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5-14-16

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McGuireWoods, LLP

SUBJECT: Oral Testimony, COA Public Hearing, Docket Item #6, LTCPU Framework

DATE: May 14, 2016

Honorable Mayor Silberberg and Members of Council –

My name is Bruce Johnson and I am the Secretary/Treasurer of Alexandria Renew and I am speaking on behalf of that organization today. I am substituting for our Chairman, John Hill, who is out of town this weekend.

Alexandria Renew supports the City's draft CSO plan framework and its submittal to the Virginia DEQ later this summer. The Framework proposes major changes to CSO outfalls 003 and 004, which will have new facilities located on Alexandria Renew property and necessitate close construction and operational coordination and physical integration with the interceptor sewer lines and wastewater treatment plant operated by Alexandria Renew. It also proposes changes to CSO outfall 002. Those changes will have some additional impacts on Alexandria Renew operations.

We both share a common commitment to our community and its citizens for solving the City's wet weather problems in a cost effective manner. We believe the Framework represents a solution that is environmentally responsible to the citizens of Alexandria. The combination of complementary approaches will reduce combined sewer overflows and mitigate the overall wet weather impacts to the Alexandria Renew facilities from the City sewer collection system. The proposed Framework obtains the greatest environmental benefit and helps minimize the long term operational and cost impacts to Alexandria Renew. This Framework also will provide for more sustainable rates and water infrastructure management.

As you know, Alexandria Renew, formerly known as the Alexandria Sanitation Authority, is a separate subdivision of the Commonwealth, created under the Virginia Water and Waste Authorities Act. Alexandria Renew is wholly responsible and accountable for a very large infrastructure worth almost 1 billion dollars and obtaining and complying with its own water quality permits issued by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. The details of our long-term partnership with the City, which has its own set of sewer collection management responsibilities, are set forth in several documents, including the Authority's Charter, our Service Agreement with the City and our respective VDEQ water quality permits.

Alexandria Renew is prepared to enter into negotiations with the City to expand our long standing partnership via an update to our 62 year-old service agreement to manage the City's waste water. Along with other necessary updates, these negotiations will define and plan the financing and conditions for executing the City's draft CSO Framework. I want to add that, from our perspective, these negotiations may include the possibility of Alexandria Renew financing, owning and managing the design, construction and operation of at least the tunnel option recommended to replace

1500 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 • 703-549-3381 • alexrenew.com

Alexandria's Water Transformers

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page showing a splash of water with droplets and ripples, rendered in a light blue and white color scheme.

outfalls 003 and 004. We look forward to beginning negotiations no later than September 1, 2016, so that Alexandria Renew has time to prepare for submission of its plan to DEQ to renew its own VDEQ wastewater operating permit and meet certain mandated requirements. That plan to meet the VDEQ requirements is due one year after DEQ approval of the City's CSO Framework. This schedule also gives the City time to prepare next year's FY 2018 to FY 2027 CIP plan based on the results of these negotiations.

We appreciate that City staff shared information with the Board and Alexandria Renew staff as they developed the draft CSO Framework. We look forward to continuing our mutual efforts to solve our water problems together.

I am willing to answer questions, if I can, from any Council members.

STATEMENT TO CITY COUNCIL ON SEWERS

6
5-14-16
Jack Sullivan

Mayor Silberberg, Members of City Council

As you may know I was appointed by the City Manager to the Combined Sewer Stakeholder Group and provided some additional views to the group's report to you. The Clerk is passing my supplement around just in case you have not seen it.

I abstained from the vote to approve the group report, not because I oppose the plan it endorses. The city staff and its consultants have done a good job of dealing with the DEQ mandate and I urge your approval of the plan.

My problem is that the plan does not go far enough. Outfall #1 at the foot of Pendleton Street on Oronoco Bay is left virtually untouched. That is the city's largest source of pollution — spewing 43 to 50 percent of the our raw sewage into the Potomac.

Note that the other three outfalls pollute SOUTH of Alexandria's city limits. Outfall #1 pollutes our waterfront. For decades to come, it will release its raw sewage past three of our major parks, the City Marina, residences, the planned new developments on the waterfront, Jones Point Park, and on down the Potomac.

The staff rightly points out that the District of Columbia currently pollutes at 20 or more times than we do. Correct, but it is spending more than \$1 billion to remedy the situation. Within two years that flow of sewage will be halved. By 2022 it is expected to end.

