

Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council's
3rd **Turning a New Leaf** Conference
Friday, December 4, 2009
George Washington University, Washington, DC

TRACK C: GETTING IT DONE WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Session C3. Panel. *Projects and Lessons Learned*

Anya Zmudzka Sattler, ArtGarden Design

Lauren Wheeler, Natural Resource Design

Adele O'Dowd, Willow Landscape Design

Daryl Braithwaite, City of Takoma Park, Maryland

Aileen Winquist, Arlington County, Virginia

Moderator: Carol Heiser, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Overview: Obstacles faced and lessons learned in five on-the-ground projects

- I. Demonstration of the conversion of a barren residential landscape to a natural one
 - A. "Conservation landscaping is accomplishing something unfulfilled in that space"
 - B. Start fleshing out the project with a specific vision or feel
 - C. Lesson Learned: Client adopted natural plantings because the designer 'told her to'

- II. Demonstration of a residential stormwater treatment using criteria from the Maryland 2000 Stormwater Design Manual
 - A. Assess the limitation of the project and design to specs
 - B. Cooperate and collaborate in conjunction with others – including residents (neighborhood meeting with donuts and coffee out of the back of the designer's truck – basic but effective)
Get community input and honestly incorporate into design
 - C. Lessons Learned
 1. Existing streets may have older streets under them and other hidden treasures
 2. Gently work around trees
 3. Monitor before and after construction
 4. Inflow and outflow of stormwater never ceases to be amazing. Be prepared to make adjustments
 5. Work closely with your communities

- III. Demonstration of an Outdoor Classroom for an urban elementary school without an unpaved playground
 - A. Problem: How can we expect kids to appreciate or desire their environment if it consists of asphalt?
 - B. Solution: Create an immediate environment, not an abstract one (rainforest)
 - C. How: This was an all-volunteer effort and was a designed project including a full set of construction documents and \$50,000 in NFWF grants. Parents were laborers and a local

contractor (Level Green) donated services. Demolition was *pro bono* courtesy of the DC Dept. of the Environment

D. Lessons Learned

1. Soil – terrible composition. Had to replace completely, which ate budget
2. Project is now phased until additional funds are raised

IV. Demonstration of an idea seeded by an existing community rain garden resulting in the Powhatan Springs Children's Rain garden

A. Idea was suggested at a community meeting after another rain garden had been installed

1. Designed (Oculus Landscape Design with Kerns Group and artist Jann Rosen Queralt) to be interactive, complementary of sports areas and to treat runoff
2. Ground and roof runoff filtered. Pumps allow children to pull water up from cistern and drip basins from roof
3. Rain garden contains an underdrain

B. Problems

1. First set of plants did not work (used obligate wetland plants such as rushes). Second planting of goldenrod and switchgrass was successful
2. Lack of maintenance

Solutions

1. Best to plant with something tall to choke out weeds. This helps keep the garden low maintenance
2. Design for a certain stormwater capacity but there is always going to be a time where you're going to exceed that

Garden is located at 6020 Wilson Blvd in Arlington, VA. Contact awingquist@arlingtonva.us

[Summary prepared by Kara Bowne Crissey]