.

The sewer lines are essential infrastructure, though it is not widely understood what types of intervention are required (as opposed to preferred) by the City in order to do this work. Many interviewees expressed understanding of the need to maintain the sewer line, but viewed the footprint needed for that maintenance as significantly smaller than what was originally planned for the Taylor Run restoration. Several interviewees expressed confusion around this topic and interest in learning about the specific components of the sewer maintenance and plans for the stream.

- “The City needs to tell us exactly what needs to be done to the sewer line. It’s understood that the sewer line needs to be maintained, but the City needs to be clear about what that means. And the sewer line is only on a portion of the stream, not the full length, so is much smaller than the project that was planned.”
- “The City needs to tell us what they think needs to be done. No one will stand in the way of a legitimate fix to a sanitary sewer. From daily water testing we know that the stream is usually a trickle but fluctuates a lot with rain. That needs to be fixed because historically the stream was up on the surface and more of the water was absorbed on the land, not runoff.”

Erosion is a threat to the safety of Strawberry Run residents and the value of their homes and property. The interviewees who spoke about Strawberry Run noted this concern of great significance to those who live in the area. Some interviewees also noted the desire to avoid the negative impacts of heavy machinery and no ability to receive redress for damages in the contract provided by the City. Also, City staff had delivered a contract to Strawberry Run landowners but then waited nearly a year before coming back to check with those landowners.

## **5. Other Concerns**

There is a perception that City residents in Strawberry Run don’t know the boundaries between their land and what belongs to the City. This lack of awareness can contribute to activities that are detrimental to the stream and surrounding natural space. Landowners, in not knowing these basic facts, use the stream either as a dumping ground or work to positively impact the stream valley. Those who mentioned this concern noted the need for improved communication around this issue.

## **Stakeholder Interests**

The following interests include bulleted entries that are either paraphrased or directly quoted statements of the stakeholders.

### **1. The Engagement Process**

All stakeholders expressed a strong interest in an inclusive, transparent, professional engagement process for City of Alexandria staff and community residents. Stakeholders expressed interest in meetings structured to allow openness to community perspectives and meaningful collaboration on mutually satisfactory objectives, options, and solutions for stream health. Their interests included:

A Consensus-based, Decision-making Group where-

- City staff meets directly (“face-to-face”) with stakeholders to hear their concerns with give and take so questions can be asked of both sides.
- “IEN or other third-party” facilitates.
- “Workshops are held with facilitated discussion, topic by topic.”
- Trust is built.
  - “For the communities, their interests are best upheld if they feel their government works for them, fiscally and competently, and that their government is protecting their parks for them.”

- A task force classifies and prioritizes projects.
- A transparent and professional process has a round table of professional, trusted technical expertise.
- “A transparent and open process.”
- All City departments connected with the project participate.
- “A more engaged, multi-disciplinary approach”
- A small group of in-house people meets over time, with Independence and transparency being critical.
- Ground rules are established.
- Trusted experts are brought together to help with consensus-based decision-making.
- Information is peer-reviewed and science-based, state-of-the art and engineering-based, and / or considered best practices.
- “Community can steer this process, but we need a nuts-and-bolts technical staff to solve the design issues. To design a successful process, it cannot turn into a political arena.”
- A lot of education will be necessary.
- “I’d like to see data and transparency written in plain English so that the average person can understand it.”

Including stakeholders who are-

- Members of the Environmental Policy Commission, the Environmental Council of Alexandria as well as civic associations, such as Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations, West End Coalition of Civic Associations, Seminary Hill Association, Ridge Civic Association, Strawberry Hill Civic Association would be the way to reach the Strawberry Run community and Taylor Run Citizen’s Association.
- Members of community religious organizations.
- Affected and interested residents who have not already expressed interest in these issues, or who have been unrepresented historically
- Involved in local schools – teachers, students, parents, student organizations, school property, school programs, and spaces for school presentations (A significant number of interviewees wanted to have schools involved in this process.)
- Others contacted through the use of “statistically valid surveys” with an information packet.

Collecting and Reviewing Feedback from the Community-

- “Hearing back what was done with the comments, what filtered through, what was thrown out.”
- “When Parks is working on a Park Plan, they will have a phase where they have feedback from the community, and they have a listening board with sharpies at the park to write what they want to see in the park, so it targets park users. The board is a really good idea because you can really get the full breadth of park users. Something like that would be helpful.”
- The public should have the opportunity to comment on the new plans. There needs to be face-to-face discussion, and the opportunity to work with everyone in the room.

Ways to Engage the Community-

- “Field trips, listening sessions, open house with experts, workshops with maps. Having the presentations so that the explanations can be made for people who aren’t aware of



issues. Not just one field trip to check a box. We need to make repeated efforts to engage a community. Listening sessions are important for community feedback.”

- Additional ways to reach the greater community – Zoom meetings, talking in a coffee shop, using a newsletter, going door-to-door in Strawberry Run, posting information in Chinquapin Park and Forest Park, and social media platforms (Instagram, and twitter), even including a webpage not affiliated with the Stormwater webpage, to avoid bias.
- Going door-to-door in the Strawberry Run area.

## **2. Learning Each Other’s Interests**

Community stakeholders expressed a serious and pressing interest in learning the City’s interests in Taylor Run and Strawberry Run, and City staff indicated an equal interest in learning what the community cared most about in these streams. All community stakeholders wanted to learn the City’s objectives for the streams. City staff expressed sincere interest in learning more about the community’s perspectives on alternatives to natural channel design, erosion, the acidic seepage swamp, and the trees in and around the streams, among other issues.

## **3. Safety**

Stakeholders expressed an interest in the safety of individuals using public and private property in and near the streams. Many expressed interests in protecting the safety of the public by maintaining sewer lines, addressing muddy paths and signage in the park and erosion on private property, and removing fallen tree limbs and dead trees from areas in and around the streams. A few mentioned an interest in restoring bridges and roads at risk to erosion. One interest entailed providing up-to-date information on a website on the timing of construction activity and on the stages and location of construction, with an aim to keeping the public safe from those areas during that time.

- Making the streams a safe place for people to come.
- “Making it as accessible and inviting as possible. There are real co-benefits if you restore streams and make them as accessible as possible.”

## **4. Presenting and Using Unbiased, Science-based Data and Other Expertise**

Many stakeholders expressed a keen interest in having the City incorporate not only engineering data, but also science-based data on streams and flora and fauna in its decision-making processes for the streams. Stakeholders were interested in focusing on science-based data and not public opinion or predictions based on data from other areas. Many emphasized the importance of having unbiased, science-based experts present to educate and advise. There was no agreement on any one particular expert. Nearly everyone recommended including individuals with scientific expertise, including trusted individuals in the community and in academia. There was one mention of a state agency, but another expressed interest in the possibility of using a paid consultant who had not been previously involved in this project. There was also an interest in having a few City staffers involved and one resident was requested. Stakeholders conveyed a strong affinity for the following:

- Peer-reviewed, science-based, best practices, data-driven information for the best outcome. (Although stakeholders disagreed on whom to include, all were interested in these criteria.)
- Experts with a deeper understanding of the science pertaining to these streams – on biodiversity, birds and other animals, plants, and human health.

- A fluvial geomorphologist, hydrologist, such as John Field
  - Wildlife biologists, and ecologists.
  - Trusted academics with practical experience, such as Joe Schilling, formerly with Virginia Tech.
  - Christian Jones, PhD, is a Professor in the Institute for Sustainable Earth at George Mason University and a Director of the Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center (PEREC)
  - Other academics from the University of West Virginia, Virginia State, and the University of Maryland, which have “good forestry programs.”
  - “I do not have a good idea of what to do technically but if it came from academia, it would be more trusted.”
  - “A representative from the Virginia Department of Forestry.”
  - A consultant with no involvement in original stream restoration plans.
  - Ron Simmons with the Natural Resources Division
  - John Marlin, City Arborist
  - Resident Russ Bailey
5. **Options to Address Increased Stormwater Volume and Surges in Taylor Run and Strawberry Run and the Resulting Impacts on the Sewer Line, Erosion, and the Environment.**

All stakeholders were keenly interested in determining the best options for addressing excessive stormwater volume and surges. Most stakeholders wanted to learn about possible alternatives to natural channel design. Interests in several options were shared. These included a conceptual design for an armored version with rip rap along a stream; a conceptual design for a bio-engineered version using plunge pools with planted grasses to keep the streams in place instead of rip rap; and a version of natural channel design. Many stakeholders supported another option: a concerted effort to address issues upstream, such as by retrofitting stormwater ponds in a way to mimic nature and minimize the damaging impact of stormwater and erosion. This option was envisioned to be coupled with an in-stream effort to increase the sewer line’s effectiveness while minimizing impact on the stream and supporting conservation of the natural area.

There was extensive interest in upstream solutions for both streams. These stakeholders were interested in building upstream stormwater retention ponds as opposed to downstream changes, such as natural channel design. A stakeholder showed an interest in placing stormwater catchments throughout the City. Another interest was in inlet filters. A majority expressed a pointed interest in addressing stormwater runoff in upstream development.

- “There are density issues all over the City and developers run over the entire area.”
- Looking at upstream solutions, such as an armored plunge pool and a weir, which dissipate water velocity.
- Using a package of strategies to address the streams in a holistic manner.
- “A multi-pronged intervention process would encourage upstream thinking. Transportation & Environmental Services and Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities Culture should work better together. We need a task force that includes climate change working together across the City.”
- Learning more about run-off. “What else is contributing to the runoff? Where is it coming from? How can be it slowed down or stopped?”

- Looking at laws and regulations to address impact on streams from upstream development.
  - Making local laws more effective.
  - Following MS4 Permit goals.
  - “I don’t know if the City has explored working with DEQ to adjust meeting percentage requirements for the MS4 permits. It seems like when you have this much at stake it’s probably worth exploring that.”
- “Sewer lines should be protected in as environmentally sensitive manner as possible, above and beyond best management practices. There will be debate on how to do this.”
- Reducing stormwater flow in a sustainable manner.
- Everyone shared their interest in controlling water velocity during storms.
- Many wanted to “re-examine the entire system of stormwater runoff” because the current system can no longer handle increased flow of stormwater – too much water flow and pollutants.
- “As rainfall ratchets up, uncollected water increases, and pollutants increase. The best way to address this is with upstream Stormwater ponds and the least effective is stream restoration. Climate change is pushing us to look at all the models in terms of water volume.”
- “Standards set for the Bay cannot be met.”

## 6. Reducing Disturbance to Natural Areas

Nearly all stakeholders conveyed a serious interest in reducing disturbance to the areas around and in the streams during work to reduce the effects of stormwater surges. These stakeholders conveyed their interest in conservation and care for natural resources, which, several stated, necessitate care for flora and fauna and removing only hazardous trees while maintaining the tree canopy. Another different interest focused on the need to remove trees for public safety and sewer line work while also including planting even more replacement trees than were removed.