Then Alexandria will remain as the premier polluter of the Potomac in the region. For how long? Staff estimates — optimistically — that it might be 2048 at the earliest for a fix. That is 32 years from now.

I personally find that timetable unacceptable and hope you will as well.

My proposal is modest. Direct the staff that you want planning for remediating Outfall #1 to begin by 2018. That need not commit you to any specific infrastructure funding. It simply says that you want the City to begin SERIOUSLY to plan to stop polluting Alexandria's waterfront and the Potomac River— and that you want to start the process sooner rather than later.

I hope you will agree. Thank you for your time. I will be happy to take questions.

SUPPLEMENTARY VIEWS ON SEWER OUTFALLS

6
5-14-16

To the Mayor and City Council:

As a member of the CSS Stakeholder Group, I abstained from the vote to approve the City staff-prepared Group recommendations on April 7, but not because of the plans endorsed therein. The staff and consultants have done a creditable job of dealing with the mandate of the Virginia DEQ about remediation at three CSS outfalls, namely #002 at Hunting Creek and #003/#004 emptying into Hooff's Run.

The problem is that these steps at best deal with only about half the problem of Alexandria's polluting the Potomac. By the City's own statistics, Alexandria annually puts 11.3 million gallons of sewage — not water with sewage, raw sewage — into the Potomac River. The plan does not, for the most part, touch Outfall #001 that spews its pollution directly into the river from the foot of Pendleton Street. That outfall annually carries the largest amount of CSS pollution, estimated by staff variously from 43% to 50% of the total.

Moreover, there are no serious plans to begin to deal with Outfall #001 until after the projects for the other three outfalls are completed in 2035 and subsequently evaluated. Then planning for that pollution source would begin, with the completion date suggested as possibly 2048. That date seems overly optimistic, given the timetables for the other outfalls.

City staff has suggested that various "green initiatives" proposed for the CSS area will have an effect on remediating the Pendleton Street outfall. At the same time, however, staff has been reluctant or possibly unable to estimate what amount of pollution would be reduced by those steps.

For decades to come during rain events, Outfall #001 will continue to discharge raw sewage across Oronoco Bay, and past Founders Park, the Seaport Center, the City Marina, Waterfront Park, the new waterfront developments, Windmill Hill Park, Ford's Landing, Porto Vecchio, Jones Point Park, and on down the Potomac. Ironically, fixing the other three outfalls will have little or no effect on the Alexandria waterfront.

Staff correctly has pointed out that the District of Columbia currently is putting into the Potomac 20 to 30 times the raw sewage that Outfall #001 accounts for. True, but the District's efforts to meet consent decrees with the EPA will have reduced significantly those outflows into the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers two years from now, with the final fix due in 2022. Subsequently, potentially for at least another 26 years or more, Alexandria will wear the title of the region's principal polluter of the Potomac.

I find this outcome unacceptable and believe that the City Council should as well. What to do? A good first step would be to mandate the City staff to begin planning within the next two years for the remediation of Outfall #001 with the objective of completing the fix no later than 2038. That is 22 years from now — far from a radical timeframe.

Respectfully submitted, Jack Sullivan, Member, CSS Citizen Stakeholder Group

Jackie Henderson

6
5-14-16

From: Gbooth123@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2016 11:54 AM
To: Jackie Henderson
Cc: Erin Bevis-Carver
Subject: Statement for May 14 Hearing on Alexandria CSO Plan
Attachments: AlexSewersComments.pdf

Dear Ms. Henderson,

I would appreciate your providing the attached statement to the members of the Alexandria City Council before the May 14 on the city's combined sewer overflow long-range control plan.

Thank you for your assistance.

Glenda Booth, President
Friends of Dyke Marsh
703-765-5233



To the Alexandria City Council

Comments of the Friends of Dyke Marsh, Glenda Booth, President
May 12, 2016

On behalf of the Friends of Dyke Marsh, I present these comments on the proposed long-term control plan to address combined sewage overflows into our waterways.

The Friends of Dyke Marsh is a non-profit, conservation organization founded in 1976. Our members live all over Northern Virginia, including Alexandria. FODM's mission is to preserve, protect and restore the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, in partnership with the National Park Service, as a thriving, native, wildlife habitat, through education, science and stewardship. Our vision is that Dyke Marsh is once again a healthy, vital, self-sustaining, biodiverse ecosystem.

