Leadership Team Meeting Notes

July 17, 2015 – 1:00-3:30 PM, NVSWCD Conference Room

Attending:

John Stokely, Ron Tuttle, Philip Latasa, Elaine Tholen, Giulia Dougiallo, Megan Dougiallo, Jordan Beeker, Betsy Smith, Dan Schwartz, Jim McGlone, Karen Fuentes, Hugh Whitehead, Suzanne Foster, Kris Unger, Amy Gould, and Shannon O’Neil.

The meeting began with introductions and a welcome to our student attendees from Chantilly High School. They are participants of the Environmental Awareness Board and Jordan is interning at OP3 for the summer.

I-66 Update:

Mark Thomas provided a thorough update on I-66 and the status of the project. A new plan will be issued in Mid-September incorporating the comments already received. Whether the funding mechanism will be public or private is unknown at this time. There are risks for both approaches to the project.

Sustainable Sites:

FCRP approached NVAR about a possible sponsorship of a conference introducing Sustainable Sites Initiative. NVAR was receptive but resolved to begin its collaboration with FCRP by holding a Realtor forum as a first step. Once those results are assessed they would decide on how to go forward on the conference. NVAR has announced the concept in the July/August issue of Re+View Magazine to their membership. They’ve requested and we have provided a list of preferred “nationally recognized” speakers for the forum which they envision as a regional or perhaps even national one as they intend to invite Realtors from all over Northern Virginia. If NAR agrees to participate there could be additional exposure on a national level and the timing will be possibly before the end of 2015 but definitely by the end of 2016.

 Additional discussions around a former effort of “Natural Landscaping” was discussed particularly the fact that this effort received Board endorsement in 2007. Jim gave some historical context around that effort being ahead of the curve in that no one was really practicing this at that time and that “Natural Landscaping” falls into a subset of Sustainable Landscapes Initiative so that should be our focus area. It is helpful to utilize the BOS endorsement as we move forward with the SSI efforts.

Hugh Whitehead asked about staff training on Sustainable Sites particularly in the zoning planning and review phase and we all agreed this was a very important first step and can be done simultaneous to the Realtor Forum effort. The next step to develop staff training will be that Jim, Betsy & Elaine will work together to create the proper message toward the goal of a prequel conference/training for county staff. Betsy will include FCDOT as well. Depending on the level of training required for this Ron Tuttle can help get proper trainers from ASLA and Amy will contact Noel as well to bring him into this effort.

Fall For Fairfax:

Providing website support is the first issue we need to resolve before we can move forward with our fall outreach effort. We discussed several efforts we could do around this festival including tree planting for service hours, an environmental “treasure” hunt with a reward attached for smaller children and signage for the Green Roof tours. Our student attendees thought this was an effort they might be able to enlist student volunteers to help with. The next step will be for Karen to confirm that we can link back to the FFF website so we can promote and get signups for our tours and treasures hunt so we can determine how many volunteers we will need on the ground for event coverage. Once we have connected with the FFF organizers we can determine what food trucks & vendors will be present and how we could work with them for establishing the reward which could be healthy treats and smoothies or something similar.

Green Streets & SWM:

Amy summarized the meeting Karen had arranged with Housing and Stormwater Management. There was agreement that a potential cost-share could be possible for green infrastructure upgrades based on county priorities and the next step was for SWM to send a letter to Housing asking if there was potential for further discussions and site visits. From follow up conversations with SWM, it was determined that the project has been placed in a work plan but the status of the letter is unknown. Betsy will follow up with Matt to see if that letter was sent.

Agenda for August 7th and Meeting Participation:

Amy will distribute an agenda for the August 7th meeting and requested volunteers to assist with different portions of the meeting so that these don’t become boring ordeals for our membership.

Accotink Gorge:

Kris Unger had previously distributed information with background and pictures on an area near the Springfield Costco called Accotink Gorge. It is located in a Park and a difficult location to get to. It is not a priority site for the Park Authority, but it was suggested we might involve Dominion Virginia Power as they have a power line easement through this area. It is a heavily forested area with excessive invasive wisteria that needs to be targeted for removal. It was agreed that it was best not to have a huge volunteer effort here as it is difficult to access but has significance in that it is so inaccessible. Exploring partner interest and potential funders will be the next steps and Kris Unger will be taking the lead on this project. FCRP can provide support as necessary.