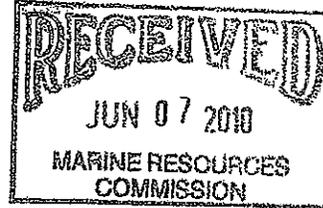


JUN 16 2010

James W. Madden
6207 Holmes Run Parkway
Alexandria, Virginia 20031

June 3, 2010

TO: Elizabeth G. Murphy
Marine Resources Commission
2600 Washington Avenue
Third Floor
Newport News, Virginia 23607



PROTEST

SUBJ: Holmes Run Restoration and Crossing Project

REF: VMRC #10-0798

Dear Ms. Murphy:

Thank you for asking for our comments on the referenced Holmes Run Application.

My wife and I have lived at our present address since April 1977. We have witnessed Holmes Run's transformation from a narrow tree-lined stream to a much broader waterway with all the matured trees gone as the result of accelerated erosion of the east side of Holmes Run. The green space between the stream and the road is now significantly smaller and would be made much smaller yet again by the proposed project.

I have difficulty reviewing the provided project plan. The print on the enclosures to your letter is very small and in some cases unreadable even with a magnifying glass. I would like the opportunity to review the project drawings in a readable form. Perhaps these drawings are either (1) on a web site (that I can access) in a more readable format or (2) in a format that could be emailed to me or (3) at a location, which is accessible to me. Are any of these options achievable?

My prime objection to this project is the concern for greater flooding potential in the neighborhood. The low-profile crossing portion of the project creates this concern.

- From the crossing drawing there is 7.5' structure (3' between the bridge dock and the stream channel plus the 4.5' height of the handrail) will collect waterborne debris (stones, twigs, branches, trees, etc.) during severe storms and high water incidents. My allegation is that the result of this blockage (caused by the crossing) will increase the likelihood of upstream pooling and flooding of homes, including mine, as well as our neighbors.

- The low-level crossing is located in the vicinity of 2 major storm drains entering Holmes Run (one is an open stream from the east and the other an underground culver from the west; both parallel Chambliss Street). When there are heavy rains and subsequent high water, the path that the rising water takes into the neighborhood emanates from the confluence of these two storm drains with Holmes Run. The "rising water" path coincides with the planned pathway to the low-profile crossing.
- It appears that the pathway to the crossing necessitates significantly more bank excavation than the simpler bank restoration. This excavation would provide a path for and facilitate the rising waters from the area of confluence mentioned above towards the homes in the neighborhood.

My conclusion is that the low-profile crossing, as structured with the 4.5' hand railing, increases the potential of neighborhood flooding. My suggestion is to delete the crossing, or to mitigate the potential of flooding with a fair weather crossing such as the existing six crossings over Holmes Run between Beauregard Street and Columbia Pike.

My second concern in the project plan is the limits and sturdiness of the stream restoration. A true restoration of the bank would move the bank towards the center of the channel. A storm drainpipe now extends slightly over 20' into the stream. That is one measure of where the stream was located about 7 years ago when the drainpipe was installed. What the project proposes is to shave the top of the existing eroded bank and slope the bank towards the streambed hence recovering (restoring) none or little of the eroded bank. The project may stabilize the bank but not restore it. I would prefer to see more restoration. More bank restoration leads to more green space. The conservation of green space is a City of Alexandria goal. I also fear the materiel shown in the plan may not be sturdy enough. Stones and boulders need to be large and heavy. The strength of the stream to move large objects during heavy rainstorms is just unbelievable. Better "heavy and sturdy" now and reduce the need for future re-restorations.

My third and last concern is the demise of the open green space the neighborhood has enjoyed for so many years. There has already been a huge lost of green space from years of erosion – approximately 20 feet along the 600 linear feet of bank. Implementing the proposed plan will minimize our green space by further reducing it by "stabilizing" the bank, landscaping the approach to the low-profile bridge, and the laying of more bike trail / walkway.

To summarize, I object to the low-profile bridge. I fear it increases the potential of flooding. No crossing is the best solution. A fair weather crossing is second best. Secondly, I am concerned that the stabilization plan and materiel are not robust enough to withstand the power of the water flow during intense rainstorms and the release of additional water from the Bancroft Dam, located a mile upstream, which frequently occurs during such times. Lastly, I am concerned about the demise of the park's open green space. No crossing certainly conserves the green space. I prefer that some "restoration" of the east bank be accomplished. I will admit, however, that while

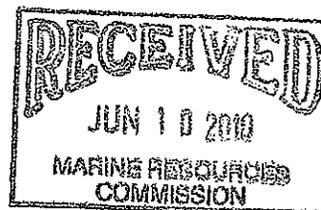
“stabilization” may reduce our green space, if properly planned and implemented, in the long run, stabilization may conserve it. To take no action to stop the bank’s erosion is not acceptable.

Thank you very much for considering my concerns. I sent a petition, signed by 52 neighbors, to the City Mayor and City Council in July 2009. A copy is available should you desire one. Also I would appreciate a response to my request for more legible copies of the enclosures. If I can be of any further assistance to you please feel free to contact me.

James W. Madden
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Elizabeth G. Murphy
Marine Resources Commission
2600 Washington Avenue
Third Floor
Newport News, Virginia 23607



SUBJECT: HOLMES RUN RESTORATION AND CROSSING PROJECT

REF: VMRC #10-0798

PROTEST

Dear Ms. Murphy:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the referenced Holmes Run Project and am especially grateful to your colleague, Ms. Lou Atkins who allowed me to re-submit my letter today after the computer fiasco on June 8th. I hope that the concerns of our neighborhood will be heard and considered seriously.