Untreated sewage, trash and pollution are among the many threats to the marsh. Dyke Marsh is on the "receiving end" of many upstream human activities.

Dyke Marsh will be totally gone by 2035 without action, concluded the U.S. Geological Survey in 2010. Fortunately, with our support, the National Park Service has completed a restoration plan and work has begun to restore the marsh. It would be very disappointing to start restoration work and have a successful restoration spoiled by pollution. It is long past time to stop all sources of pollution, including the city's untreated sewage discharged during most storms.

The Environmental Context

According to the recent 2016 Potomac Conservancy report card on the Potomac River some pollution (nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment) levels are dropping. Despite that good news, the Potomac River is not healthy.

- The Conservancy gave the river a grade of B-, up from C in 2013, which is still not an A.
- The river is still not fishable or swimmable, a goal of the 1972 Clean Water Act.
- Polluted runoff from suburban and urban communities is the *only* growing source of pollution to the Potomac and Chesapeake Bay.
- In Fairfax County, over 70% of streams are in fair to poor condition. That includes Cameron Run and Hunting Creek on the city's southern border. Fairfax County's Cameron Run Watershed study in 2004 rated most tributaries as very poor for biotic integrity, habitat and fish taxa richness. The study concluded, "Cameron Run watershed is one of the poorest watersheds, compared to the rest of the county. Approximately six miles of stream were categorized as having 'very poor' habitat conditions, 23 miles as 'poor,' 17 miles as 'fair,' and two miles as 'good.'" And these streams have few adequate riparian buffers.
- Hunting Creek has a TMDL for bacteria. That stream (Cameron Run/Hunting Creek) has been severely altered, dammed, channelized, polluted and inflicted with heavy sedimentation. Most of its wetlands have been destroyed.

Alexandria's Long-Term Control Plan

Thank you for preparing a long-term control plan, for forming the CSO Stakeholder Group and for including a representative of the Friends of Dyke Marsh. We support your commitment to require the separation of systems when the city approves redevelopment plans. We support including green infrastructure projects to curb stormwater entering the system. That is one part of the solution.

We support efforts to send more trash to Alexandria Renew for removal. Trash like plastic bottles, aluminum cans, fast food containers, Styrofoam, cigarette butts are not only unsightly, they inflict great environmental harm. Fish, birds and other animals ingest trash like cigarette butts, plastic and Styrofoam bits. Critters get trapped in plastic bottles and aluminum cans and die. Birds get tangled up and die in plastic streamers, balloon strings, six-pack holders and other materials.

Recommendations

Tanks – On Tank Alternative 4, the document says, “The city will need to negotiate with the National Park Service.” As a partner with the Park Service, we would be very concerned about locating a tank in a park. For too long, many local governments and others have viewed parkland as “unimproved,” saying for example, it should be used by people or developed because “there’s nothing there.”

There are many valuable natural resources in Jones Point Park. Parks, including Jones Point, provide important ecological services like filtering stormwater runoff, cleaning the air, serving as carbon sinks and are habitat for many birds and many species of wildlife, and for many species, their numbers are declining in Northern Virginia. In a densely-populated city like Alexandria covered with impervious surfaces, parks are especially critical for the ecological services they provide.

Underground tanks can disrupt underground hydrological and other systems and depending on their location, block the intertidal exchange between the water and the land. We believe tanks should be located on already disturbed areas, under parking lots, for example.

Schedule – We believe the schedule should be accelerated. While building the first tunnel, the city should start design work on the next phases.

Outfall 001 – Outfall 001 discharges from 43% to 50% of total CSS pollution, untreated sewage. The city states as its policy in the ECO-City Charter to eliminate all sewage discharges. The proposed long-range control plan does not include elimination of outfall 001. The city apparently has no plans to begin to address this outfall until after the projects for Outfalls #002, #003 and #004 are completed in 2035.

Concrete plans and a defined schedule to eliminate that outfall should be part of this plan because of the substantial volume of untreated sewage going into the river from that outfall and the harm those discharges are causing to the health of the river.

Retrofit Impervious Surfaces -- We urge the city retrofit more impervious surfaces, like parking lots and roofs to enable them to retain stormwater and to allow more rainwater to naturally infiltrate into the ground.

