



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Town Hall
405 Martin Luther King Jr.
Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Booker Creek Working Group Meeting Notes

Chair John Morris
Chair Pamela Schultz
Vice-Chair Jeanette Bench
Doug Frederick
Antonia Sebastian
Shugong Wang

Noel Myers (absent)
Chad Pickens
Miguel Rojas Sotelo (absent)
Michael Dupree
Louie Rivers

Monday, October 18, 2021

6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

1 Welcome and Review of the Agenda

The chairs welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda.

2 Introductions

Working group members introduced themselves and described a hope they have for the meetings.

3 Announcements

Staff provided logistical announcements. The next meeting will be on November 1, 2021 at 6:00 PM. Resources, including past meeting materials, will be available on the Town website at www.townofchapelhill.org/BookerCreekStudies. If the group decides to form subcommittees, those meetings will be subject to public meeting requirements, including 48-hour public notice and posted meeting notes.

4 Finalizing Group Norms

The group approved of the following norms discussed last week:

- Begin and adjourn on time
- One speaker at a time
- Listen for understanding
- Say what you need to say while making room for others to say what they need to say
- Embrace a learning mindset
- Be mindful of assumptions & ask questions
- It is OK to disagree...please do so respectfully
- Share your own story and respect the stories of others
- Be goal-oriented & clarify objectives for each meeting

The group discussed the following proposed additional norms:

- Engage with staff for context & details
- Work toward consensus. If consensus can't be reached, decisions will be made by a significant majority of at least 3/4.

Jeanette Bench suggested that the group adopt the attendance requirements of advisory boards.

5 Discussion of Draft Mission Statement

The group discussed the following draft mission statement:

Make recommendations to the Town Council for Stormwater Management for the Town of Chapel Hill

- Consistent with the three goals of the Town's Stormwater Management Program, including reduce flooding, improve water quality, and protect and restore natural stream corridors
- Consistent with the Climate Action and Response Plan
- Consistent with the Town's equity goals in the Strategic Plan
- Balance reduction of flood damages with minimizing environmental damage and insuring that recommended projects have benefits greater than their financial and environmental costs

The group compared the draft with the Mayor's framing statements:

- Where is it flooding in our community and by how much? (in layman's terms - 6 inches, etc) how many homes, streets & businesses?
- What ideas can help reduce flooding during big storm events - and by how much?
- How to get the community engaged on their own properties with stormwater reduction
- How long do you think it will take to come back with short term & long term ideas?
- Who is not at the table and what expertise are you still needing?
- What role do our existing bottomland forests play in mitigating large stormwater events?

The group discussed adding language around community engagement. The chairs will include member comments into the draft they will share with Council at the October 20th Work Session. The group will vote on the final draft at the next meeting.

6 Discussion of Potential Agenda Items

The group discussed the following items:

- Defining the problem of flood damages in the watershed in terms of the location of structures flooded and the amount of damage. Useful information is available on the NC Flood Inundation Mapping and Alert Network.
- Reports on the potential for green infrastructure to reduce flood levels, such things as swales, downspout disconnect, rain gardens, etc. We will seek documented watershed examples from communities.
- A Town report on their priorities for the other two goals of the Town's stormwater program: improving stormwater quality and protecting and preserving natural stream corridors.
- The potential of some other valuable tools to reduce flood damages, such as flood proofing structures and helping property owners elevate their buildings or buying out structures repeatedly damaged.

Group members suggested these additional topics:

- Consider the tradeoffs and quantitative flood mitigation benefits of green infrastructure.
- A Town-maintained information structure of existing stormwater infrastructure and land-use.
- External speakers about their experience with green infrastructure.

Antonia Sebastian suggested the group identify one key topic per agenda. Michael Dupree suggested setting the agenda topic with future meeting dates to allow time to invite speakers.

Future agenda topics and corresponding resources will be available at www.townofchapelhill.org/bookercreekstudies

7 Reviewing Next Steps

The Chairs will provide an update at the October 20th Work Session. Working group members will share potential agenda items through email at stormwater@townofchapelhill.org or sbauer@townofchapelhill.org. The next meeting will be on November 1st at 6:00 PM.

8 Public Input

Residents provided comments to the group. A transcript of those comments will be available at www.townofchapelhill.org/bookercreekstudies

9 Adjourn

Sue Burke explained that Appendix B of the Lower Booker Creek report notes culverts and bridges that are at risk to flooding. Jeanette Bench suggested adding a column to contextualize the levels at which the structures flood.