
**San Francisquito Watershed Council
Steering Committee Minutes**

February 14, 2007

Introductions. Agenda approved. January 10, 2007, minutes approved. The next Steering Committee meeting is March 14, 2007.

Announcements

- Pam Sturner: There will be two French broom removal volunteer workdays coming up: Saturday, March 3, from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM at the Alpine Inn (sponsored by SFWC) and Saturday, March 10, (sponsored by the Portola Valley Conservation Committee) meeting at Portola Valley Town Center.
- Pam Sturner: The Watershed Council will be co-sponsoring a presentation by Andy Lipkis, founder of TreePeople, on Wednesday, March 21, from 7 to 9 PM. Andy and TreePeople have done groundbreaking work in watershed-friendly stormwater management in Los Angeles.
- Pam Sturner: The Watershed Council will be hosting two guided tours of its stormwater demonstration projects on Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25. We are still finalizing the times. Check in with Katie if you are interested.
- Pam Sturner: The public comment period for the Palo Alto pump station EIR closes on February 28, 2007.

Presentation: SFWC's stormwater demonstration projects – creek-friendly techniques to absorb rainwater and reduce runoff (Katie Pilat, SFWC)

Pam introduced the presentation, saying it is a major milestone to be completing these demonstration projects. The project has been a large component of the Watershed Council's workload and budget since 2004, accounting for about \$200K in total funds, of which \$35K supported staff time. It is a remarkable achievement and will now be a platform for the outreach about innovative approaches to stormwater pollution prevention. The demonstration projects were made possible through work with a number of partners including with the property owners, the Watershed Council's Management Advisory Committee, and the project's Technical Advisory Committee. Pam asked the Steering Committee to think about the projects in the context of the Watershed Council's organizational profile of current activities for the upcoming strategic planning as they listened to the presentation.

The PowerPoint presentation that accompanied Katie's talk will be made available on the Watershed Council's website.

Katie noted that the stormwater demonstration projects have been underway for the past three years. They were undertaken with the goal of providing on-the-ground examples of materials and techniques that reduce runoff. This is opposite in approach to conventional drainage strategies, which are designed to get water off hardscape surfaces quickly. The demonstration techniques used in SFWC's projects get water to infiltrate into the ground, where it moves to creeks as groundwater, rather than sheeting overland as runoff. Another goal of the project was to

demonstrate materials that could be used in both residential and commercial settings, although many can be used in both, just at different scales.

The Watershed Council's projects were made possible by a grant from the State Water Resources Control Board through the voter-approved Costa-Machado Water Act. Katie also thanked the property owners – the City of Menlo Park and Kurt and Hiromi Kelty – and stressed the importance of their role in bringing the projects to completion.

The projects included retrofits of hardscaped areas on two properties. One was the driveway of a single-family home at 735 Homer Avenue in Palo Alto. The other was Plaza #5, a parking lot owned by the City of Menlo Park between Santa Cruz and Menlo Avenues at Crane Street in downtown Menlo Park.

Prior to the retrofit, the parking lot was asphalt that was cracked and nearing the end of its life. The hydrology of the lot is such that stormwater runs downhill to the parking stalls from the asphalt drive aisles. Permeable concrete was used on 5,500 square feet, or between a third and a half of the stall area of the lot, which covers about 1 acre. The project area was determined by the amount of funding available. As part of the retrofit the City also put in swales.

Permeable concrete works by allowing water to run through and soak into the ground below. A hose full on will soak in and leave a wet spot about a foot in diameter. The mixture has no fines or sand; it consists of a large aggregate, cement, and water. It was poured in a layer 6 inches thick over a 6-inch base layer of crushed stone.

The biofilters consist of planted areas where 8 inches of soil was laid over 16 inches of sand over 2-1/2 to 5 feet of crushed rock.

The permeable concrete was poured in two phases so as not to lose use of the full parking lot at once. On the first pour, which was completed in November 2005, the surface came out well. The second phase wasn't completed until June 2006. Because of the late rains during the spring, we had to wait until May to get started.