- The minimum in intervention – using the minimum gray and green infrastructure needed to make these streams functional, safe and sound.
- Conservation in perpetuity.
- “The plan would be biocentric and conservation-oriented with ongoing quality stewardship.”
- Removing cement slabs, shoring up the banks and hillsides, and generally stabilizing the area.
- “Work on the trail and sewer would be done carefully using BMPs, not what an engineering consultant advises, but a plan that includes ecological concerns.”
- “I don’t know all of the different types of options, but something that gets it close to its pre-development state would be best.”
- “Some medium ground... something between demolishing trees and not taking any trees down.”
- Knowing where worksites should be entered to minimize harm to trees and other plants.
- Protection for acidic seepage swamps. Avoiding bringing in invasive plants during stream improvement.
- Working together on irreplaceable plants and trees.
- “The public is attached to these trees but may not realize that the trees will be falling into the streams if they are not removed. The idea would be to replace the trees taken out, several times over. An open dialogue will be helpful.”
- “The public is focused on the mature trees, not the new, younger ones. All kinds of factors must be accounted for. When’s the best time to plant a tree, the first time is 100 years ago, and the second time is right now!”

## 7. Interests Particular to Taylor Run

Most stakeholders were familiar with Taylor Run and the nearby Chinquapin Park. They conveyed numerous interests in reducing stormwater runoff particular to the Taylor Run area. Most pertained to possible upstream efforts in the area with a few minimal efforts in-stream. One of the stakeholders mentioned that the holistic ideas stakeholders have expressed interest in may already be included in the City's environmental Action Plan. Contrary to these views was the interest in improving the sewer line in a way that required more extensive in-stream effort. The interests encompassed the following:

- Minimum intervention to improve the sewer line and stop erosion.
- Taylor Run has value as it is – “It could really benefit from some small fixups. It's Alexandria's gem, but it's rough cut. If you come in from the high school side, that's the most degraded part of the stream. Every two weeks Taylor Run becomes a different stream because of the foliage blooming. High School uses that stream as a laboratory.”
- “Armoring the stream is not a bad way to go. One of the things that would help with stormwater would be to daylight the streams that are culverted and create habitat. That big grassy area in front of Chinquapin Rec Center, why not create habitat there? These big extensive projects are just prone to failure, and they cost so much money. In some cases, just armor the stream bank. I don't think you need to do as much as they've done. Remove channelization where it's been channelized.”
- “Would be nice to see more flowering plants, to have it be a little more inviting than trees down and weeds around it.”
- Replating/regrading the area between King Street and Taylor Run to address erosion.
- Using a retention pond and plantings to address the velocity of the water flow in Taylor Run to the extent determined by the gauges placed in Taylor Run.
- A concerted effort is needed upstream, though it is more complicated. We do not want to flood everyone's basements.
- “Leave the interior Taylor Run alone – just need to slow the water and do upstream work. Lots of things that are very doable.”
- “Years ago, when there was not a plan to do the interior of Taylor Run, there was a plan to build a retention pond right at the high school. That plan was on the right path. We need to do this upstream and not use critical resource areas as stormwater projects.”
- Water retention areas on upstream properties
- Specific ideas generated regarding Taylor Run:
  - “Make a bioswale area, 100 linear feet directly connected to Taylor Run and receive double credit due to the flow directly into Taylor Run.” (Bradley Shopping area)
  - Fix the cistern at Alexandria City High School and add water retention measures
  - Create a large dry bed for filtration at the Aquatic Center.
  - Manage stormwater at the Minnie Howard High School campus.
  - Use the large dry bed for filtration at the Aquatic Center next to Chinquapin Park.
  - The Chinquapin Park area can be addressed more easily because it is not a development or otherwise privately owned.
  - Give First Baptist Church stormwater tax abatement using a French drain to reduce runoff from impervious surfaces.
  - DEQ gives sizable credits for native tree planting, and these could be used for planting trees in the flood plain areas (not over planting in the forest.)
  - Add trees as buffers. Remove the concrete. Reduce mowing such as Holmes Run Trail. “These are very low-hanging fruit.”

- “Reduce mowing to let more areas grow wild and reduce stormwater damage. There is no need to worry about crime near the path from a wild area here because there are two football fields that would separate the forest from the walking path.”
- “No slabs of concrete, have it look like a park, no natural channel design.”
- “Are some of the items we’ve heard mentioned -- plantings in median, addressing upstream development, etc. -- already included in the Environmental Action Plan? Yes. I don’t think someone could say that the City hasn’t tried to think about these things holistically. There are an overwhelming number of them, and they’re all things that have been thought about. The Plan is supposed to be revisited every 5-10 years. The Energy and Climate group is under the purview of the City Manager.”
- “What has to be done? Protect the sewer lines. Move the trail or protect it. Forest Park could serve as an alternate trail. Have an expert to talk about a remedy for this situation.”

## **8. Interests Particular to Strawberry Run**

Stakeholders familiar with Strawberry Run had particular interests too. The overarching interest was to minimize impact on the stream while protecting the flora and fauna in and around the stream – the natural habitat. There was an interest in evaluating the extent of need in reducing stormwater surges in the stream. One stakeholder expressed a keen interest in learning velocity flow from the gauges inserted in the stream. Everyone was interested in stopping the erosion of private property.

- “Need good policy and process. It should be safeguarded and done right.”
- “The main interest for Strawberry Run is avoiding property degradation!”
- “How do you preserve the delicate ecosystem?”

## **9. Intra-departmental Collaboration**

The majority of stakeholders were interested in having representatives from Natural Resources and Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities consulted in this project from its inception through implementation. Although a formal process exists, the community experienced a lack of communication and collaboration among the relevant City departments. Stakeholders expressed interest in the views of individuals in these departments and expressed a desire for Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES) to include them in its decision-making process. These stakeholders felt those they had consulted in these departments represented their interests. These stakeholders conveyed their interest in City staff recognizing the value in the views of individuals in these departments, in more collaboration among these departments and T&ES, and in a more mutually satisfactory decision-making process.

- Meeting during business hours in a professional manner.
- Including staff in these departments in community meetings
- “I would like to see the Natural Resources division receive more respect.”
- Improving coordination of communication among City departments and with the Public.
- “Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) had done clearcutting outside of the library on the original channel of Holmes Run without informing the public or even telling Natural Resources or Parks.”

## **10. Ongoing Community Outreach**

A few stakeholders were excited to express an interest in more active ongoing engagement between City staff and the community. Although the City already makes presentations to civic organizations and publishes its views on its website and in written articles, stakeholders expressed an interest in more interactive ongoing activities between City staff and clubs, organizations, and youth in the community. Stakeholder suggestions included:

- Involve City of Alexandria High School and other high schools as well as middle and elementary schools in stream work. Include youth organizations such as the Boy Scouts. Reconnect students to the stream.
- Include Northern Virginia Community College students.
- Utilize an Adopt-a-stream Program, a Friends of Taylor Run and Strawberry Run.
- Offer healthy streams and programs such as tours and walks.
- Provide more coverage in both Alexandria newspapers and on social media.

## **Informational Needs**

During an assessment process, it is important to ask about stakeholder informational needs as a way to provide a basis for meaningful participation and to “level the playing field.” These requests for information may not be adequately addressed under stakeholder concerns or interests. During the IEN interviews, stakeholders indicated that they would want to learn more about:

- Stream restoration techniques.
- The role of the DEQ grant in relation to the stream improvement project design criteria.
- Other stormwater management techniques for these streams to keep them healthy.
- Flexibility within City funding mechanisms for project work.

## **Additional ideas**

As with additional information, other ideas not related to key stakeholder concerns or interests emerged during the interview process. The following additional idea was generated by stakeholders:

- A more complete approach to the stewardship of stream valleys across the City should be considered and supported by the City. Organizations such as Four Mile Run have demonstrated a keen sense of stewardship and care for environmental concerns and can be helpful to the City. Organizational grassroots involvement in environmental issues and stream health can be a galvanizing method to build trust and ensure City infrastructure is maintained and cared for.

## **Conclusion**

The City of Alexandria initiated restoration efforts for two streams, Taylor Run and Strawberry Run, using a natural stream channel design approach. Community residents opposed this initial design and restoration effort because they believed the original design sacrificed too many trees, jeopardized the biodiversity and unique environmental aspects of Taylor Run, and disregarded landowner concerns in Strawberry Run.

A Stakeholder Advisory Group was formed by IEN to provide guidance on the assessment process, specifically the selection of stakeholders to be interviewed and questions to be asked. Stakeholder interviews were conducted in early 2022, and the overwhelming sentiment expressed by interviewees was a lack of trust in the City's approach and intent, compounded by its lack of transparency and insufficient engagement efforts. Many interviewees expressed their desire to see the stream improvement work move forward to protect City infrastructure, improve habitat, and enhance the recreational components of these stream corridors. Community stakeholders recommended an expanded community outreach approach including workgroups to facilitate engagement and resolution of the technical issues around stream improvement.

IEN believes a rebuilding of the relationship between City stakeholders and City staff is possible. In addition, the level of expertise within the City's residents can be a strength for the City to lean on to accomplish this and other environmental efforts. This rebuilding effort will take some time, with the City committing to transparency and deep listening to residents throughout the stream improvement work and process.

### **Next Steps**

IEN is working with the City to determine next steps, to be determined in early May 2022, and has submitted a revised scope of work to facilitate the development of a community supported approach for improving long-term stream health.

# Appendix One

## City of Alexandria Stream Health Interviews

February 24, 2022 - March 30, 2022

### 1. What is your current role and how are you involved with these two streams?

Interviewees included city staff in the Transportation and Environmental Studies Division, Parks staff and Parks Commission, city natural resource staff, homeowners adjacent to both streams, teachers and students, and community activists.

### 2. Is there any specific history relating to these two streams, their uses, their role in the neighborhoods or community that you would like to share ... or would be important for us to understand?

