

UMD Annual Review
Stormwater Prevention and Pollution Plan
Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Comments and Questions from Meeting attendees:

1. When is the Rain Garden work planning to start? (asked by a student)
Erik Larson- After the students leave in May and there is reduced congestion in the parking lots. Majority of work will probably be done in June and July of this summer. We are still working out the details.
2. You talked a lot about the Oregon Creek side of campus, what about the other side? What are you doing about pesticides going into West Tischer Creek? (asked by UMD staff who is also a campus neighbor)
Candice Richards and Peggy Dahlberg- We are minimizing pesticide use campus-wide, using only enough pesticides to target the invasive plants in question. We are also working on building good sod so that invasive plants have a less hospitable environment. We are basing planting and maintenance decisions on our proposed Integrated Turf Management plan, which attempts to balance aesthetics, environment, etc to best serve the campus community.
3. Have you thought about reducing the amount of lawns on campus? Like, how about turning the lawn in front of Darland into a prairie? (John Pastor, faculty)
Candice Richards and Peggy Dahlberg- Actually, yes. Again we are looking at our Integrated Turf Management plan and how best to balance the needs of the campus. We are leaving wide grass buffers around ponds and creating no-mow zones. Darland is on the list for being redone in the future.
4. What are you doing about salt reduction on campus? (campus neighbor)
Peggy Dahlberg and Candice Richards- One new piece of equipment we have this year is a control system on our salt spreader, which allows us to monitor and control the amount of salt we are distributing much better. We don't use sand anymore to control ice on campus, we are relying strictly on salt. The areas we are manually spreading salt are the hardest to control, like the sidewalks. We are continually reviewing equipment and products for cost and effectiveness for controlling ice on campus.
5. A lot of people like to walk on campus during the winter for the same reason- the sidewalks are well maintained and salted. (campus neighbor)

6. Are you reviewing alternative strategies for paving parking lots, such as gravel? (campus neighbor)
Erik Larson- Yes, we are looking at alternatives. Gravel is good for the first few months but after it gets packed down by vehicle use, it also becomes impervious, plus there is sediment run-off during any rain event. We are looking at impervious pavers, asphalts, etc. Actually, we are already using some grassy paver in areas we need to access with large equipment. Grassy paver is like a mesh under the grass that allows us to drive on the surface without ripping up the grass or making ruts. So right now, yes, we are always open to new products, but right now containing run-off is the best option.

7. What does “aesthetics” mean? Dandelions? (campus neighbor)
Candice Richards and Peggy Dahlberg- Dandelions are an invasive plant. As we said before, we are working at ways to reduce the amount of pesticides we use by building up the turf and keeping it healthy. It is a difficult thing to balance everyone’s expectations of what looks nice.

8. Erik, have you tried using pea rock for parking? (MPCA representative)
Erik Larson- We have looked at different types of surfaces, and pea rock creates ADA issues for canes and wheel chairs. It also creates slipping hazards when kicked onto solid surfaces. We have looked at crushed granite but we still have not overcome the ADA issues. As mentioned before, we continue to look for new surface options.

9. I am concerned about the amount of cars and people driving to campus, as well as the paved surfaces and expansions of parking lots. Has the University ever considered building a ramp?
Erik Larson- Yes, there have been 2 studies of which I was the project manager. It just isn’t financially feasible to build a multi-surface parking area. The cost is very high compared to a flat lot. Parking permits would need to raise to about \$400 per year just to cover the costs. Really, though, Bev Ecklund in Parking Services is the correct person to contact regarding parking issues. We are working to make sure that any new parking lots are designed with stormwater protection in mind.

Meeting adjourned.