The June pour didn't come out well. It was done at a warmer time of year, and the mix was probably too dry. In addition, the conditions needed for a good cure were not met. Because permeable concrete has very low water content when it's poured, it needs to be kept moist in order to cure properly. The plastic covering that kept the moisture in blew off a couple of times during the curing period, which lasts 7-10 days.

On inspection, the City rejected the second pour, and it was redone this January. It looks good and is open to traffic again.

The price of the retrofit was \$10 per square foot, or \$55,000 total.

In terms of performance, we already talked about durability above. Part of the experiment is to see how long the permeable concrete lasts. In terms of permeability, the trickle of water shown in the slide soaks right in as soon as it hits the pervious concrete. The next slide shows that the

pervious concrete is completely dry when other nearby asphalt areas still contain puddles. The next slide, which was taken on the same day as the slide showing the dry pervious concrete, shows that the biofilter on the Phase 1 side did not drain as expected, and ponding occurred in the parking lot even after very mild rains. The City specified the sand and soil of the Phase 2 biofilter more strictly and that side drains well. They also installed overflow inlets that take water from the surface directly to the perforated under drain pipe in both the Phase 1 and Phase 2 biofilters. This overflow inlet has greatly reduced ponding on the Phase 1 biofilter.

There are two types of monitoring being conducted as part of this project. Balance Hydrologics is doing the work.

At the bottom left corner there's an area next to the sidewalk with no swale. Drain pipes go under the sidewalk to the street. We attached a flow meter there to see what's coming off the permeable concrete vs. the asphalt. The results showed that there was no water backed against the outlets from the permeable concrete, and it didn't ever reach the level of the pipes.

An interesting thing we observed is that owing to irregularities of the gutter, water spills out of it to the permeable concrete, where it soaks in. This is a benefit we didn't expect from the project.

Katie is hoping to be at the parking lot during a big storm so that she can document how the permeable concrete is performing under storm conditions. So far the weather has not cooperated.

The second type of monitoring at the site measures the rate at which water infiltrates into the soil. This is done using pressure transducers that measure the height of water above them. There are peaks when there's rain, and it's during the peaks that there's water in the pipes. What we found is that the water level quickly goes to zero because water flows out the perforated under drainpipe to a drywell. Only the downstream end remains wet.

Question: How deep is the drywell?

Response: The concrete-lined inlet is about 12 feet deep, and there's a hole filled with gravel that's another 4 feet deep below that.

The experience of coordinating these projects produced a number of insights, or "lessons learned," that may be useful to others contemplating similar projects.

First, the materials work: they absorb rainfall and reduce runoff a lot. In the case of the parking lot, they were able to suck water away from the gutter where normally it would be backed up.

One of the biggest insights was the importance of having an experienced contractor pouring the permeable concrete. When it's coming out of the truck, you need to know exactly what the consistency should be. The material is very sensitive to the water content when being installed.

Question: Was this the first time this contractor used the product?

Response: Yes; they had had training beforehand. The first phase worked well, the second one didn't.

Question: Did O'Grady do the work?

Response: A subcontractor did it. It was a 6-inch thick section of pervious concrete on top of 6 inches of crushed rock base.

Question: Is there a plan for sharing the lessons learned beyond the Steering Committee?

Response: Katie gave this presentation to the California Stormwater Quality Association. A lot of people were there and heard it. Maybe we could also share it with San Mateo County.

Katie then moved to the portion of the presentation devoted to the residential site. The driveway is about 180 feet long and was originally covered with asphalt. There was also a concrete patio at the back. The goal was to turn the hardscape into permeable surfaces. Seven techniques were used. In the end, each one could have been an entire project for a typical homeowner.

The techniques were:

- 1) A gravel-filled trench captures roof runoff.
- 2) A Hollywood driveway has narrow concrete tracks to drive on and grass in between.
- 3) Regular concrete was used to surface the basketball area. Permeable concrete was not used because of cost concerns.
- 4) Grass pavers were used in the back. These are plastic rings in a matrix 1 foot deep that can be planted with grass and are designed to spread the weight of vehicles driven over them.
- 5) Unit pavers were used in area where cars park overnight.
- 6) A concrete patio was broken into large pieces that were relaid with spaces in between.
- 7) A rain garden was installed next to the front part of the driveway. It is made of highly absorbent soil and gravel that acts as a reservoir to store water before it percolates into the ground.