- Saw these streams suffer the same symptoms: too much water going through them
- History reveals a real negligence for the value of a natural watershed, for how important parks are as a biodiversity corridor.
- Important for people to have nature in surroundings. There is a failure to protect the nature that is part of these streams
- Need to address impact of development directly – need to decrease upstream pollutants and water flow going into these streams.
- City is just trying to do a retrofit
- Community members hired an expert and residents were educated about stormwater damage.
- No room for the streams: can't rip out the infrastructure: put them in pipes
- Stream trying to recover
- Don't know the specifics of the road construction
- In Taylor Run: don't know about TC Williams High: remember the Titans in 1971: does the community have this connection through this movie: TC Williams connection: what are you truly looking for?
- Interested in knowing if there is a connection / emotional connection between the stream and the high school held by someone who went there? She sees graffiti along the stream.
- Are educators using the stream at Taylor Run?
- The EPA and state and local regulatory agencies have done all in their power to reduce pollutants in the Chesapeake Bay, including reducing pollutants in the streams in the Bay watershed through natural channel design. Consequently, the current regulations, grant proposals, and input from non-scientific members of City Council have motivated City of Alexandria staff to use natural channel design without examining the specific impacts on these two streams caused by bulldozing biodiversity and upstream development. The City's recognition that credits need not be derived from these streams may indicate the City is now open to looking at other options for these streams.
- Strawberry Run project failed; completed to the engineering plans at the time; lots of water right after; climate change impacts, both in design and regulatory approaches; rain gauges close in; do see pockets of large rain events
- Need to use the latest FEMA data to accommodate some of the climate change issues



- How did the city react to the failure? City will not respond to a newspaper article; respond to mails...lots of opinion pieces; they launched a website, story map for Taylor Run, Strawberry Run planned for the summer; communications person on staff now. An AECOM expert is on staff to work on interviews and ensure accuracy numbers and science in the articles. A specialist makes sure the City voice is heard in a non-combative way through newspapers.
- Taylor Run is a biological hotspot, with a cultural history, and a natural history.
- Strawberry Run has old age stands of trees.
- Part of Taylor Run is owned by the City and the other part is owned by First Baptist Church of Alexandria.
- With Downstream Strawberry Run, the City under-calculated the amount of stormwater flowing out of the pipe.
- Taylor Run has an irreplaceable, rare acidic seepage swamp that the City needs to address.
- I was silenced and so informed my boss that I would voice my concerns as a private citizen.
- The seepage acidic swamp is extremely diverse and in need of preservation for its uniqueness.
- Taylor Run Cultural History includes (1) Native American history (findings of hand axes, arrowheads, and other archeological artifacts; (2) WWII history (modest village of housing on the hill for workers in Torpedo Factory used during WWII); and African American History (Early African American Schoolhouse where T.C. Williams was built on an old African American community near the high school with a broken promise from the high school regarding the night lighting for sports).
- Sound bite; biological hotspot, cultural and natural history; Taylor, and Strawberry Run such as old age trees. Taylor is much bigger, rare seepage there. Alleged conflict of interest; 1900-foot section of stream owned by First Baptist Church. Picking up easements in 2020. The community knows nothing. Lack of transparency.
- Strawberry a battle in a different way. Mislead by staff...City manager's name is on a grant application. Miscalculated stormwater sheet flow out of the pipe.
- Environmental review in an official capacity; completely marginalized. I was marginalized by my Department-2020 and 2021. Not one iota about the biological diversity, beloved nature areas; had to go as a private citizen; kowtowing to stormwater. Nobody could get the information. Greenwashing these projects. Met with Seminary Hill Association in Feb 2020
- City Parks own the parks...zero comments; African American and natural history; WWII torpedo factory and munitions plant. Chinquapin Hollow; early ties to the Smithsonian. Black community was nearby closer to Duke Street
- Community values the quiet forests around these streams
- Pretty high-water levels when raining
- Some wish to preserve ecology for its own sake.
- On Strawberry Run some just do not want anything going on in their backyard.
- Community feedback can be unreliable and undemocratic.
- Those who do not have time, do not get to weigh in.
- On Strawberry a giant sycamore tree is being undercut by erosion.
- I have not evaluated the trees on the streams.
- I was called in just to fix one tree.
- I was not brought in early enough to determine best practices for these trees.
- This project will destroy more trees.

- I'm new but the community values them. Ecological and "not in my backyard" value. Whenever I am back there, it seems natural...the amount of water and force is unnatural. Seen the flooding and kinetic energy.
- Do get community feedback; people who have the time and energy to contribute; sporadic nature; mostly anecdotal
- Has to happen; essential to the city; got to go through! (city perspective); conveyed to me as a foregone conclusion; structure my role as saving a tree or two; brought us in at the 90% level
- Tree canopy goal of 40% across the City
- Jan 28 2020 - public meeting where stormwater folks revealed their plan. We wanted to learn the possible effects on the forest along the sides of Taylor Run and the wetland adjacent to the stream. It's an acidic seepage wetland and is small but really unique. The forest along the stream is one of the few in the City. Several large trees, including City champion Red Maple. The City spokesperson didn't comment on the impact to the wetland and said only a few *dozen* trees might be cut. Certain city staff were not invited to the meeting.
  - Sewer line wasn't included in the DEQ application they submitted but was mentioned in the meeting.
  - The City was asked how they determine the amount of pollutants that were flowing from the stream to the Bay. A consultant for the City said that the numbers would be determined by an algorithm. After the meeting [we] learned that the number of trees that would be cut would be 267, and at the time of the meeting the city had that list and knew that the number wasn't "dozens." And the wetland would be affected and probably harmed by the project.
  - The expert panel report (mostly engineering firms who do stream restoration) contained the algorithm. One element of it was not complicated - the amount of nutrients multiplied by the amount of soil eroded over the course of the year. Localities proposing to do restorations were encouraged to do soil samples, however they were permitted to use nutrient numbers from streams that were derived from Pennsylvania. It's a mystery as to why this would be acceptable.
- It became clear that the stormwater staff was committed to the original plan. Tours began with other city staff in September 2020. Covid meant only small groups could go through at one time. At this point the ECA got involved. Staff did all of these things on his own time (weekend projects). Several Council members went on these tours. EPC got involved. Opposition morphed into opposing the whole project, not just modifying it.
- January 2021 - submitted proposal to the City re: tree planting to get to 100% credit obligation to reach reductions by 2028. We asked not to use Taylor Run reconstruction but instead to use their portion of the money to plant trees. The funding they had committed (of their own, not DEQ's) would allow them to plant trees but also do the sanitary sewer fix they had been planning.
  - City attacked the proposal - implied that it would require many more trees and money than what the proposal had actually requested. This exchange led them to believe that the City staff didn't actually care, nor were they seriously considering alternatives.
- Soil samples results showed that levels were really 1/5th of what the City had estimated based on the Pennsylvania numbers. Because of this, the City wouldn't actually get the nutrient reductions that they were claiming to the public. You have to look at these numbers from the Bay's point of view. If these projects aren't actually achieving the reductions projected, they're not valuable to the Bay.
- Natural channel design raises the stream bed to reconnect the flood plains, in some places 5-7 ft. In Taylor Run there is no indication that there ever was a floodplain. In high

water events, the stream would flood the wetland. The wetland has never overflowed - non-alluvial wetland/it's spring-based. Different types of ecology. An overflow of the stream would have a detrimental effect on the wetland.

- The City claimed that DEQ required them to use the default numbers. That is false. The expert panel and DEQ encouraged all jurisdictions to use their own soil samples but allowed them to use the default Pennsylvania numbers.
- The City Manager was told that the staff was being required to proceed with these inaccurate numbers, which is why it took so long to intervene. The City staff undermined their credibility when they continually repeated this falsehood.
- DEQ has since changed the rules and now requires soil samples, but this project has been grandfathered in by DEQ and doesn't have to meet that requirement.
- Council meeting - no opportunity to comment on Taylor Run until the end of the meeting at 1:00 a.m. But that engagement led to the Council to instruct the City to take soil samples, and to look at alternative approaches. The results, released in December, were almost exactly what city biology staff had found, about 1/5th of the level of the default numbers.
- Water testing twice a month at Taylor Run. Volunteers included folks who have done water quality testing in their careers and are very competent in the process. Found very low levels of phosphorus and nitrogen. Measured at the top and bottom points of the stream. Slight rise in nitrogen levels at the bottom. Phosphorus levels were higher at the top than at the bottom. DEQ started doing monthly monitoring further downstream (volunteer group didn't know this). Turns out they were finding even lower levels, suggesting that the stream actually reduces nutrients rather than contributing.
- One "Expert" implied that stream life was degraded. The volunteer group got trained by Izaak Walton League to evaluate macroinvertebrate life and they found substantial macroinvertebrates present when sampling in different seasons.
- The City Council had told staff to look for alternative ways to meet Chesapeake Bay obligations. The City has a new plan that doesn't include Taylor Run or Strawberry Run. So their position is that they only need to talk about the specifics, not nutrient reduction since their new plan no longer requires it. Many members of the public believe that's different from what the City Council told them to do. The City's new plan uses the old default numbers. If you're looking at it from the Bay's point of view, you actually want to get the pollution reduction, not just a plan that projects reductions that can't actually be achieved.
- Taylor Run is one of Alexandria's few woodlands. Stands of large trees, fern forests, right in the heart of the City. Few people see it though it's open to everyone. Diverse group of users. We're the most densely populated jurisdiction in Virginia.
- This project was going to be 1900 x 75 ft. (the size of a runway) and require an entire gutting of the forest. It seems like it should be well justified to take a measure of that size, and the City hasn't made the case for actually taking that step.
- I don't know much about their history. My sense is that they could be utilized a lot more if they were better. Any stream in the City should be prized both for recreation and also environmental benefits. Taylor Run in particular needs a lot of help on both accounts.
- The High School students hang out around the stream.
- There is signage about a former mill on the site of Chinguapin Park and about an African American Community in the area. There are also garden plots in the park for the community.
- Chinguapin and Forest Park are connected.
- Boy Scouts have put in a less steep path near the garden plot and an attractive bog.
- A second source of water is near the recreation center.
- It is difficult to walk in the park after a rain because of the mud.

- Chinquapin Village history.
- A picnic pavilion you can rent.
- Used by a lot of kids to play; surrounded by woods; multiple hiking trails but in horrible condition; Trash in it
- Water gets really high; out of the banks
- Signposts in people's yards; issues about Taylor Run; lack of information shared with city residents; Mayor's bulletin, it was buried
- Taylor Run has a stronger community connection because of proximity to Alexandria City High School. Teachers have been using it as a living classroom. Used as a running trail/more of a hub. The Rec Center provides a lot of vital services like heating and cooling stations. More foot traffic there. Even the MS13 love that park. They don't treat it right (we have to paint over their spray paint). Historically there was a Chinquapin Village; a black community that got displaced but there are still remnants.
- Strawberry Run - there were small track houses that were built up to the floodplain around Fort Williams Park. These houses existed before Resource Protection Areas, so they were grandfathered in and were able to develop them further. There is a small footpath but not really trails. The people that live around the Park feel like it's their land.
- Strawberry Run was the site of earlier restoration that blew out, and every stream restoration in DC has done the same thing. They all use natural channel design. The inventor of NCD has said that it has no place in urban areas.
- "Calling it a restoration is a misnomer, it's stream construction. They have to cut down all of the trees to get the equipment in there. Once you disturb the soil to that extent, the place is completely engulfed in invasive species. When you remove the trees, you kill the habitat. It's so fragile and threatened already. All of the forests are so stressed because they're fragmented habitats."
- TES has been very condescending about the tree loss and dismissive of the ideas of trees as critical infrastructure.
- Alexandria has developed very close to the stream valley more so than most locations. We can throw money into infrastructure but ultimately Mother Nature is going to win every time.
- Community doesn't really use it like me; stays wet; separate from the walking path; path is close to the streambank and could fall in; some historical basis in Taylor Run to Forest Park; this is the "bog/seep" area of concern
- Walking needs to be easier and safer; mulch around the signage but not other areas
- Forest Park trails are better maintained so more people walk there
- Interested in keeping them intact, the trees, so few green spaces
- Coming as a person in the neighborhood; informed
- My neighbor; not much opinion, communicate with the son, bamboo in the back of the yard
- All of our time in Timber branch and Taylor Run
- Care depends on who they are; some don't think at all; outreach key to people
- City decided with the stream, and they didn't know what they were getting into
- Concerned about different issues; very valid concerns; NCD done before; Strawberry Runs under the road; invited everybody and the Mayor to take a road
- Many more houses back-up to the stream; city needed pollution credits; samples and the PA example, not a narrow city stream. They had a different Mission. No clue...
- Why take away the tree canopy? 360 Bradford Trees! They wouldn't listen...think they know...check that off that they met with the neighborhood. Lack of honesty and transparency. Do not have leadership, has to be a clear honest communication
- Results of the studies we still do not have. A lot of hard work...
- 40-50 years of not much happening; why was this necessary? A very curt response!

