From: julie mcclintock
To: Megan Wooley
Subject: Stormwater
Date: Monday, July 08, 2013 1:51:19 PM

Megan

I am sending a message for the steering committee about stormwater. It contains a couple of live links. I would appreciate it is you would please post it on the Town community webpage as well.

Thanks!

--Julie

Note to Central West Steering Committee

The recent flooding really got everyone's attention.

I am sharing these pictures and video footage, to add to Sarah's pictures. The first is a picture story of a stormwater facility that failed **before** the recent flood on Town owned land. Ninety percent of stormwater structures fail. Manmade structures are just not nearly as effective as the natural landscape in handling stormwater.

Second I've enclosed a video taken by a homeowner living very close to the undeveloped property in the focus area. Imagine what will happen to storm flows onto these neighbors' property when land along Estes Drive is developed.

It's very important that the Central West Steering Committee take the time to address stormwater issues. Because of Chapel Hill's topography and creeks, stormwater is a Town-wide challenge. I assume we want to recommend quality development that will reverberate across all of the Future Focus Areas. I've heard some committee members say we don't need to be concerned because Chapel Hill ordinances already offer a high level of environment protection. Chapel Hill may have that reputation, but we are far from living up to it. The Town established a stormwater utility a few years back but that was only a first step and the master plan has yet to be approved or implemented.

It's very clear that the Town does not have the infrastructure in place to prevent flooding and environmental damage to creeks and property. Equally important is the fact that it also does not have the standards in place. Present ordinance standards will not meet the challenge of providing more density without doing harm. Only controlling for only the first inch of rainfall is not adequate. That's the standard that was applied for the stormwater facilities at the Library.

Stream buffers are only one dimension for mitigating flood damage and protecting water quality. Another key determinant is the amount of impervious surface allowed when development occurs. Presently Town impervious surface standards for commercials development allow 70% of the land surface to be covered, which leave little land for rainwater to infiltrate or be captured on site.
Stormwater structures can help if they are designed properly and maintained but

they can't do the job if there are so many parking lots, roof tops and roads, that there is no land on which to place them.

Future trends predict more storm events and unusual weather patterns. Our committee has a responsibility for figuring out how these challenges will be met, before recommending increases in paved surfaces in the Central West focus area. If we fail to do this, we will all share in the consequences that will occur downstream.

Thanks for your consideration of this important issue and see you all tomorrow.

--Julie McClintock

copies to Stormwater Advisory Committee and Central West Neighbors