In the photo of the completed trench, the white caps are the tops of the monitoring wells and the green cap is the overflow outlet.

Installation was done as follows:

Regular concrete was used for the wheel track part of the driveway. In the back part of the driveway, pavers were laid over a cement sand base, which is permeable, and compacted for stability.

For the installation of the GrassPave, the contractor was told by the GrassPave manufacturer that it was ok to use sod.

For the back patio, the original concrete was broken up with a sledgehammer and replaced.

The rain garden was planted with plants that can have wet feet for a while but survive the long summer dry season.

The homeowner was happy with the rain garden, patio, and pavers. The pavers are stable and permeable; they fit together with interlocking teeth but leave a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch gap between units.

The GrassPave was not so successful. The sod turned mushy and didn't work out, so the contractor tried reseeded it with grass. This produced nice grass, but it didn't hold up to use as part of the driveway. There are two tenants living at this property who make a minimum of four car trips a day, and the grass couldn't withstand that level of use. The plan now is to remove the grass pavers and put in pavers.

In the front of the driveway between the wheel tracks, the GrassPave also got muddy and rutted along the edges of the concrete tracks. The contractor measured the width and distance between the centers of the wheels to determine the track dimensions. However, because you have to back out of the driveway, and the wheel tracks are narrow, drivers often fall off the tracks onto the grass. As a result, the edges of the wheel tracks have become rutted.

One unintended consequence of using the grass pavers is increased runoff into the street when the homeowner waters the grass between the wheel tracks. This problem will be corrected when the pavers are installed.

According to the new design, the pavers will be laid on wheel tracks 42 inches wide, and there will be a strip of grass 16 inches wide between them.

In summary, this was six or seven projects in one.

The total cost to redo the driveway was \$62,000, which is more than you would expect to pay for a project like this. However, this is a demonstration project, and its purpose is to show many possibilities.

Excavation was a big part of the cost – \$9,300 – because the native soil had to be removed to allow 4 to 6 inches of permeable base under each kind of paving technique. This provides storage areas for runoff while it infiltrates slowly, because the native soil is clayey. The pavers are one of the more expensive materials that we used. The cost of the new design shown on the slide does not reflect the cost of removing the materials that didn't work – it is the cost of doing just the new design, as if from scratch.

Question: Could you use \$10 per square foot of permeable concrete in the driveway project?

Response: No. That was a larger setting, and the institutional involvement of Menlo Park meant that there were cost efficiencies.

Question: How much impact did that have on cost?

Response: We didn't try to get permeable concrete costs for the smaller project. It would be interesting to find out.

Comment: It's nice that the pavers weren't that much more – it looks like 25%.

As in the case of the parking lot, there are two types of monitoring at this site. One is to measure runoff flowing off the property and to determine the amount of ponding. In other words, how long does water stay on the surface before sinking in?

This photo showing 2-4 inches of ponding was taken right after the New Year's Eve storm of 2005-06. A day later, it was dry.

The second type of monitoring uses a pressure transducer to measure the water level in order to determine how quickly water sinks in and how much is coming out of the pipe. We were mystified by the results, because we were seeing no water at this point. It may be that the surfaces are infiltrating more into the soil than we thought.

Lessons learned from this project are that even in fairly clayey soil, it's good to see that with permeable base materials, you can get good infiltration. In terms of the execution of the project, we probably took on too much here. It cost a lot and had a lot of moving parts, which made it difficult. An important point is that there was a real family living here throughout the project, and they were incredibly patient: this was a long and trying process. From a technical standpoint, the most important lesson was that the grass pavers didn't hold up.

Question: Was it too shady for the grass pavers?

Response: Possibly. There are a few large trees over the driveway that cast shade.

Comment: With the transition to catalytic converters, the use of grass in settings like these became a fire hazard in Southern California.

Comment: I've seen a few photos of grass pavers, and I can't recall seeing anything that looked much better.

Comment: For water conservation, I would never put in a strip of grass less than 10 feet wide, because you can't sprinkle it efficiently if it's any narrower.

Response: The homeowner is using pop-up sprayers.