- A lot of non-answers; wanted to make it a park? What about the trees?
- Did our own research; blatant falsehoods; lot of mistakes and loss of confidence
- City predicated their grant application on false community engagement; went to City Council
- Not a disagreement on approach but on public trust; not based on science on any collaboration
- Former congressman; dug into the issues; led tours
- There is a home that has recently gotten a demolition permit at the headwaters of Strawberry Run. Not a good decision ; there is seepage, and some significant trees. Our natural resources department is a great resource. “Why do you hire people of his caliber and then muzzle him?” “Why would you take an environmentally sensitive area and not protect it?”
- “We need to be heard.”
- Taylor Run - there are seepages, rare plants. A lot of it is in a natural state. There is talk of trees falling in the stream. It looks natural/normal, not devastation. When they bring in heavy equipment, they will destroy what’s here. How can you take something natural and make it manmade and tell us you’re restoring it to a natural state?
- The City has used models developed for other streams that do not apply to these streams.
- The City doesn’t have a stream monitoring program where you look for macroinvertebrates. “We’re being told the streams aren’t that healthy, but from my perspective there’s no data to back it up.”
- Didn’t see the City exercising care in their decision-making process. Lack of transparency.
- Issue with Chesapeake Bay watershed - an easement on that portion on Church property but apparently not all the area they need to have work done. 13 acres here, Church and parking lot on one lot. Property we allow the community to use. A lot of children on their way to high school. Picnic area we let them use. Neighbors use. People bring their dogs and let them run in the area. Since private property we don’t post for public. A community friendly church. A preschool of members  $\frac{2}{3}$  who do not attend - they use this area too.
- We have retention areas inspected. Road to runs to parking lot and a culvert.
- The culvert - we have them clean it out only three times in ten years. You have regular trickle of water and then increases significantly during rains. Can get an unbreaking branch, City comes out to repair.
- Community’s use of your property - typically we have not had any issue with the neighbors as they bring their dogs. We do have challenges with the students at the high school. They come to talk, sometimes to things they ought not. But the preschool teachers have some concern with students being there. We have had to call in authorities.

**3. What are your concerns – and your hopes – for the future of each of these streams? Taylor Run? Strawberry Run?**

- Should be to establish a real conservation approach to protect the biodiversity and enhance to the degree we can
- I would like to see the City protect biodiversity and address, to the degree possible, the harm from past and future development, harm that with the next storm could allow flooding/surface water run-off to wash out efforts accomplished through natural channel design, as occurred in the downstream portion of Strawberry Run. Strawberry Run residents do not feel the City is addressing their concerns.

- I hope the City could have a more fluid relationship with the Community, identify shared values, and involve scientists with expertise in these streams.
- The City should involve the community and experts earlier in its decision-making process.
- The City needs local laws to address the impact of increased precipitation.
- The City needs to increase upstream stormwater ponds near development.
- Climate change should be pushing the City to look at all models on water volume.
- Although there will be debate, best management practices should be used for protecting sewer lines in an environmentally sensitive manner. No one has tested the current proposals on how environmentally sensitive the proposed process will be.
- Much stronger effort to reduce the effort of development
- Can do restoration but a minimal impact approach; protect the sewer line
- Appreciate the relationship to the Bay
- Watersheds; give them real importance; natural systems
- Overlapping with all the urban systems
- City needs to work with the community better; figure out a way to protect; costs
- Involve going down a lane; entrenched and more fluid relationship between the community; sit down and take in evidence; becomes a fight
- ID earlier!
- COA a caring community-shared values; COA doesn't work well
- Taylor Run/Chinquapin Park more ecosystem value; Strawberry Run failure, smaller area but same issue
- For Taylor Run – that it be a safe place to go. We need to revisit green infrastructure. There are dangerous trees, dead trees, and the path is muddy and not ADA safe. The banks are extremely steep and they are eroding.  
I would like the area safe. I would like to keep the unsafe trees but by using their trunks for stream banks for a habitat and to keep biomass in the area.
- I appreciate the trees and understand the importance of the tree canopy because trees hold sediment in the soil, but we also need to appreciate that the long root systems of sedges and rushes also help stabilize stream banks like the trees. Dead trees are not appropriate for a park. Sedges and rushes need sunlight.
- We are replanting young trees to help with carbon sequestration.
- Taylor Run is a great educational park and should be used by the High School for educational purposes.
- The school is nearby, and other schools use the stream for lessons, so safety is the number one concern.
- The infrastructure for the sewer line needs to be safe. There are alternative designs that are not natural channel design that would be helpful.
- Strawberry Run is behind private homes and erosion is important to address for the homes.
- All urban streams are assets to the community; functional and safe; not safe, too eroded
- Think of them as a part of our infrastructure
- Extending beyond the neighborhood assumptions about water quantity; more water in my worry, climate change; could design and then be wrong; used to sing decision to bridge the uncertainty gap, climate change is difficult to predict, 2040 to 2050; 15-20% volume; translated into a design parameter; transform into peak flows; fool's errand
- We do have tools; what if? ; cope with climate change
- A safe place for people to go! Visit all the places people go. Trees falling down, lots of dead trees...not ADA safe, steep banks and slippery trails
- What do you say to people when they say don't take my trees? A very scientific response: some trees dead and need to be removed- "I do appreciate a good tree"

- Educational park for the HS! Outside learning center...green safe place
- Chatted with a friend-something that everyone can love. Need the infrastructure to be safe-History of Place! Need Green Places...
- For Strawberry Run, it is behind homes-safe place
- 3 different scenarios-Taylor first; two pipe crossings, first one supported by clay and old concrete, in 2015 a project to repair the headwall, armored the larger sanitary pipe going across Taylor Run. Don't need to come down the stream valley. No floodplain, no nutrients
- Strawberry Run-middle Strawberry Run; lot of collateral damage like big old trees. Hardened Cameron Valley sand; concerns for serious property damage if a NCD; large tree just came down and crushed a house. Nothing needs to be done...except STW pipes that are old. Quality work with plunge pool with other practices
- Lucky Run-nothing needs to be done; repair one blowout with an asphalt path. A broad flat shallow stream
- Concern is massive tree canopy loss; planting a small tree is not an equivalent substitution
- Replant native trees and little follow-up maintenance; long-term impacts. Even if you do replant, the follow up maintenance is also a big concern. Extensive watering is needed for 2 years and attention to weeds is ongoing. Systematic planting of trees can help reduce nutrient levels. Trees need not be destroyed, and planting is much less expensive.
- [Natural resources] should have been part of the group working on a more holistic plan for these streams and from an ecological perspective
- City has this problem with stormwater! Source protection...
- Holistic city-wide problem; group discussion across the city
- Concerned about a campaign promulgated by stormwater management and AECOM, an engineering firm, at EPC meetings. The claim was without this project, "You'll have raw sewage coming in." Another claim was that even if the City does not do the stream project, the City still needs to cut down trees to put in the new sewer.
- The sewer pipes are solid and, laid down on the hard clay, geologically speaking, they are like cement. There are two pipes, one coming down from King Street. There is already clearing from King Street to put the pipe in. It is possible to put in a pipe and put armoring around it without taking one tree down – as was done in 2016.
- Where an old stand of trees is over the sewer line along the trail, clear cutting is not the best answer for removing them, but clear cutting the whole 1900 linear feet of stream is in the original plan.
- Middle Strawberry Run has hardened sandstone on the banks so very little soil there and will not migrate much. If we make an artificial flood plain where none was before, we will have flooding on private property.
- A plunge pool is fine but should not be ripping the stream apart to make the plunge pool.
- Stormwater retention ponds would not hold up here.
- If pulling out any concrete with rip rap, it should be done carefully.
- The Clean Water Act protects the acidic seepage swamp. Natural Channel Design disturbance would not be permitted under the Clean Water Act.)
- Would like to see the stream as intact as possible. One of the things they did in the 60s and 70s was to drop concrete for stabilization and there are big blocks of concrete there that could be removed. First, do no harm. Nothing has been done to maintain the stream area. Could fix the path, and the first 100 yards or so of the stream. Bring in a landscape firm who works with native plants to provide thoughts on what could be done.

- One of the things that the City said when the project first started was that they would use native plants. There was a 5+ year project to remove invasive plants from Taylor Run. Now only native plants remain, so invasives aren't a problem there.
- No concerns about the stream's future if it's left as it is. The City keeps talking about the sewer line. The City needs to tell us exactly what needs to be done to the sewer line. It's understood that the sewer line needs to be maintained, but the City needs to be clear about what that means. And the sewer line is only on a portion of the stream, not the full length, so is much smaller than the project that was planned.
- I hope that the City will be clear and transparent. The City's commitment now is 2.5 million. That still leaves a lot of money that's been committed to the stream that could do other things. They might not want to do the other fixes to TR if the credits aren't being pursued. They could if they wanted to upgrade that stream for well within the budget, they've committed to do it but might have to give up the grant from DEQ. They don't need the credits from the Taylor and Strawberry Run.
- There has been little communication from the City since the legislative session last year
- Two-fold - they provide really important habitat in a densely populated area for wildlife and native plants and the co-benefits of having those things. There is a lot of opportunity for improving those components in these areas. Less important but still of significance is the recreational benefit of each. I'm less familiar with Strawberry and Lucky Run (I don't know if there are walking paths there). Taylor Run is used a lot now and would probably be used a lot more with improvements. A lot of birders use nearby Monticello Park for birdwatching. 4 Mile Run is on the migration path for a lot of these birds.
  - Taylor Run "average user" probably skews a little older, walking dogs or solo or in small groups. Near a community garden so my guess is that there are a lot of people who part of that garden who are walking through there. The homes nearby are generally single-family homes on the older side.
- Stream is swimmable, i.e., healthy and accessible: kids need to be a part of the environment
- Current disconnect between the streams and the people; need an educated community and connected community
- More bridges built between the city and citizens; macroinvertebrate testing, more opportunity
- Also a wildlife resource
- They can address issues like the exposed sewer infrastructure without cutting down all the trees ; they've done it before. They can do less and be more careful. Don't bid out to the lowest bidder, go with the company that knows how to be more cautious.
- Soil samples indicated that nutrient credits aren't needed.
- Preserve and increase the habitat, forest, and riparian areas around these streams. Trees are effective and cheaper than construction.
  - Continuous habitat for wildlife corridor. [It would be great] to connect Strawberry Run and 48 Early St. to establish a more continuous habitat. I have seen evidence of deer, raccoons, etc. It would be ideal to acquire the land from the HOAs where they're currently managing it like a golf course (grass seed, cultivated plants that escape). Put a trail in for human use. Bike lanes and walking paths through parks.
  - The First Baptist Church has not been good stewards ; parking lot in the woods, planting nonnative species, how is this not a conflict of interest?
- Would like the streams and area around Old Chinquapin Village cleaned up. Slabs in the stream from torn down homes when residents moved out.
- Would like signage improved.



