

Environmental Technical Manual
Meeting Notes
Meeting held May 17, 2011

The purpose of this meeting was to obtain the final comments on the list of proposed changes to the Environmental Technical Manual. The list that was discussed was posted on the web in April 2011. The following are the comments and responses from the meeting. **Comments to be addressed in the current update to the Technical Manual will be accepted until the close of business May 31, 2011.**

Comment: Can the worksheets be provided in Excel on the web?

Response: Yes, but we are experiencing some technical difficulties in doing so. We are working with our web people to correct this. Worksheets are available in PDF form on the web or by contacting an EPS staff person who can email the Excel spreadsheet.

Comment: Are you considering changes to the tree canopy coverage requirements?

Response: We have heard a variety of concerns with regard to applicability and we continue to welcome comments.

Comment: If a project meets the 10% green space requirement it should also be able to meet the tree canopy coverage requirement. An example was given of a site that was not able to do this (an auto auction yard).

Response: We will look into the 10% green space and tree canopy requirements and see if there are places where overlaps can be addressed.

Comment: Why is the 10-year canopy the amount of credit provided?

Response: The requirements for tree canopy percentages and the credits provided are based on those that were in use in Fairfax County for almost 20 years. They had no variance allowances – all sites were required to meet the ordinance through preservation or planting – no exceptions. The Prince George’s County ordinance allows tree planting in far more places than Fairfax does (within utility easements for example) and we have a provision for a variance making our program more flexible. Fairfax recently doubled their requirements and instituted a variance-type of allowance.

Comment: Why are different tree sizes at time of planting provided with different canopy credits? Don’t all the trees reach the same size eventually? Why are the sizes different from the sizes required in the Landscape Manual?

Response: We’re looking at matching the Landscape Manual tree sizes to those in the tree canopy credit worksheet and providing a limited number of credit classes.

Comment: If a project is exempt from the Landscape Manual isn’t it also exempt from tree canopy?

Response: No, if a project is exempt from the Landscape Manual or the Woodland Conservation Ordinance, it is not exempt from the tree canopy coverage requirements.

Comment: For specimen, champion and historic trees it shouldn't be necessary to include both the rating score and the descriptive term ("excellent" "good" etc.). Require one or the other but not both.

Response: We will look at this and provide a response in the draft TM update.

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