The final component of the project is outreach. We'll be giving guided tours on Saturday, March 24, in the morning and Sunday, March 25, in the afternoon. Katie will provide the details at the next Steering Committee meeting. We'll likely do an open house at the farmers' market on the 25th. There will also be an interpretive sign going in, and we've produced a brochure about watershed-friendly techniques to use in retrofitting hardscape. We'll also produce fact sheets for the two sites describing the specs and cost.

Comment: I'll make an endorsement for pavers. Five years ago, I installed them on my walkway. There is no ponding; the water goes right through. Send people to my house.

Response: People in our watershed are doing great things to manage stormwater. One thing I want to do is find out where they are and put together a collection of examples for people to see.

Question: Will you put all the tour information on the website?

Response: Yes, and we'll send it out to our email lists, too.

Comment: We need to connect with Peninsula School about this project. There's a lot of work going on there that could benefit.

Question: Is there a report on this project?

Response: Yes; it will be turned in to the State Board, and we can make it available to anyone who's interested. That would be a way to get the details out.

Comment: EOA would like to have the details.

Comment: We'd like to have a handout for our building permit counter, especially one for residents about redoing their driveways.

Katie said she would provide copies of the brochure and fact sheets to interested jurisdictions.

Presentation: SFWC's mid-year financial position (Pam Sturner)

Pam passed around handouts showing two kinds of financial reports. These reports provide the indicators the Watershed Council needs to understand how we are doing financially. Having them is a milestone: this is the first set of numbers agreed on by all parties concerned. The first report is from the new financial management system that was created when the Watershed Council officially became a fiscally sponsored project of Acterra. Pam thanked Bill Whitmer (a MAC member) and Nancy Hubbard (Acterra's business manager) for their help in getting these reports produced, and also thanked Katie Pilat for her work on program and grant budgets. The handouts will be posted on the website (<http://sanfranciscuito.org/projects/forums>).

Highlights: In terms of income, we are behind where we thought we would be mid-year, mostly because of work not yet completed. (See top half of "Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual" report.) Most of the work not yet completed is in the stormwater demonstration and fish passage improvement projects, and a large part of both of these budgets goes to contractors. The projects will be completed this fiscal year and all of the stormwater grant money will be spent. For the fish passage projects, the timing of when we will spend out these grants is less predictable, but we anticipate that we will bring about \$45K into fiscal year 2007-08. At this time we do anticipate finishing all the fish passage work. There is good news on the Fox Hollow fish passage project: the Town of Woodside staff has received Town Council approval to work with the Watershed Council on the development of project designs.

The Watershed Council is also behind on anticipated expenses at the mid-year point. The budgets included a sizable portion of funds for consultants for work that hasn't been completed yet. Also, we budget conservatively and sometimes include more funding than we think we'll need. There is also some variation between accounting definitions and out definitions.

Most importantly, the reverse side of this report (the Balance Sheet) shows us that we have about \$115K in reserves left after paying our bills, returning unused funds, and collecting on invoices. This equals about five months of our expenses, so we are in good shape. As a rule of thumb, nonprofits like to have three to five months of reserves. So at this point, we think we'll end the year in the black.

Comment: It would be helpful to add this "reserves" amount to the end of the Balance Sheet form so it was obvious without doing any math.

Response: We will do that for the next report.

Pam also presented the Watershed Council's projected Fiscal Year 2007-08 budget. She stressed that it is a rough estimate, as it is very early in the year to present it. Also, a lot may change as we move forward in the strategic planning process. The budget includes two staff people for the projects that will continue into the next fiscal year, which include volunteer workdays, Steering Committee meetings, and outreach -- basically all projects except the stormwater demonstration and fish passage projects, which will be ending this fiscal year. The reason we have two staff members in the budget instead of three is that Katie plans to leave the Watershed Council at the

conclusion of the stormwater and fish passage projects. She told Pam quite a while ago that she wants to see these projects through and then make a change.

Katie interjected at this point that she has learned a lot and gotten a lot of fantastic and valuable experience working at the Watershed Council, but her commute from San Francisco makes continuing to work here unsustainable in the long-term.