- Too much litter and trash; big cement slabs in Taylor Run; not natural in that regard, catch the litter
- My hope is that someone or some group would adopt both creeks; more free flowing
- Chinquapin Village was subsidized housing for Pentagon employees during the war; torn down, access to Chinquapin was cut off; hundreds of children went to public schools
- High school fields, TC Williams; open field in the center of the park
- Village phased out gradually so not contentious
- The signs are not maintained well and defaced - gangs?
- Where the HS is now standing; the stadium lights story...
- Not an easy place to traverse; a small space to operate in
- Want minimal trees taken and disturbance
- Want it to be fully restored! Lots of different issues. Need clean-ups and more complicated aspects dealt with later
- Find a solution that plants more trees
- Find common ground...lot of drama
- City does only what is necessary; specific to fix what needs to be fixed...
- Leave the natural environment as is; least amount of damage
- Staging area on a side street; 3-9 months-not appropriate; damage to Fort Williams Parkway
- Need to see it ahead of time; sophisticated group in the communities and a part of the process
- Taylor and Strawberry Run are different; for SR do no harm; a conservation area; a delicate area, great wildlife area
- Protecting private property is key for SR
- Concern/hope: Removing the concrete slabs upstream in Strawberry Run (There are also some in Taylor Run). If the City really cared about the streams and about being an "eco-city," wouldn't this stuff be taken care of before now. It's only when they get a grant that they get motivated to fix it. Vision would be that they're restored to as natural a state as they can be and that the public can access them easily. It concerns me when I look at the staging area and the heavy equipment they're planning to bring in. If they're going to put in 10 native species, in that area how many natural species are there? Are there way more than 10 natural species? You're going to cut down various sizes and ages of trees but replace them with trees that are all the same age, which doesn't seem natural. Some of this is under the guise of stormwater or keeping nutrients out of the Bay. My hope is that the streams would be restored as naturally as possible.
- City's presentation in October 2020 used culvert photos, but I don't think they were all from the City, I wish they had labeled them. The erosion is from run-off from development.
- Not a lot of concerns re: environmental. We'll support the City.
- With any project, how and when it is done. Equipment areas. There for extended times would be a concern. Pre-school is present. Assume the community would not be allowed down there and then back to normal. Erosion issues would be gone. Back to normal.
- Don't want bad press but it is appropriate to do the work.
- We do get debris and rocks, but it is not really that big of a deal on our property. Of course there is erosion, but there does not appear to be any present danger to any buildings on the property.
- The sewer line comes much closer to our property and the City has a right of way on property to work on that. Impervious areas and near fire lane - any work on that would impact our fire lane and our playgrounds. I only have a little info on this. Some of our advisors have mentioned that the sewer may be addressed. Wonder if sewer line will be addressed during this repair of the stream.

- Would be interested in how and where equipment is stored during the time the repair is being done, work hours, and the noise during the week. We would need to keep the community safe from the area.

4. **What kinds of information would be helpful or important for you and others to be able to participate meaningfully in creating a collaborative strategy for Taylor and Strawberry Run?** (There are three questions within this question.)

a. **The kinds of information, such as, for example, data, field trips, and presentations about different methods of addressing stream degradation?** (The answers to this question are divided into two subheadings: “Kinds of Information” and “Ways to Provide the Information.”)

b. **And who would you like (or trust) to provide this information? Specific types of experts, or state agencies, or the PDC, or university scientists or engineers?**

c. **Is there a specific person -- or type of person -- that you think would be trusted by all participants in the process?**

#### Kinds of Information

- We need information to make upstream stormwater ponds as opposed to downstream changes.
- What laws/regulations for upstream development reduce impact on the streams?
- One concern has been that the City has not listened to residents as it has pursued grant funding, and it may lose that if it does anything different. However, the City is now using an engineering assessment that will use more stringent measures than the downstream Strawberry Run project that failed. The monitors and gauges will be helpful in this assessment.
- It would be helpful for the City staff to know exactly what the community wants to protect, including trees.
- With the velocity of the water coming down the stream, the gauges may indicate that a retention pond and plantings may be needed for Taylor Run.
- Strawberry Run has gauges too for monitoring velocity.
- City staff is looking at upstream solutions, which would entail green infrastructure, such as water velocity. which dissipates against the rocks in an armored plunge pool and as it goes over a weir.
- Publicize the environmental costs and [the fact that] new trees are not the same as old ones. New ones need expensive long-term maintenance.
- Ask, “Where should a worksite be entered, how do you reduce disturbance, and how do you avoid bringing in invasive plants?”
- Give the ABCs of other ways to address Stormwater issues.
- Ask, why is this the best option? What less intrusive options are there? Nutrient credit trading...what are the alternatives?
- We need to have good science and not public opinion.
- What is the role of City Staff in other departments included in this process? What say do they have in this matter? They need to be brought in legitimately.
- Objective, unbiased experts ; Virginia Tech has experts that can provide objective views. Virginia State Forestry has experts who could be helpful and not compromised by payment.
- What is the best option? What are the alternatives?
- Educate the community in the range of options. Do not sugarcoat the environmental cost. Use full cost accounting. New trees need long-term maintenance. Provide this information at the highest level!

- Where should a worksite be entered, how do you reduce disturbance, and how do you avoid bringing in invasive plants?
- The City needs to tell us what they think needs to be done. No one will stand in the way of a legitimate fix to a sanitary sewer. From daily water testing we know that the stream is usually a trickle but fluctuates a lot with rain. That needs to be fixed because historically the stream was up on the surface and more of the water was absorbed on the land, not runoff.
- Everything that is done needs to be part of a package. There needs to be bioswales and water retention strategies. There is room for them in the parking lots by the shopping centers. The High School was built as a green building so supposedly there wasn't going to be runoff, but there is because they haven't maintained the cistern. There is room for water retention measures, but they're expensive. Episcopal High School already has some water retention on site. We need to know what else is contributing to the runoff. Where is it coming from? How can be it slowed down or stopped?
- Trust science-driven data. Transportation & Environmental Services' methodologies have been questionable. They seem to be more money driven than data driven.
- The land between the stream and park needs to be taken care of. The soil needs to be held in place. It is a matter of time before catastrophic event occurs. More people would enjoy the area.
- Look at the whole picture! Man-made changes have brought more runoff.
- What other options exist? Compromise?
- Scale back the original plan to protect the infrastructure
- We want to see the City's plans!
- Remove the trees that are hazards. Realistically figure out what trees need to come down.
- Where are the two studies? Is the city holding the documents?
- The City does not respond to our questions about the studies. Residents will not trust the City if it does not produce the documents on the studies before a technical advisory group begins work.
- The City has hired consultants to create alternatives. Start by examining those. What's the best course of action? Assess and establish needs and objectives.
- The project needs to be done, it's just the approach that is concerning.
- Can there be replating and regrading of the area between King Street and Taylor Run to keep the soil from sliding down?
- Improving park paths for walking.
- A middle way between activists and the City is preferred - "Some medium ground... something between demolishing trees and not taking any trees down."

### Ways to Provide Information

- It may be hard for public to assimilate this (technical) information. However, they can understand the basic question – Do these projects reduce stormwater flow in a sustainable manner and improve the environment? The answer is no.
- Not sure what to do. The goal is to come closer to a consensus and to use any tool in the toolkit for meaningful dialogue.
- It would be important for City staff and stakeholders to meet face-to-face to learn how they were not heard and what their concerns are.
- Need to build trust.
- It may be helpful to go door-to-door near Strawberry Run to get feedback.

- A website can be used for feedback during construction. Other information can be provided on the website such as information on a plunge pool and the sewer line, particularly an exposed sewer line with an overflow problem.
- Talking in a coffee shop, one-on-one has worked on another project in another city.
- A newsletter could be provided.
- Need a transparent and professional process with a round table of professional, technical expertise. Because of the lack of trust, the process should adhere to scientific integrity. Also, it cannot be consultant-driven; the expertise cannot be disenfranchised.
- The outcome needs to be reported to the Environmental Policy Commission, Civic Associations and Environmental Council of Alexandria – the process needs to be transparent.
- Need to work together on the irreplaceable plants and trees.
- This should not be on Stormwater's webpage. It should be presented in an impartial way.
- There is a need for face-to-face meetings with the City, with give and take and questions can be asked with both sides. Helpful to have IEN or third-party facilitators.
- A third-party facilitator would be helpful. It's unfortunate that there are some very vocal minority opinions that have been in many different contexts disparaging of City staff. The struggle is that when City staff attempts to facilitate, cooler heads don't prevail. "City staff gets [criticized] quite a bit and they work very hard to do good work for the City." Because some folks are biased against the City, it would be helpful to have a third-party facilitator for discussions.
- During the Environmental Action Plan, there was a lot of community engagement, including workshop days where we would have facilitated discussions topic by topic with a member of the EPC and City Staff and participants could give their thoughts on the specific subject matter. That format was great, but it doesn't reach a huge audience and it's self-selecting because it's people who are passionate about issues. It's a very open and inviting way to do something as opposed to large community meetings where there are just a few speakers and a large audience because there's much less collaboration. "People in the audience might feel fairly disengaged. It's more work to do the workshop but I think it could be effective. It does put the onus on people attending to have their own ideas and present them, instead of just reacting."
- This can be very technical and dense. You would want the technical information there as a support but having a very talented writer to distill it down to a few key points, maybe one or two pages per stream. My guess is that that's the level of interest for the broader public. If you can physically post those at the Park to reach the user that's as good a way as any. You do see lots of signs saying, "Don't Bulldoze Chinquapin Park," and that's not actually helpful, but has been very effective for the people behind that messaging.
- Getting City staff into the schools is critical. Students should know and understand what's going on.
- Need for greater information sharing between departments. Being included in the process and not being written off as tree huggers when we give our input. It's our Park, you can't bulldoze it so that you can bring millions of dollars from the state for a problem that's not a real problem. It's not fixing a problem; it's building your resume.
- City staff should meet during City business hours. The different departments should be included in the community meetings as a source of information. More transparency is always preferred.
- Have better community outreach! Very sophisticated residents. A transparent process. Let's get going!
- Have a plan on the least disruptive way to proceed and then get to work.

- Figure out the design and get it done.
- Present the information as part of a school assembly or part of a school program.
- A media show such as a news podcast for the school could be generated by students for students
- Transparency is critical to trust. [This was said about the two studies of alternative plans.]
- We have been subject to a lot of presentations.
- “Smart people are dug in!” Very contentious issues in front of City Council, including uproar about sexual assault in high schools, taking community resource officers out of schools, and concurrent-bike lanes issue as well.
- [The problem with] City engagement with roundtables and citizen involvement is you never hear back what was done with the comments, what filtered through, what was thrown out.
- Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) had done clearcutting outside of the library on the original channel of Holmes Run without informing the public or even telling Natural Resources or Parks. Lack of coordination of communication between departments.
- All four departments should sign off on projects to show they’re aware of what’s happening.
- They can say “we had community meetings, we had community input.” “But the public feel like staff just does what it wants to do.’
- A presentation indicating the timeline for the project – start dates and end dates - and notification of any change in the timeline.
- One organization wished to remain politically neutral and asked not to be a location for presentations.
- A Zoom meeting with the City has been helpful.

