



## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** June 15, 2016

**To:** Mr. Williams, President, Robert E. Lee Neighborhood Watch Association  
Amber Ellis, Watershed Restoration Manager, James River Association  
Jamie Brunkow, Lower James Riverkeeper, James River Association  
Ben Hawkins, Volunteer Coordinator, James River Association

**From:** Alisa Hefner, Skeo  
Beth Schermerhorn, Skeo  
Miranda Maupin, Skeo

**Re:** **Walkable Watershed Community Meeting Summary**

On Tuesday, June 14, 2016, the Walkable Watershed project team hosted a public input session as part of the Robert E. Lee's (REL) Neighborhood Watch monthly meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to share a draft concept plan that identifies a list of potential strategies to improve flooding, walkability, connectivity, and water quality. This memo provides a summary of the input provided and next steps.

Skeo presented the draft concept plan that includes ideas to reduce flooding and increase safety and connection. Discussion included sharing that James River Association (JRA) has applied for second NFWF grant that would fund a drainage study, implementation of projects and the forming of a community watershed coalition, confirming that the opportunities in the Concept Plan meet the goals and priorities of the neighborhood and prioritizing which projects participants saw as most important to complete first. This memo provides a summary of the community meeting discussion and next steps to build relationships between the REL neighborhood and the Petersburg National Battlefield (PNB).

### Concept Plan Discussion

Participants reviewed the Concept Plan developed by Skeo, which included the input generated at the first community meeting in April 2016. Participants had the following feedback on the Draft Concept Plan:

- Participants confirmed that the list of priorities for the REL neighborhood was accurate and represented their top priorities.
- One participant expressed concern that Courthouse Street would not be wide enough for curb extensions or bump outs. They also expressed that the symbol should be changed to show stormwater improvements instead of an intersection retrofit.
- Participants agreed that the drainage study, which would be a part of the NFWF grant that JRA has applied for, would help to explore the feasibility of opportunities.



- Participants expressed concern about the stormwater drainage at the intersection of Washington and Courthouse and felt that this area that floods regularly should be added to the Existing Conditions and Opportunity maps.
- Participants expressed confusion about what design strategies would be used to reduce flooding along the PNB park boundary. They suggested that the plan include the purple dashed line and the blue line for flooding to represent how two strategies would be implemented and that a diagram would be helpful to explain the concept.
- Participants also pointed out that the symbols for flooding and swales were similar and this made it confusing to understand the Concept Plan.

### Prioritizing Opportunities

After participants confirmed that the opportunities in the Draft Concept Plan met community goals, participants used notecards to rank their top 3 projects which they felt were most important to implement first. The following represents their ranking. Opportunities in **bold** represent opportunities where multiple participants chose the same project:

- Swale on Whitehill Drive curve
- Improving culvert behind REL Elementary
- Public art on drains
- Washington & Courthouse stormwater improvements
- **Intersection retrofit at Slagle and Hare Streets (A)**
- **Trail H connecting Pin Oak and Gibbons as a safe route to REL Elementary (H)**
- Swale on Courthouse (B)
- Rain garden off Hare Street (G)
- **Swale and vegetated buffer along PNB northern border (F)**
- **Moving the dumpster at Boxwood Court (E)**

### Next Steps

- Skeo will incorporate the feedback from the meeting and develop a Final Concept Plan which will be shared with the public at National Night Out on August 2 and September Neighborhood Watch meeting by JRA.
- JRA will work with residents to install rain barrels at homes in the REL neighborhood and throughout Petersburg.
- JRA will continue to coordinate cleanup events, including storm drain marking with community partners and organizations.
- JRA will continue to provide updates to the REL Neighborhood Watch Assoc. on progress and funding opportunities.