Pam continued that Katie will be on staff through June and then move to contractor status to finish the last two fish passage projects. Pam told the Steering Committee that while the strategic planning process is going on, the Watershed Council will stay at two staff people in order to be able to keep all options open and respond to whatever the outcomes may be. She said that the Watershed Council will miss Katie a great deal.

Pam noted that with regard to projected income, there may be fewer federal funds for our streamside revegetation projects than anticipated because the federal budget has not yet been passed, so several federal funding sources that the Watershed Council expected to apply for will probably not be available this year.

Strategic Planning (Pam Sturner)

Introductions: Strategic Planning Committee:

Based on the Steering Committee's consensus at the January meeting that the strategic planning process would be best served by a smaller group to do the "heavy lifting," Pam recruited members for a Strategic Planning Committee. This committee will generate ideas and keep the process moving.

Pam was looking for 8 to 10 people total, including the MAC. Her goal was to get a balance of internal and external perspectives, and recruit people who care about the Watershed Council, who could commit the time needed to do the work, who would work collaboratively, and who would be willing to grapple with the hard questions. She reported to the Steering Committee that the recruitment efforts had been successful, and there is a very strong group of 10 people who have volunteered to be on the committee. In addition to the MAC, which includes Jerry Hearn, Philippe Cohen, Trish Mulvey, Bill Whitmer, and Phil Bobel, the committee includes Chuck Kinney, who is a former JPA director, former Menlo Park Council member, and founder of the Friends of San Francisquito Creek; Brad Eggleston of the Environmental Compliance Division of the City of Palo Alto; Liz Duffie, an Ohlone School parent and Jasper Ridge docent and worked on a watershed project in the Lake Tahoe area for the USGS; Debbie Mytels, the Associate Director for Programs for Acterra; and Leslie Lambert, the Planning Manager for the Town of Portola Valley. Ginger Holt and Linda Drey-Nightingale will also assist the committee on specific issues.

Pam then asked each of the committee members present to introduce themselves to the group and to share why they were interested in participating on the committee.

Philippe Cohen is the Administrative Director of the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve. This preserve is totally within the San Francisquito watershed and has one or two key features relevant to what happens downstream in the creek... such as Searsville dam. He has been involved in the Watershed Council since November 1993 when he started his job at the preserve. He thinks the Watershed Council is the best venue for engaging the watershed community, getting people more involved, and helping them gain the knowledge to be able to address the issues of the watershed.

Jerry Hearn has also been involved in the Watershed Council since its inception. He enjoys the fact that a bunch of different people with a bunch of different ideas come together to arrive at reasonable conclusions. He likes working in the watershed, doing the plantings, and being on the Steelhead Task Force. He grew up here and the creek has been a part of his life forever. He thinks the Watershed Council is in a place where it is on a solid upswing and he wants to make that happen. He thinks the Watershed Council needs the plan in order to look toward the future, to know what we're good at, how to make things happen, how to keep getting funding, and also to help figure out what our goals and structure are.

Liz Duffie said she loves the idea of a watershed council and wants to get more involved and find out what's going on.

Bill Whitmer told the group that he retired ten years ago and knew Trish Mulvey, which is how he got involved with the Watershed Council. He has helped with financials and with three or four other strategic planning processes in the past. He thinks these processes are really important for groups to do.

Debbie Mytels is Acterra's Associate Director for Programs and was the first Coordinator of the Watershed Council after its formation in 1993. She thinks watershed councils are the right way to approach watershed management. Debbie said that the focus on the creek is a metaphor for streams of communities coming together. She feels that she can contribute to this process because she knows a lot of people in the watershed and looks forward to engaging them in a dialogue about what the community needs and wants from a watershed council.

Trish Mulvey has lived near the creek since she was eight years old and collected pollywogs. She does what she does by networking. In the early days of the Watershed Council, she and Dena Mossar coordinated activities to bring different people together. She has a long-standing interest in the creek and the watershed. She has helped various Watershed Council Coordinators through her role on the MAC, she is the chair of the Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative, and she's on the Board of Directors of the Friends of San Francisco Estuary and the San Francisco Estuary Institute. She participated in the strategic planning processes of the Silicon Valley Pollution Prevention Center and Save San Francisco Bay Association. She looks forward to working with the new people on the committee.

Question: How will the Watershed Council interface with the Stanford University Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)?

