

Magothy River Association December 2020 Newsletter

Editor's Note: As we come to the end of 2020, the Magothy River Association looks forward to a return to normalcy sometime in 2021. We appreciate our volunteers and officers, who continue to do whatever is still possible to assist in the preservation of the Magothy River and its tributaries. We wish you Happy Holidays!

Andrea Germain, Editor



Beachwood Park project. On a Saturday in November, volunteers for the MRA planted over 70 native trees, shrubs, and perennials to complete a stormwater restoration project at Beachwood Park in Pasadena. A severely eroded slope that funneled stormwater and sediment directly into the Magothy has been addressed with the construction of multi-tiered walls, donated by Maguire Marine Construction and its supplier, The Stone Store. The tiers will slow the descent of water, while native plantings purchased by the MRA that include American holly, black gum, serviceberry, bayberry, clethra, low-bush blueberries, Christmas ferns, and sea oats will absorb rainwater and stabilize the soil in the remediated area. Projects such as this can

make a real difference in improving the health of the Magothy. Thanks to all who helped, especially Jim and Jim Crafton, who organized the event and worked with Parks and Rec on permits!

Water Trail and Living History Videos. MRA videographer Charles Germain is working with Paul Spadaro to videotape new additions to the Magothy River Water Trail, including Cypress Creek, Dividing Creek, Mill Creek and the Little Magothy River. Charles collected excellent pictures of fall foliage and made some impressive drone shots of Cypress Creek.

As an addition to the MRA Living History video collection, Charles and Paul are working on a video about **Mt. Misery**, which was a military outpost in Arnold during the Civil War. The lookout post and 2 cannon batteries were supported by 200 Union troops who played a key role in the early days of the war. From the top of Mt. Misery, the troops could see Annapolis, the Magothy, the Severn River, and the Chesapeake Bay. Conditions at Mt. Misery were miserable for the troops, made worse by the fact that local residents supporting the south attempted to sell the troops poisoned cakes. The troops remained at the post until the war ended. The video should be completed by late spring.

Water Trail Links

<https://youtu.be/n0By3r9AMHc> cypress

<https://youtu.be/kVJoR9dxaYU> dividing

<https://youtu.be/0zlOyyk7oxk> mill creek



Ecology Services. The MRA filed a Notice of Intent to Sue Ecology Services, a waste-management company located in Pasadena, for improper discharge of stormwater, which

appears to be flowing from its driveway down the road and into Lake Waterford. MDE (Maryland Department of the Environment) responded to the MRA, stating that it has “a process in place and are committed to bringing the Ecology Services facility into compliance with the requirements of the General Permit/Consent Order.” MDE acknowledges continuing issues of noncompliance and “intends to elevate enforcement ...and that the Department is considering a formal enforcement activity.” MRA has since received a copy of the letter sent from MDE to Ecology Services, ordering “corrective measures to be implemented and/or payment of a monetary penalty” of up to \$35,000 a day. Corrective measures must be in place by December 11, 2020.

MRA is pleased to see that MDE is taking action to stop the pollution of our waters. We need to continue fighting to ensure that these activities are stopped immediately, whether the stormwater contamination comes from local businesses or from development. Filing lawsuits and producing videos showing dangerous runoff are two of the ways MRA is fighting to save our watershed.

Plan 2040. MRA has officially commented on Anne Arundel County’s masterplan for the future: Plan 2040. This plan can inform the County’s decisions on land use and environmental protection and recognizes the environmental decline occurring throughout our County. It also acknowledges citizen concerns about degraded water quality and the loss of forests and wildlife habitat. The Plan suggests that the County “limit development in existing residential neighborhoods, limit development on peninsulas and expand protection of farmland, forests, and shorelines.”

The MRA would like to see the County follow the guidance laid out in the plan. As a first step, MRA asks the County to vigorously enforce the regulations that currently exist and immediately cease granting modifications to development projects that do not adhere to the Code. Additionally, MRA asks the County to revise the county codes to strengthen environmental protections by holding development projects to standards for stormwater management that actually protect our waterways rather than to the minimum standards that are employed today. Dead zones in our creeks and rivers grow with every new development, as sediment-laden runoff contaminates the water with every rainfall. Allowing development on steep slopes, within stream buffers, with outfall flows into sensitive wetlands and other damaging practices have brought the oxygen levels to near zero in many feeder streams and creeks along the Magothy River. Current code must be strengthened so that measurable improvements will be evident in our creeks and rivers. A first step includes adherence by Planning and Zoning to the existing regulations as well as identification and elimination of weaknesses in the Code as soon as possible.

State of the Magothy Presentation—SAVE THE DATE. Our 2020 State of the Magothy presentation will be a Zoom event at 7 pm on Wednesday, March 16, 2021. Sally Hornor will present the 2020 Magothy Index, and we plan to have a second speaker, who will discuss upcoming the work to be done by the County at Lake Waterford. The Zoom information will be

posted on the MRA Facebook page shortly before the event. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

Magothy River Water Trail Game. The game is now available at Side Street Framers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Y9gJnKTuQI&t=12s...>

New Year's Day Walk. Because of Covid, our annual New Year's Day walk is cancelled.

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