Conclusion

The city's CSO system was installed in the late 1800s, early 1900s. The Clean Water Act became law in 1972, 44 years ago. It is long past time to update the city's sewer system and to stop polluting our streams and rivers.

Even though Virginia DEQ has issued multiple Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits for the city's combined sewer system, including 1995, 2001, 2007 and 2013, continuing to discharge raw sewage in 2016 and subsequent years should not be tolerated. Having approved permits does not make it an acceptable or responsible practice to dump 11.3 million gallons of raw sewage into the river every year.

We urge you to strengthen and accelerate the plan.

6
5-14-16

Jackie Henderson

From: Lalit Sharma
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2016 11:02 AM
To: Jackie Henderson
Cc: William Skrabak; Erin Bevis-Carver
Subject: comment letter from Sierra club
Attachments: MVG Alexandria CSO final 05-10-16.doc

Jackie:

Please see attached comment letter from Sierra Club related to "Long Term Control Plan Update" item that was heard Tuesday and scheduled for public hearing on Saturday, for inclusion among public comments

Let me know if you have any questions

Lalit

Lalit Sharma, P.E.
Division Chief, Sanitary Infrastructure Transportation and Environmental Services City of Alexandria
Phone: 703-746-4072
Fax: 703-519-8354

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MOUNT VERNON GROUP

CITIES OF ALEXANDRIA AND FALLS CHURCH, ARLINGTON COUNTY, AND
EASTERN FAIRFAX AND PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTIES, VIRGINIA CHAPTER



May 10, 2016

The Honorable Justin Wilson

Re: Alexandria combined sewer system overflow

Dear Vice Mayor Wilson:

The Sierra Club has reviewed Alexandria's proposed Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) to eliminate the water pollution caused by overflows from the combined sewer system (CSS) that serves 540 acres of the City. We believe that this plan is inadequate, because it does little to control the majority of the human waste from the CSS that is polluting our local waterways.

The LTCP outlines strategies to reduce pollution from three of the four current outflows from the CSS, those that discharge into the Hunting Creek watershed. However, the LTCP contains only partial, long-term plans to control the pollution from the fourth and largest outflow, the pipe that flows into Oronoco Bay from the end of Pendleton Street. The volume of outflow from this pipe may be reduced through "green infrastructure" measures to reduce stormwater runoff and through potential separation of storm and sanitary sewer in some small sections of the City as redevelopment occurs. However, these measures will not be sufficient to prevent raw sewage from flowing into Oronoco Bay many times each year. Control of the remaining pollution emitting from this outflow through systems like those proposed for the three smaller outflow pipes is not scheduled to be studied until 2033, with resolution of the issue at some point further into the future. As a result, Alexandria plans to continue to send untreated human waste into Oronoco Bay dozens of times a year for the next 17 years before beginning to look for a solution. The nine "minimum controls" that the City includes in its current plan are things like signage that do nothing to reduce the flow of human waste into the bay.

This massive pollution has been permitted by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ), even though dumping raw sewage into our waters violates U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations. Despite repeated urging by citizens, VDEQ has never measured pollution levels in Oronoco Bay, nor has it set Total Maximum Daily Loads for pollution as it has done for the Hunting Creek Watershed. As a result, VDEQ does not limit the amount of pollution that Alexandria puts into the water used by its residents for fishing, kayaking, rowing crew and boating.

Despite this, perhaps temporary, lack of action by VDEQ, Alexandria should act now to address the pollution endangering its citizens. Alexandria residents are proud of their city's Eco-City status, and the City's Eco-City charter explicitly states that Alexandria will eliminate all sewage discharges. Alexandria, like any environmentally conscious jurisdiction, should be embarrassed by the massive water pollution resulting from its CSS. It should follow the lead of Washington, DC, and other jurisdictions and seek to clean up the human waste fouling its waters. The Clean Water Act requires no less.



MOUNT VERNON GROUP

CITIES OF ALEXANDRIA AND FALLS CHURCH, ARLINGTON COUNTY, AND
EASTERN FAIRFAX AND PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTIES, VIRGINIA CHAPTER



We look forward to working with Alexandria's leaders on a LTCP that controls all four of the outflows from the City's combined sewer system.

Sincerely,

Dean Amel
Chair, Mount Vernon Group
Virginia Chapter, Sierra Club

cc. Delegates Mark Levine and Charniele Herring
Senators Adam Ebbin and George Barker
Rep. Don Beyer