Response: This has yet to be determined.

No one present knew if the public comment period is still open.

Comment: The HCP will have an enormous impact on the watershed. It has a 50-year timeframe.

Response: We could invite Charles Carter of Stanford to give a presentation to the Steering Committee about it.

Review of results from survey on initial questions

Pam presented results of the survey of initial questions from the January strategic planning discussion at which we asked what issues were important to cover, what issues were off the table, and what level of effort the group thought would be possible to help get the work done.

Pam asked the group these questions through an online survey and had summarized results to share with the group. She asked the group to consider whether they thought the results sounded like us as she talked the group through them and to let her know if there are important ideas that are missing or if her interpretation of any comments is not correct.

There were five main questions on this initial survey. 15 people responded and Pam was impressed with the thoughtfulness of the responses.

Question (1): What issues do you feel are important to address in our strategic planning effort?

This was the question with the biggest and most varied response. The responses fell out into two groups – those addressing purposes and those addressing structure. For those responses addressing the purpose of the Watershed Council, Pam saw a strong focus on outreach, with different ways of achieving it. Some people placed focus on external information – re-engaging the community and tying our work into community needs, essentially revisiting the relevance of the organization. Others had a more internal focus – saying we should start from our strengths and existing frameworks and tie our work into the six issue areas identified as part of the Draft Watershed Management Plan. Some responses included both internal and external focus. Pam stressed to the group that it is important to be aware of the difference in focus because the foundation of a successful plan is clarity and agreement on approach and priorities.

Question: For those who said we need to re-engage the community, were they saying we are disengaged, or just not engaged enough?

Response: From the responses, it looked like both.

Question: What is the difference between engage the community, which was described as external focus, and outreach, which was described as internal focus?

Response: There is some overlap there, but maybe one difference is that the first is based on community needs and the second is based on sharing the Watershed Council's knowledge.

Question: How did you feel about the number of responses?

Response (from Pam Sturner): I was hoping for more, but the ones I got were very thoughtful.

Another interesting response was that the Watershed Council needs to clarify its relationship with other organizations, including the JPA, other non-profits, and local governments.

There were fewer responses about organizational structure; more people were interested in programs and purpose. Ideas that were brought up were that the Watershed Council should consider whether a Resource Conservation District (RCD) is an appropriate management structure for this watershed and whether the Watershed Council should become an independent 501(c)(3) organization.

Comment: There already is an RCD that covers the watershed.

Response: The Black Mountain RCD only covers the Santa Clara County part (roughly 20% of the watershed), and the San Mateo County RCD only covers the coast side of Skyline.

Comment: It's hard to create a new RCD.

Pam also noted that there was interest in understanding the cost of running the organization, determining how volunteers could take on roles to help cut costs, and figuring out how to ensure ongoing support from the cities, local agencies, and Stanford.

Question (2) What outcomes would you like to see? What would constitute success at the end?

Responses indicated that people want a plan that will be used, that will be actionable. To be actionable, the plan must have clarity on overall direction, consensus on areas of focus and buy-in from the Steering Committee and staff. Other desired outcomes included a specific two-year plan with a timeline, re-energizing the organization, a sustainable governance structure, and metrics for monitoring the success of the organization. Although we monitor our success in completing projects for funders, this last idea is new for us as an organization.

Question (3) Are there any issues that you think should not be up for discussion?

Four people said "none." Pam wondered if this meant this meant that people specifically wanted to keep everything open or whether it just meant there was nothing they felt strongly about. If it is the former, this could be in conflict with responses saying that issues contrary to the founding principles of the organization should not be on the table. Pam asked if anyone had a sense of whether there was a real conflict. Two people said that they answered "none" because they couldn't think of any issues to keep off the table. There was also some discussion about why specific watershed issues such as flooding and steelhead shouldn't be included as part of the strategic planning process. The group eventually agreed that the strategic plan is for determining broad goals and mandates, not specific projects or tactical details. Also, natural resources issues already discussed as part of the Vision Document will be input to the process later on in the program discussions.

Question (4) Do you have any observations to share about worked or didn't work in planning efforts you've taken part in, either with the Watershed Council or other organizations?