**b. Who would you like (or trust) to provide this information? Specific types of experts, or state agencies, or the PDC, or university scientists or engineers?**

- The City has relied on its own people with vested interests who are good engineers but who are not biology experts. These projects require a deeper understanding of the science pertaining to these streams – on biodiversity, birds and other animals, plants, and human health.
- We have tried walks. We hired fluviologist, John Field, to inform the City (big Zoom Meeting). We hoped for more close collaboration but could not get beyond differences of opinion. Relying on regulatory goals shuts out openness to science relevant to these streams - it comes down to good science and not just public opinion.
- City’s consultants are good technicians (engineers), but these streams require a deeper understanding of the underlying science. John Field, a fluviologist, can examine how the streams may be filled in and then tell you what will happen to the streams in the future. Need scientists.
- Need a list of experts without vested interests to prioritize and assimilate the information.
- Small group of in-house people should meet over time. Independence and transparency are critical.
- Yes, staff can move forward, and we can forgive each other. We have professional credibility.
- What is the role of individuals in City departments other than stormwater staff in this process? They need to be brought in legitimately.

- Some skepticism about the idea of technical group. If someone doesn't like the information, they might not trust the source even if it's a third party of some kind.
- Yes, maybe someone at Virginia Tech. We collaborated on the Environmental Action Plan. They have a satellite campus in Old Town now. A University partner could help to address the trust issue.
- Joe Schilling, formerly with Virginia Tech, is still in the area. (He is a senior research associate in the Metropolitan Housing and Community Policy Center and Policy Advisory group at the Urban Institute.) City Staff would know him. He and his students were instrumental in writing a lot of the Environmental Action Plan in 2008-2009. His demeanor is excellent, and he has significant technical expertise.
- The City's technical staff is very good. The very visible contention between the Environmental Policy Commission and City Staff is new.
- Pull in people at the University level. A local source is Christian Jones, PhD, is a Professor and director of the Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center (PEREC). Step out of the political lens.
- There is more comfort with someone like a fluvial geomorphologist, a hydrologist who actually measures flow rather than someone who predicts flow during these intensifying storms. Is there equilibrium? Is the sediment load in equilibrium? Are the soils not alluvial? University sources as opposed to consulting firms, like Virginia Tech. Need wildlife biologists, and ecologists. Can't leave it to the engineers! Sometimes you shouldn't engineer a solution out of everything.
- Trust state agencies and universities
- Use outside consultants who have not seen the original plans; maybe some new viewpoints on it.
- City has a perspective that you work for them! As a result of the "road diets," the accident rate has gone up ten-fold.
- Would like to see the Natural Resources division receive more respect. Natural Resources staff has explicitly been told they can't speak to the Planning Commission or City Council. "He is someone I trust. If he had been allowed to speak, we would be in a different place now."
- The City can be trusted to address the sewer issue.
- The help of an arborist, John Marlin, should be used in this process.

**c. Is there a specific person - - or type of person – that you think would be trusted by all participants in the process?**

- Someone without vested interests

**5. What are different options for the streams that you would like to explore in moving forward? Or that you would like to learn more about?**

- The mayor would say the City is under pressure from EPA and State DEQ [to do what the grant funding permits.]. The City thinks because we have the funding we need; we have to do it. Follow MS4 Permit goals. In the Chesapeake Bay Act – just so many inches of water and pollutants are regulated. I recommend changing local laws.
- As rainfall ratchets up, uncollected water increases, and pollutants increase. The best way to address this is with upstream Stormwater ponds and the least effective is stream

restoration. Climate change is pushing us to look at all the models in terms of water volume.

- Infrastructure - We have Best Management Practices, but sewer lines should be protected in as environmentally sensitive manner as possible. There will be debate on how to do this.
- Need to re-examine the entire system of stormwater runoff because the current system is not designed to handle it – too much water flow and pollutants. Standards set up for Bay cannot be met currently. We can supply a list of experts.
- With the velocity of the water coming down the stream, the gauges may indicate that a retention pond and plantings may be needed for Taylor Run.
- Strawberry Run also has gauges for monitoring velocity.
- City staff is looking at upstream solutions, which would entail green infrastructure, such as water velocity. which dissipates against the rocks in an armored plunge pool and as it goes over a weir.
- Natural channel design (NCD) comes out on top in terms of long-term maintenance.
- What are the alternatives to natural channel design? What are the least intrusive options? What is the role of City staff in other departments involved in the process? Need to be brought in legitimately.
- Ask, “Where should a worksite be entered, how do you reduce disturbance, and how do you avoid bringing in invasive plants?”
- Everything that is done needs to be part of a package. There needs to be bioswales and water retention strategies. There is room for them in the parking lots by the shopping centers. The High School was built as a green building so supposedly there wasn’t going to be runoff, but there is because they haven’t maintained the cistern. There is room for water retention measures, but they’re expensive. Episcopal High School already has some water retention on site. We need to know what else is contributing to the runoff. Where is it coming from? How can be it slowed down or stopped?
- Natural channel design does not work in urban environments.
- A concerted effort is needed upstream, but it is a complicated issue. We all want to avoid flooding in everyone’s basement.
- Two approaches – One is a concerted effort to address issues upstream – retrofitting stormwater ponds (knows experts on this), in a way to mimic nature and minimize damaging impact of stormwater, such as erosion. The other is an in-stream effort, which includes working on the sewage line (with minimal impact on stream). Make them more attractive.
- The Chinquapin Park area can be addressed more easily because it is not a development or otherwise privately owned.
- If you apply Natural channel design principles, you cannot recreate the “original” stream (as close as possible) because stormwater will undo the work. It will be a very temporary fix with immediate impact on biodiversity and lack of any benefit in reducing pollution.
- There is lack of evidence of the need for reducing phosphorus and nitrogen in sediment in these streams. We need to look at the science and weigh the pros and cons.
- It is necessary to take down trees and that may require more long-term maintenance. The public is attached to these trees but may not realize that the trees will be falling into the streams if they are not removed. The idea would be to replace the trees taken out several times over. An open dialogue will be helpful.
- “The public is focused on the mature trees, not the new, younger ones. All kinds of factors must be accounted for. When’s the best time to plant a tree, 100 years ago and the second time is right now!”
- Possible options include: (1) a conceptual design for an armored version – rip rap along a stream; (2) a conceptual design for a bio-engineering version using plunge pools with

planted grasses to keep the streams in place instead of rip rap; and (3) a version of natural channel design.

- Leave the interior Taylor Run alone – just need to slow the water and do upstream work. Lots of things that are very doable.
- Need good policy and process. It should be safeguarded and done right.
- Years ago, when there was not a plan to do the interior of Taylor Run, there was a plan to build a retention pond right at the high school. That plan was on the right path. We need to do this upstream and not use critical resource areas as stormwater projects.
- There is a lot that is doable. Use hundreds of feet of bioswale upstream (with a twelve-foot width) to sequester runoff. (Bradley Shopping Center)
- Another idea is to use the large, dry, shallow bed next to the Aquatic Center at Chinquapin Park and fill it with gravel and the right vegetation.
- Another idea is to use stormwater management tools on the Minnie Howard Campus of Alexandria City High School.
- The First Baptist Church of Alexandria has an impervious parking lot that it pays stormwater taxes on. A French drain could be installed.
- DEQ gives sizable credits for native tree planting, and these could be used for planting trees in the floodplain areas (not over planting in the forest.)
- Add trees as buffers. Remove the concrete. Reduce mowing such as Holmes Run Trail. These are very low-hanging fruit.
- A multi-pronged intervention process would encourage upstream thinking; Transportation & Environmental Services and Recreations, Cultural Activities, and Parks should work better together. We need a task force that includes climate change working together across the City.
- The minimum in intervention – using the minimum gray and green infrastructure needed to make these streams functional, safe and sound.
- Reduce mowing to let more areas grow wild and reduce stormwater damage. There is no need to worry about crime near the path from a wild area here because there are two football fields that would separate the forest from the walking path.
- Build more stormwater catchments throughout the City above the streams.
- Taylor Run could really benefit from some small fixups. If you come in from the high school side, that's the most degraded part of the stream. Every two weeks Taylor Run becomes a different stream because of the foliage blooming. High School uses that stream as a laboratory.
- Something that gets close to a stream's pre-development state would be the best option (old growth trees, no infrastructure). Perhaps the best way is to get a few different companies that specialize in restoration to give their plans, and then it's less about what City staff wants and more about weighing different options. That would be more expensive, but perhaps worth it when you have this kind of deadlock.
- People feel like they were excluded. That's understandable. Perhaps both sides weren't doing enough to compromise.
- It seems like when you have this much at stake it's probably worth exploring whether the City can work with the Department of Environmental Quality to adjust percentage requirements for the MS4 permits.
- If it came from academia, it would be more trusted.
- Armoring the stream is not a bad way to go. One of the things that would help with stormwater would be to daylight the streams that are culverted and create habitat. That big grassy area in front of Chinquapin Rec Center, why not create habitat there? These big extensive projects are just prone to failure, and they cost so much money. In some cases, just armor the stream bank. I don't think you need to do as much as they've done. Remove channelization where it's been channelized.



- Current storms are not like old storms. Weather patterns are always changing. Accurate measurements are essential. Don't need to intervene that much. Eventually the alluvial soils will be removed if they haven't already been.
- What has to be done? Protect the sewer lines. Move the trail or protect it. Forest Park could serve as an alternate trail. Expert to talk about a remedy for this situation.
- Address the whole package. Fix it properly! No slabs of concrete, have it look like a park, no natural channel design. I don't think natural channel design will work.
- Learn more about urban streams. Have more outreach. Focus on flooding and erosion control.
- Consider the whole area at once. Need a clean-up crew, maybe a Key Club.
- City owns the stream corridor; backyards delineated by fences or sodded back yards
- Residents have planted trees on City property. Beautification is important to residents.
- Main objective for Strawberry Run is property degradation! City plan would have made it worse.
- How do you preserve the delicate ecosystem?
- I would love to see the finished report that y'all present to the City, to see what others thought of and what resonated with others. In the City presentation they used a stream before/after, but we would like to know how things evolve and how they plan to do these stream restorations.
- Rod Simmons, out of his own pocket, did nutrient tests on Taylor Run, and I'm appalled that he had to do that, it should have been done.
- I'd like to see data and transparency written in plain English so that the average person can understand it.
- Temple Beth El has done incredible work on their property, and I would like to see more buy in like that.
- I would like to see environmental clubs, to earn the eco-City title again, and to see more natural choices based on actual data from the sites.
- Want to learn what actions are decided on and timing of different activities so we can protect those on our private property.
- Aesthetics concern us. We would like significant aesthetic improvement. The stream will look much nicer. It will be more park-like.
- Will not take sides on the environmental issues.
- "Could fish be added to Taylor Run?"
- About the dead and live trees, "In a perfect world it would be nice to have grass on the slopes and to have it thinned out in the summer when it looks overgrown. We have deer and fox and squirrels. We understand that would mean you have to mow the grass, but would be nice to see more flowering plants, to have it be a little more inviting than trees down and weeds around it."

**6. How might we best engage the different communities and stakeholders for each stream? (There are three questions within this question.)**

**a. Presentations, listening sessions, open houses with experts, workshops with maps, focus groups, field trips, different languages, timing to ensure equity and inclusivity, and/or others?**

**b. Taylor Run community and stakeholders – i.e., people who are impacted by it, and use it or enjoy it?**

**c. Strawberry Run community and stakeholders?**

(The answers to all three questions are combined below.)

