

Sustainable DC
Water Working Group Notes
11-2-2011

ATTENDEES

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Adele Ashkar
Julie Lacascio
Lindsey Holaday
Jennifer Peters
Laura Collins

TERM DEFINITION

1. **MS4** (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems): a publicly owned conveyance or system of conveyances (including roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made channels, or storm drains)
2. **Grey Water** (not universally agreed upon): leftover water from baths, showers, hand basins and washing machines only
3. **Black Water**: wastewater containing fecal matter and urine
4. **Rainwater Harvesting**: Collecting water-from a roof, driveway, or other hard surface during a rainfall-and channeling it into a rain barrel or other container to be saved for use in landscaping or in the household.
5. **Impervious**: not permitting penetration or passage (water in this context)

DISCUSSION

1. Who's not at meeting who should be?
 - General Services Administration
 - Property owners
 - Governmental decision makers
 - Water Resources Institute (UDC)
2. Group Norms
 - Decisions will be made by consensus by those present at meeting. Consensus means you can live with decision but don't necessarily fully agree with it.
 - Ideas not agreed upon will still be listed in recommendations, but not as supported by the **working group** (WG).
 - If participant objects to proposal, should have constructive suggestion or language as alternative

3. “What is sustainability?” discussion

- From social justice point of view, all people—particularly low-income people with fewer alternatives—should be able to swim in the Anacostia River
- Keep in mind majority of toxins in rivers come from Maryland
- **MS4** (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems) permit regulations should be tied to sustainability issues and be taken advantage of
- DC waterways shouldn’t be dividers—they should be resources that bring the city together, especially the Anacostia.
- How to measure all these things? [Will be tackled later in process]
- What is the scope of our group? Stormwater? Drinking water? Should really think of all water as one water cycle.
 - Should definitely include sewage in scope—possible to use incentives and punishments to require entities to naturally deal with certain amount of waste generated onsite.
- Lots of synergies/overlap with other WGs. Should identify those areas of overlap.
- Let’s agree on some terms (above)
- Collecting stormwater and adding relevant infrastructure can generate jobs
- Much to be said for decentralizing water system and taking pressure off existing infrastructure, especially as city continues to grow in population
 - How can we do this using natural methods (e.g. rain gardens)
- How can we use gray water more, but also how can we lessen our use of potable water (e.g. not use potable water for sprinklers, fire hydrants)?
- We should be harvesting rainwater
- All water is part of one cycle and one world. What is the connection of water to carbon, air, energy, etc?
- It’s not just about our water use here, but also our water use in manufacturing, which in essence “exports” water outside the city. Need to know our complete carbon footprint
- Need to consider changes to infrastructure as well as behavior
- Whatever is implemented should use local labor to give jobs and training to the chronically underemployed in DC
- Stretch goal: Fishable Anacostia by 2032. Maybe fishable too.
 - People are already fishing in river despite risk—it’s an equitability issue
 - Giving kids access to river is an economic justice issue
- Need to look at recommendations in terms of how savings can offset the costs within and between initiatives (e.g. reducing stormwater runoff through rain gardens may lower operating costs of Blue Plains Water Treatment Center). This may make some initiatives more feasible than would otherwise sound.

NEXT MEETING DATE

New Date and Location [Reserved]

Wednesday, 12/14/11, 5:30 to 8:30 pm

1100 First Street, SE, 2nd floor