The most common answer was that the process should be open and inclusive. Other responses included that meetings should be used efficiently, that there should be openness to change, and that there must be follow-up on the plans. Pam noted that openness and inclusivity can sometimes be in conflict with efficient use of meetings, so this will be a balancing act. In order to use people's time efficiently, Pam will try to make sure there are clear goals and good

facilitation for the meetings. She plans to have the group write things offline, circulate drafts, and get help when they're stuck.

What didn't work was basically the flip side of what did: not following through on the plan, getting bogged down in details, and giving history too much weight. In response to a comment that the online survey does not stimulate new ideas, Pam noted that there will be opportunities for group work later in the process, that there probably will be a retreat, and that she is working to iron out problems people had accessing the survey website.

Question (5) What could you volunteer to do to get the work done?

There were lots of offers to help with things that need to be done.

Pam concluded that in order to have a successful strategic planning process, we need active participation in consensus: we need everyone to be clear about where they agree or disagree and in the cases where there is disagreement, people must be clear about what they can live with. We will spend our time where we need to spend it, but will be conscious to balance that with moving forward. This will create the foundation for a plan that works.

The results of the survey will be posted on the Watershed Council website. They will be given to the Strategic Planning Committee as guidance and will be used to check back on our progress and see how we're doing against it.

Comment: Is it possible to follow up with individuals who did survey?

Response: Yes, it is.

Comment: As we go we need to think about how to keep the cities engaged.

Response (Pam): I have been in contact with Steering Committee members we don't often see and discussed how to keep them apprised of progress on the plan.

Activity and discussion: building SFWC's organizational timeline

Pam introduced a group activity that the Steering Committee would do next to reconstruct the Watershed Council's history. She asked the group to divide in two and spend half an hour recording as many events in SFWC's history as they could think of. One group will take 1993 to 2000; the other will take 2001 to the present. Examples of things to record are our founding, changes in leadership, the beginnings (and endings) of programs, the award of grants, office moves, and whatever else we think is important. We'll use the results to think about where we've been, where we are, and where we're going.

After the exercise, which everyone enjoyed, the group discussed the results. The early years were convoluted and stressful; in the later years, many efforts were already in progress and just carried the organization along.

Comment: If this is true, this would mean the early efforts are also carrying through to current work.

Response: This may be true, but that doesn't mean there isn't the opportunity to stir the pot.

Comment: Conversations are a lot more civil now than they were then. Writing the reconnaissance report executive summary was a pitched battle.

Question: Does this mean we are better at working things out, or just better at knowing and avoiding difficult issues?

Response: We got sick of fighting. We're better at avoiding issues we know we can't resolve, but we're also better at understanding all sides of the story now. For example, the Family Farm Road issue was very contentious and there was a lot of emotion.

Comment: This exercise was a testimony to citizen involvement.

Comment: There are some items missing from both lists, such as the installation of a SamTrans trash can at University Avenue over the creek. How will the omissions be dealt with?

Response: If there's a group that wants to volunteer to flesh the history out further, we would welcome them to do that.

Question: Are the documents listed on the boards in the Acterra library?

Response: A lot of them are.

Comment: Don't spend too much time on history!

The timelines should be transcribed and sent out to the whole group to see if anything has been forgotten.

In attendance:

Jill Bicknell – SCVURPPP

Dianne Dryer – City of Menlo Park

Darrin Gambelin – Stanford Linear Accelerator Center

Susan Witebsky – Stanford Linear Accelerator Center

Jerry Hearn – Acterra

Julie Skelton – Stanford Real Estate

Lis Schwerer Duffie

Bill Whitmer – SFWC

Jonathan Owens – Balance Hydrologics

Kevin Murray – SFCJPA

Art Kraemer – Crescent Park Neighborhood Association

Viv Blomenkamp – League of Women Voters, Palo Alto

Philippe S. Cohen – Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, Stanford University

Marty Laporte – Stanford Utilities

Joe Teresi – City of Palo Alto

Marge DeStaebler – PV Conservation Committee

Trish Mulvey – SFWC / WMI

Katie Pilat – SFWC

Pam Sturner – SFWC

Ryan Navratil – SFWC

Minutes respectfully submitted by Katie Pilat.