- The City of Alexandria has many caring groups, but past group efforts have not been effective. No business community has weighed in on this topic.
- Back in 2013 the Environmental Council of Alexandria conducted meetings to help the City work better with the community. These were not effective. The Environmental Council of Alexandria (ECA) had a Zoom talk on science-based data and invited the public and regulatory folks. ECA presented scientifically based information. The City responded by giving its own presentations.
- It would be more helpful if the City would give more weight to the voices of an intelligent and committed community. The ECA is so committed to learning the relevant science-based data that it hired John Field to inform the community. When the City is adversarial and not listening to [community members], it is tough to figure out how to build consensus.
- Regarding hiring experts for a presentation, the community is knowledgeable and recognizes the need for an engineer and a scientist, but because the science part is pretty esoteric, finding a perfect match for the science is not likely.
- There are several issues where the City has not been listening to residents about the level of science-based expertise required.
- This is a very difficult situation. The infrastructure needs to be fixed. The stream is not in good shape. Protect the stream first but it might be temporary.
- The trees are a concern. Let us inventory what we have in the habitat.
- Who uses the streams?
- Use a two or three phased approach.
- Community members and City staff can meet one-on-one.
- Involve a Taylor Run HS science group. Reconnect students to the stream.
- Need to learn more about this super unique wetland/acidic seepage swamp and why it is special. We want to keep the natural resources around!
- I want to make a place for people!
- Use the citizen monitoring report.
- Have a small group process.
- Kathie Hoekstra with EPC shows the spirit of inclusion and transparency. Give a presentation about all the special things about Taylor Run. Ground rules for the discussion will be necessary. For decision-making, standards to work by are necessary. Can EPC be an arbiter on the facts?
- Find common ground. The city should say what it is working on. The City should keep the communication frequent.
- Use statistically valid surveys. City staff are often getting input from the homeowners who have time to engage with them. A randomized sample is more statistically valid than self-selected participants, but those less engaged may not be educated on these issues.
- A lot of education will be necessary for these meetings.
- A survey should include an information packet.
- The University of West Virginia, Virginia State, and the University of Maryland have good forestry programs.
- "Tree Stewards" is a community group in Alexandria who may be included.
- The High School uses this space as a lab. It would be important to connect with those teachers to learn about the value of the stream to them.
- Yes, to listening sessions, community meetings, etc. It should not be just City staff presenting. City staff should be going to the monthly meetings of the communities like Homeowners Associations, instead of those community members having to go to where it is convenient for the City. Demonstrating that effort would be important. "Even if you don't want to hear this, we're going to talk about it." Their usual approach is to set up a meeting on a topic and then invite people to come, rather than going to communities to

present to the residents. It's certainly more efficient, and there are a lot of civic associations, but they could prioritize the ones that are close by.

- Follow-up: Are some of the items we've heard mentioned -- plantings in median, addressing upstream development, etc. -- already included in the Environmental Action Plan? Yes. I don't think someone could say that the City hasn't tried to think about these things holistically. There are an overwhelming number of them, and they're all things that have been thought about. The Plan is supposed to be revisited every 5-10 years. The Energy and Climate group is under the purview of the City Manager.
- Considering the significant capital investment, if there was a plan that anyone was going to adopt that didn't account for huge wash out events, I would be very surprised that those would be selected.
- Involve academia. Bring in scientists from the George Mason University Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center (PEREC).
- Need to include David Taylor, who has talked with DEQ, Russ Bailey, arborist John Marlin. Need to do like Kathy Hoekstra has done – be fair minded, professional, and inclusive. Include Civic Associations.
- Get residents involved in volunteer work! All opinions matter for problem-solving.
- Get the youth voice in city government. There are streams behind nearly every school. Have an Adopt-a-stream program and teach them about their watershed. Go see the stream with an expert.
- Programming in association with public schools like the Winkler Botanical Preserve, now lost due to the pandemic. Have Watershed Warriors for the streams!
- Field trips, listening sessions, open house with experts, workshops with maps. Having the presentations so that the explanations can be made for people who aren't aware of issues. Not just one field trip to check a box. We need to make repeated efforts to engage a community. Listening sessions are important for community feedback.
- When Parks is working on a Park Plan, they will have a phase where they have feedback from the community, and they have a listening board with sharpies at the park to write what they want to see in the park, so it targets park users. The board is a really good idea because you can really get the full breadth of park users. Something like that would be helpful.
- Not sure how best to engage the communities. The communities may not be looking at the needs of the City as a whole.
- Chinquapin Park Rec Center has a room with birthday parties, etc. That location holds tens of people, not hundreds.
- The public may not be aware of the walking path. There is no signage to direct them to the walking path.
- There are a lot of strong opinions from the Civic Associations. Civic Associations do work if notified early and often. Have the City send something to read. A resident noted that she or he would read the information. "I'll read it and try to stay up on it."
- Have workshops and segments posted by social media – a social media platform, Instagram, and twitter.
- High School clubs could take this on.
- Can do fundraisers.
- City already can use mail to contact every resident plus the Civic Associations.
- Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations are Seminary Hill Association, Ridge Civic association, and West End Coalition of Civic Associations. I bet the City doesn't even know these exist.
- Civic engagement has been limited and focused on one group, e.g., bus riders.
- Taylor Run is more the complicated stream. Taylor needs the scientific studies and engineering plans.

- Without stated objectives, what are we actually talking about? We could be talking about different things and the discussion becomes a game of telephone.
- What is the problem we are trying to solve? Accept the diagnosis..." Clearly define the problem.
- Consultants are expensive.
- Civic associations have been helpful in spreading the word; the EPC has listened and done well too.
- Each project could have its own Facebook page where citizens could ask questions for staff to answer.
- Stakeholder groups could be helpful going forward, maybe under the Parks Commission. Let the Parks commission have more oversight.
- Ask the City if they have ever asked a Scout group to partner with them? There's always a Boy Scout looking for a project.
- Strawberry Hill Civic Association would be the way to reach the Strawberry Run community. Beth El Hebrew Congregation is nearby. There is a Taylor Run Citizen's Association near Taylor Run.
- There is also the possibility of connecting with NoVA Community College students for stream monitoring.
- EPC should be involved, but [there has been disappointment] because in the past there are places where they could have made a statement and didn't.
- When King Street's four lanes became two lanes with added bike lanes, there was a series of town halls that were informative. The crosswalks make it much safer now. Put town halls in different places, such as Alexandria High School. It would be good for casual observers to see this. With social media, there are a number of blog groups for dissemination. That seems to work well. People read those and comment. I would recommend using social media technology. There could be a specific website to address this construction or a Facebook page to visit. It may be hard to do because the City would have to respond.

**7. What would success look like to you? In terms of the streams? For the communities? For equity and inclusivity?**

**a. Taylor Run and General success?**

- Work with community players who have been studying this for a long time.
- Bring experts together and get a consensus.
- Minimize impact on streams.
- Prevent future harm.
- Enhance the nature we have.
- Address root cause in development.
- Need the EPC involved. The City backed off with Kathie Hoekstra's leadership, and took some soil samples, but this did not change the dynamic. It would be helpful to have other organizations involved.
- Success working with the community players
- Bridge the gap between the "yeas and the nays"
- Preserving the natural resources.
- Making the streams a safe place for people to come.
- For Strawberry Run, stabilizing the infrastructure to protect the private property in backyards, including trees.
- Using inlet filters, swales, and plunge pools upstream where appropriate.

- Human interest is the least important; it is an ecological issue. All else secondary.
- Conservation in perpetuity, and quality stewardship including dead tree removal and repair of sewer lines.
- I am optimistic about this process
- Use peer-reviewed, best practices, data-driven information for the best outcome. Combine this with statistically valid public engagement.
- Make minimal necessary repair where stormwater is destroying private property and trees.
- At a high level, consider all ideas equally.
- Do a cost benefit analysis for trees.
- Focus on protection of the tree canopy.
- EPC and EPA should both contribute to the task force.
- Urban Forestry / Recreation, Parks, and Cultural History to meet regularly with Transportation and Environmental services (Stormwater Management) should meet regularly
- Understanding the bare minimum to make them safe and functional. Best practices should drive outcomes, like rigorous soil sampling.
- Process of engagement, using a Task Force to classify and prioritize projects, and involving all entities of the City that connect to those projects.
- The plan would be biocentric and conservation-oriented with ongoing quality stewardship.
- Work on the trail and sewer would be done carefully using BMPs, not what an engineering consultant advises but a plan that includes ecological concerns. Anything less than that these would be destructive.
- For the communities, their interests are best upheld if they feel that their government works for them, fiscally and competently and that their government is protecting their parks for them.
- For equity and inclusivity -
  - Oakland Baptist Church – an old black church. Has interest in an old black cemetery at Fort Ward, the high school and Chinquapin and Forest Park. (No drainage problems there.)
  - There is an older black community in the area.
  - Fort Ward, just above the High School, drains into the Taylor Run watershed and has an old black cemetery.
  - Seminary Hill Civic Association should be included.
- There has already been a success. The City has now come up with the plan to meet its Chesapeake Bay obligation without Taylor and Strawberry Run. They're the first jurisdiction to change their plans, while others are proceeding with theirs with the default (inaccurate) numbers. To the Chesapeake Bay, this is a scam because it inflates the amount of reductions. DEQ has recognized this which is why they now require soil tests. To the City's credit, they paused after the data started coming in.
- Success would look like a minimally disruptive plan, or one that benefits the visuals of the stream.
- Through the lens of equity and inclusivity – knowledgeable people should obviously be included in these conversations at a minimum. They should have veto power over it since the credits are no longer needed. There is still the sanitary sewer issue, which is stormwater, but now it's really a natural resources issue.