My husband (now deceased) and I bought our property in 1975, largely due to the beauty of Holmes Run and its environs. Over the years, this environment has been severely endangered to the point of threatening our home through flooding. This has happened despite the appeals to local officials from many in the neighborhood. Promises were always forthcoming from these officials, usually that the problem would be studied. As a result, Holmes Run has continued to threaten us with flooding: the lovely meadow on which neighborhood children used to play and which functioned as a buffer in times of high water is now about one half of its 1975 size. I believe the current proposed project will exacerbate the flood threat and further reduce the size of the green space adjacent to Holmes Run.

The presentation of the project as indicated by your enclosures strongly indicates the potential that the bridge or crossing will function as a catch-all for any water-borne debris. In previous storms, this debris included trees, rocks, and branches of considerable size and resulted in pooling of water, flooding of the green and occasionally of my property and that of my neighbors. Since the plan requires excavation of the current embankment, this would further reduce the ability of the green area to protect us from any flood waters. Indeed, the excavation could, in high water conditions, act as an uncontrollable, ungated sluiceway. This is especially since the crossing or bridge is to be located near the two major storm drains where draining waters from upper Dowden

Terrace converge into Holmes Run. This arrangement could further facilitate flooding of the neighborhood.

What I have never understood is the logic of this plan. For years, this neighborhood has requested that the embankment be strengthened and restored and that the flow of Holmes Run be addressed (the flow has increased as the neighborhoods upstream have grown). The current proposed plan seems inadequate to the current flood challenge never mind what future growth might proffer. Would it not be safer, more efficient and more economical to devise a plan for restoration of the stream and embankment, to implement this plan and to test its efficacy for a few years? Once the stream and its environs have stabilized, then the area could be studied for a bridge or crossing.

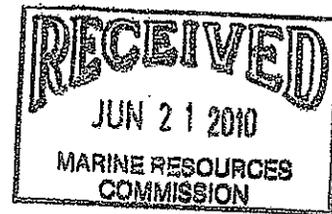
In closing, I object to the current proposed plan. I ask that the focus of the proposal shift to the stabilization of Holmes Run and its embankment; and 2) that the bridge/crossing be postponed until the stabilization and restoration are successfully secured. What is currently proposed only further threatens our environs and our homes. It is a waste of taxpayers' monies. As it stands now, it is another example of this neighborhood being "BRACKed" by officials who ostensibly listen but do not hear us.

Sincerely yours,

Frances McCreary Holland, Ph.D.

Frances McCreary Holland, Ph.D.

PROTEST



From: Jay Madden [mailto:jwmadden@verizon.net]
Sent: Friday, June 18, 2010 12:28 AM
To: Murphy, Elizabeth (MRC)
Subject: Additional remarks and Suggestion reference to VMRC #10-0798 (Holmes Run Restoration)

Ms. Murphy,

These are additional comments I would like to add to my letter mailed to you on June 7. I discussed the Project Plan with a neighbor, Mr. Bill McCulla, who is much more knowledgeable than I in analyzing projects such as proposed in VMRC #10-0798. His comments are in two parts, (1) The crossing, (2) Channel and bank stabilization. The comments are certainly germane. Good rationale is provided with the each comment.

Crossing. 1. Use of railing crossing a fast moving stream which carries large debris and tree limbs during high water flow which occurs during each rain storm is a positive way to create an impediment to the stream with the resultant back up of the flow and increased possibility of flooding beyond the stream banks. A solution would be to lower the crossing to less than one foot above low flow and not need the VDOT required railing.

2. The approaches to the crossing are at right angles to the stream flow presenting an unarmored embankment to the high flow with the resultant cutting and erosion by the swift water during high water events. A solution would be to have the approach paths constructed at an angle to the crossing going from high to low in the direction of flow, this would prevent having a bank getting the direct impact from the flow. This could hopefully be accomplished without further reducing the green space.

Channel and bank stabilization

1. The force of the water does not seem to have been considered with the use of 21A stone and excavated river stone around the boulders. The high water force of this stream has moved large concrete barriers, stones larger than 12 inches and trees. The use of unsecured stone will result in undermining and eventual movement of the boulders and the erosion of the banks.

2. No attempt has been made to restore the playing field that existed prior to the most recent erosion. The plans reduce the playing field even further by cutting into the existing bank to create a gentle slope planted with trees and bushes.

3. The use of erosion control fabric to contain both earth and small stones in a fast flowing stream carrying debris and other material which would tend to snag on the fabric and either create a blockage or rip and remove the fabric with the resulting erosion of the earth and stone. does not seem wise.

4. No consideration has been given to the difference in elevation between the Alexandria (high) side and the Fairfax (low) side of the stream. The stream should be brought back to its, previous location, the Alexandria side restored with armored banks (gabion cages) and provisions made for water to pool in the park land in Fairfax.

It also appears that Figure 1 and Figure 2, which show the limits of the project, are not correct. The restoration plan should be all the way to the Alexandria City / Fairfax County line which is past Hawthorne Avenue. I believe a later diagram (2009-12-18-Plan) is probably correct.

Should an email not be satisfactory and a more formal letter be required please let me know.

Sincerely,

Jay Madden
703-379-1592