

Building Cities in the Rain
Meeting Minutes
Federal Way City Hall
11-7-13

Attendees: De'Sean Quinn, S Central LIO; Tim Gates, Commerce; Heather Trim, Futurewise; Andy Rheaume, Redmond; Jim Simmonds, King Co.; Cheri Gibbons (for Ian Munce), Tacoma; Erika Harris, PSRC; Bill Moore, Ecology; Daniel S. Gariépy, Ecology; John Palmer, US EPA; Bruce Wulkan, PSAT; Paul Bucitch, Bellevue.

Guests: Jeff Wilson, Commerce; Larry Schaffner, WSDOT; William Appleton, Federal Way; Paul Fendt, David Evans; Eric LaFrance, Sammamish

Facilitator: Tim Gates, Department of Commerce

Note taker: Heather Ballash, Department of Commerce

Update from De'Sean: A new item to follow up on this project is incorporated into the South Central Sound Action Area "Near Term Action" (NTAs) for the 2014 Action Agenda.

Background memo

See PowerPoint for details.

Commerce contract - Innovative approaches portfolio by SvR. January presentation to the group and the GMPB in February.

Reviewed key issues (see Slides)

6&7: Flow control standard is main issue.

In some areas wetland hydroperiod can be a significant concern as well. Clarified that main cost concern is not a new requirement from the 2013-2018 permit, but existing flow control requirements in certain geological/geographic circumstances. Reviewed basis for "40/20" zone, a variation from flow control standard based on Des Moines Creek study (streams assumed to have generally stabilized after 20 years of being > 40% impervious).

8: Low Impact Development

Affirmed LID can reduce costs, but existing information is not specific to ultra-urban redevelopment.

9: Regional facilities

Can be helpful where geology and geography are favorable. Parks (e.g., Yauger Park in Olympia) can be multipurpose stormwater facilities but there are often issues with public expectations, multiple use, and financing. In the Redmond Overlake example, the city is leasing space beneath a Sears parking lot. Concern was raised that facilities built to one standard may not be used later to meet future more stringent standards.

Concerns raised about funds spent on stormwater control that may not have enough impact on streams that have been too altered. City bonding for project is limited, cannot count on regional facilities even in all places where it might make sense.

King County (and Seattle?) stormwater manuals include "stop-loss" provisions approved by Ecology. Ecology clarified allowance for equivalent manuals since 2007 (there are several Phase I and Phase II approved manuals).

Ecology clarified communities have the ability to adopt elements of other manuals into locally equivalent manuals (provided there isn't inappropriate "cherry-picking" – if there are elements that necessarily must work together they cannot be adopted in isolation).

Perhaps the stop-loss provision could be evaluated as part of a future project as a potential means to help address concerns about infill redevelopment?

Another alternative in Seattle's manual: a lower flow control standard, but it applies to a lower threshold of projects, so achieves equal or better result.

General observation: fully explore existing tools in the toolbox. See Section 6 Exceptions/Variations.

10. Basin planning

Basin plans are expensive and can be complicated if requires coordination with a number of jurisdictions.

11-33 Review of "context-sensitive mitigation" and VISION 2040

Concerns were raised about potentially "writing off" urban streams if there are variations in flow control standard. Discussions concerning distinctions between urbanized streams that are fully in urban areas and streams that flow through urban areas and have critical habitat upstream. Reminder from regulators that there are ESA-listed species in some urban streams, stormwater approaches should protect beneficial uses wherever they are found.

34- 36 Future scope of this group

The group expressed interest in gathering more information on stormwater impacts in regional growth centers. There are 16 RGCs outside the 40/20. Perhaps these areas or a subset of them could be the focus of more in depth evaluation.

Some concern that any effort should not be looked at as a relaxing of standards, but rather alternative approach. Evaluation should include impacts to streams.

Look at multipurpose green amenities/infrastructure.

Need more data from developers on actual stormwater costs. Are we experiencing population projections in regional centers? Where are the true costs barriers to developing in centers? Are they stormwater, or other costs? Would be helpful to know why are not meeting targets.

Most recent draft regional center monitoring report:

<http://www.psrc.org/assets/10190/07-CentersMonitoringReport2013-10-31.pdf>