- A stream that is as restored to its natural state as possible, that is also sustainable.
- Making it as accessible and inviting to everyone as possible. There are real co-benefits if you restore streams AND make them accessible to people.
- Having healthy streams and programs such as tours and walks
- Success would be increasing habitat, making sure it's in the best condition that we can keep it in, increasing riparian buffers, maintaining trails for the public to use, and connectivity to the wildlife so that they can use these parks and streams.
  - As a species we have to be so much more inclusive and so much less selfish, less human-centric.
- Success would be better outcomes for the streams itself: removing cement slabs, shoring up the banks and hillsides and generally stabilizing the area.
- More people that are personally involved due to the nearness of the project!
- Getting the information out. We have two weekly newspapers, Alexandria Times, and Alexandria Gazette. It would be great if they had a journalist dedicated to following the programming. In addition to the City website, more coverage from both newspapers would be great.
- Have a Facebook page to share information and receive information.
- Good to involve Strawberry Hill Civic Association. The community has many young families. Fran Vogel is the current president.
- African American residents were displaced and relocated to Mudtown area nearby.
- Community Garden at the back of Chinquapin - I'm not sure of the level of interest from those participants.
- Have Friends of Taylor Run.
- Have City staff train citizens including boy scouts. Reward those who contribute.
- Success = as natural a state of the stream as possible using native plants. Too much new construction planting with non-native plants.
- Success = ongoing stream monitoring even if it's twice a year.
- The timeline and the impact to any traffic flow parking lot and any activity we would be doing. That whatever is promised will actually happen. Whatever we've agreed within the time frame actually happens so we can conduct our church activities without further impact.
- I do not want the church to be involved in any controversy - that we are taking a side. No bad publicity, no protesters, nothing we would have to defend. Inclusivity - how we would interact with the neighbors. We would be willing in a setting that would support the City but not have to debate why we are doing that. We do not want to be thrust into that situation at all.
- As a community organization, we try to be a good neighbor, even work with the High School.

b. **Strawberry Run success?**

- Great stable stream that looks good and holding its sediment
- Upstream, downstream and Lake Cook-¼ million dollars to clean out-need a stable stream, people's backyards

- Francis Hammond and Patrick Henry MS are connected to Strawberry Run. An adopt-a-stream program should go through elementary schools and would be beneficial for the stream and those children and schools.
- Have gone a year without hearing anything!
- Open and transparent
- Improve flood and pollution control and remove invasive plants. This is an opportunity for community service.
- Better communication and open transparent process
- Do the least damage you can do
- Protect our environment and tree canopy and streams. There are density issues all over the city, and developers run over the entire area.
- Attention to our environment
- Doing the repairs that are needed...minimize the efforts and cost
- Collaborative and transparent process would get the trust needed
- Have Friends of Strawberry Run and training by the City staff with rewards for those who contribute.
- Have a Facebook page to share information and receive feedback.

**8. What else might be important for us to know in order for us to design a successful collaborative, equitable, and inclusive decision-making process for Alexandria?**

- A naturalist and arborist should be involved. More focus on trees is needed.
- A more engaged, multi-disciplinary approach is needed
- Increase emphasis on conservation and reducing stormwater runoff in development.
- Use a comprehensive approach.
- Montgomery Co Maryland is calling it "Save Our Streams." Something like that could be helpful.
- Greater focus on conservation and preservation and integrating that with prior development
- Other projects that are happening - option to say we are proceeding as a base of reference
- ECA Facebook page remarks
- IEN not seeking a technical solution but a process-based path leading to a solution: "finding the middle way."
- Technical people should be free to do their job
- We need to include evidence-based, rigorous, scientific, and best practices in the project. Use a principled approach informed by higher values.
- You build up from the minimum necessary to minimize disturbance.
- All of the options should be evidence-based, rigorous, and scientific, where the default is minimum intervention
- Community can steer this process, but we need a nuts-and-bolts technical staff to solve the design issues. To design a successful process, it cannot turn into a political arena.
- Strategic framework for moving forward
- The public should have the opportunity to comment on the new plans, and there needs to be a face-to-face opportunity to work it through with everyone in the room. Including John and Rob, Jesse, and his team.

- The community is using Facebook groups to discuss these topics and the City's engagement with IEN.
- Different Facebook pages indicate some in the community are not interested in coming to the table to compromise.
- Erosion is undercutting the road and must be addressed.
- At this point I see good things coming out of this. We already have significant success in the City coming up with an alternative plan. Tree planting is not a fix but it's a supplement. Jesse mentioning tree planting in the EPC meeting, and the Mayor mentioning it in an interview before the election - those are things that probably wouldn't have happened before. It seems like Stormwater didn't previously understand that opportunity.
- Trying a lot of options for outreach and posting it physically in these places (at the high school, in Chinquapin Park, at the churches) not just online. There are going to be some people on both sides of this who are very entrenched. Reaching and engaging everyone else would be important to come to a consensus. Not just addressing the loudest people in the room.
- Connect back up again with the schools and build community trust!
- There is a great opportunity to expand 4 mile run and expand to Taylor Run
- Retention rates are low! Four Mile Run organization is great and has the ability to connect, like he's done within the Hispanic community of Chirilagua.
- Alexandria is extremely transient. Some really vocal residents will be gone in three years. Others who have lived here forever won't say a word. Immigrant populations often live in apartments, anecdotally they stay here longer than the higher earning professionals. It's very difficult to reach that community, but they need to be engaged. We have a significant Ethiopian population, so we started posting more in Amharic. More work like that is called for.
- Something should be posted at the Park to meet the user where they are.
- Community listservs and e-news.
- Sometimes with the public input it seems like it's done quickly and quietly to check a box, but that isn't really serving the residents.
- Civic associations (CA) could be a practical way for the city to get ideas across-engage the CA from the start-from the beginning-no brainer-schools as well, different way to engage. Also younger people.
- City council have a role. Politics had a role in the issues. Crazy situation...the bike path issue as well-a practical standpoint it is great, slowing traffic down on King Street near Woodbine Nursing Home and Silverado Nursing Home
- The African American community has often been pushed around. They were displaced in the 60s to build Fort Ward park. It's important to engage with that community, we're talking about long term residents.
- Lot of distrust of the city government due to all the transportation projects. People are very jaded. If we go to the city council with X people, they do what they want to do anyway! It's fake community input. Skepticism has set in.
- Lack of trust of the city staff and city council
- There is a need for clear information without an agenda, in order to collaborate and compromise
- There is a lack of permeable surfaces within the community which is of great concern to many residents
- Getting rid of the concrete in the stream! Need community involvement
- There is a need for more transparency from the City. It would be helpful if they would find better ways to engage residents.



- What happens to the suggestions put forward, how are they vetted? If they weren't accepted and included, we'd like to know why. How many times do you want us to show up and then we don't know what happens to our input?
- Near and dear to our heart is the stormwater fees that we pay. Businesses and other organizations were exempt until 2-3 years ago. These fees have gone up. I understand it helps the City fund projects like this. There are questions that come into play now that we are no longer exempt. What does the future hold? As the work is done, how is it paid for. I understand about the grant. Will that help limit future fees? Since going up for us, I assume it is going up for everyone. Where do the fees go? That's dramatic. A \$25,000 fee due to square footage and impervious surfaces. We get some credits. It would seem like some benefit to all organizations in area of credits, because we have allowed the City to do this work on our property. I would imagine City will come back to monitor. I am sure we will continue to allow this. So, in the big picture, will we financially benefit. So maybe this is part of the communication aspect of this process. If City will inform us of this and not expect us to find the right publication for this.
- City Council empowers individual residents over staff expertise and what is eminently food. Staff spends excessive time "putting out fires" of hyper-empowered citizens who have the ear of the mayor.
- The City of Alexandria is experiencing massive turnover. Payroll has been reduced and our staff is overly busy. Transportation and Environmental Services is also busy. This situation may have resulted from departments being too busy (for too little pay) to have a proper discussions on these two streams.
- We do have a mechanism to talk to neighbors and communities and resolve issues internally. The difference here is it is antagonistic and vocal, and got ugly very quickly.
- Trees are important but you have to look forward and look at the condition of the tree and have a long-term mentality.
- Get closer in the dialogue! Use a Bay credit paradigm focus to protect infrastructure.

9. **Who else would you suggest we talk to?**

- a. at the City level?**
- b. Other stakeholders In the community?**

- Rod Simmons, engineers, biologists
- Civic associations, although some Civic Associations do not want to state an opinion.
- We had meeting after meeting with former City Council persons and it did not seem to bridge the gap. Council approves the grants. Engineers brought in a proposed plan that was approved by City Council. The plan should have had a more detailed analysis of environmental and conservation impacts.
- The issue is what are the goals and does the plan meet these goals – for biodiversity, pollutants, and other matters.
- Civic associations
- Tree Stewards
- Civic Associations
- City Council not that valuable, as they only approve the grants

- City-level, Mary Farrah, John Marlin, and Matt Landes (Principal planner for DPI)
- Alexander MacDonald (ECA)
- 3 City high school teachers who use the stream as a lab (ecology/biology).
- Bill Gillespie - he's the team leader on the water quality monitoring.
- Buddy Ford Nature Center-William Ramsey Elementary School-relationship has eroded due to turnover-loss of teachers, could reach out to middle schools
- Reps from each of the Civic Associations, students from Student Council at the high school
- Once a contract has been secured, the Department of Project Implementation oversees everything. Damon specifically has worked with TES on the Ben B. project. He's the one who deals with contractors once the project is underway. They're like the quality control people. Bringing them into the fold would be important.
- There is a former Congressman who is knowledgeable about Strawberry Run
- Park Managers
- Teachers who do the macroinvertebrate surveys
- Speak to the HS-Service Club, as we need to adopt that area and help maintain it. Key Club and NHS, Dr. Hutchins is Superintendent and Principal. The Photography Club takes pictures with garden plots.
- Could involve Boy Scouts too
- Parks and Rec Commissioner can designate a cleanup
- Fran Vogel for Strawberry Run
- Lyn Allen
- Joe Sustach
- Claudia Hamblin-Katnik to learn what her original vision was, or whether they've pivoted completely away.
- Paula Sullivan - high up in the Audubon Society, very engaged in environmental work.
- No group or individuals jump out in my mind. The only thing that comes to mind, at least with the church we can notify our members, even preschool parents. So any work on Taylor Run they may be oblivious to. We need to be active.
- We have groups including preschool and boy scouts - we would like to be knowledgeable so we can inform those who use our property. To give them some awareness.
- Students who traverse the area - if they don't walk through the park, they have a long way to walk home.
- We have over 100 students in the preschool. When ratios change for teacher student ratio, we'll have close to 150 people.
- There is a path that the students use so they need to be informed. On our property, where they enter it is the parking lot, so walk that, then path into woods, so some is just dirt, goes into back yards of house, but also a street butts up against our property, that's where they go to cut through. Not a safety concern where they walk through on our property. The construction could have an impact.
- Peter Balas - Principal at Alexandria High School

**Concerns** - What did the City do with Strawberry Hill? When you click on it says, "no information." Did they have a meeting or not? Strawberry Hill has been routinely overlooked and it's hard to find their information.

- Implication that stream meandering isn't natural

## **Appendix Two**

### **Members of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee**

#### **Name and Affiliation**

Carter Fleming, President, Seminary Hill Civic Association

Erin Winograd, Member, Wakefield-Tarleton Civic Association

Gina Andrews Bruce, Program Manager, Concerned Citizens of Alexandria

Kathie Hoekstra, Chair, Environmental Protection Commission

Kurt Moser, President, Four Mile Run Association

Roy Byrd, President, Alexandria Federation

Steve Walz, Former Director, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

## Appendix Three

### Stakeholders Interviewed for the Assessment

#### Stakeholder Interview List-Staff

Camille Liebnitzky	TES-Stormwater
Daniel Medina	SMW Program Manager
John Marlin	Director, City Parks
Mary Farrah	City, Natural Resources
Rod Simmons	City, Natural Resources

#### Stakeholder Interview List-Community Stakeholders

Andrew Macdonald	President, Environmental Council
Anne Sullivan	ACHS student
Christine Walika	Resident, Strawberry Run
Elizabeth Wright	Holmes Run Association
First Baptist Church Leadership	
Geoffrey Goode	Parks and Rec Commission
Jeanne Jacob	City DEI staff Recommendation
Jeremy Flachs	Attorney
Larry Kocot	Strawberry resident
Mary Breslin	MS Teacher
Nell Mercer	Taylor Run resident
Russell Bailey	EPC member/citizen monitor