



Working Group Name: NATURE

Meeting Date: Monday, December 19th, 2011

Meeting Location: Bethlehem Baptist Church, 2458 MLK Jr Ave, SE

Attendees: Molly Scott, Martha Surridge, Matt Grason, David Culp, Mary H. Rojas, MonaCheri Pollard, Absalom Jordan, Mike Cowden, Brian Rodgers, Gloria A. Lessington, Michael Godec, Kristina Byrne, Neal Fitzpatrick, Stella Tarnay, Janine Harris, Anne Lewis, Matt Harper, Anthony D. Jones, Wayne Baumgartner, Harold Thomas, Lisa Morris, Andrew Serfass, Kenneth Brown, Sharon Reinckens, Brenda Lee Richardson, Ian Leahy, Ida Tripp, Tammy Stidham, Ella Faulkner (Working Group Co-Chair), Monica Lear (Working Group Co-Chair), Polina Bakhtearov (Facilitator)

Main Points/Discussion: The focus of this meeting was to create a vision statement for Nature.

First, the group split up into two sub-groups and brainstormed ideas for a vision statement.

Group 1 – headed by Monica Lear

What does the city look like in the future it is more sustainable?

- Greener – more activity pollinators, natural activity
- Every street should be complete – trees, pedestrian paths, bike lanes, safe
- No person left indoors (children and adults)
- Access to nature and green space
- Maintain stable populations of native wildlife: health habitats – rivers, wetlands, trees, etc.
- Healthy minds and bodies
- Maintained and overseen by everyone (we are in this TOGETHER) – collective awareness, appreciation, and oversight; maintenance
- Achieve standards for air quality, water, emissions, etc.
- Establish value for nature and natural systems through promotion, education, etc.
- DC to be a “national model” for sustainability, ecosystem maintenance, etc.
- Policies and budgets need to be in line with these goals
- Recognize the wonders and beauty of nature
- More options for fresh, healthy, sustainably produced food
- Promote urban agriculture and ecosystems to facilitate that



Group 2 – headed by Ella Faulkner

What are some inspirational words/phrases that you would like to see in the vision statement for Nature?

Understanding/respecting nature

All DC residents...

Collaborating

Restoring/regeneration

Kind

Ensure for future generations

Caring to it

Benefit from balanced ecosystems with the 5 elements of nature (wind, earth, fire, water, air)

Foster a way to thrive in the urban environment

Protect and enhance

Increase access to public space

Establishment of youth programs in parks

Incorporating ALL park land into network

Balanced approach to conservation

Integrating nature into the built environment

Scientifically-viable services (economically sound)

Greater access for youth (recreation)

General respect

Reconnect/connect

Joy

Access

More activity

Educational and recreational uses outside of the recreation centers

Unused spaces – increase use/access

RFK Stadium (under National Public Service) – repurpose for recreation facilities?

Health/safe green space

Joy in interacting w/nature

Understand nature based on ecological foundation

What are the buzz words that you want to pull out of this brainstorm?

Connection

Access

Balance

Synergy



Planning (government agencies) – zoning, regulations, policies

Protect

City/District-wide

Natural space/systems

Integrate with built environment

Manage

Emphasis on youth

Stewardship

Preserve

Safe

Celebration

Appreciation

Respect

Joy

Understanding

Commitment to connection

Working together

Community

Livable

Model/Example

Collaboration

Once the two groups joined back together, we drafted several versions of a vision statement for Nature:

- Reconnect to the District as a natural system through greater park/green space/open space (connectivity and) access, protection of natural space, and integrating nature with the built environment (and youth stewardship).
- All of our actions reflect an understanding and appreciation for nature and its systems (by connecting people to green spaces and wildlife).
- All District residents enjoy access to DC's natural systems while protecting and respecting them.
- A promise to connect the residents of the city to the beauty and wonders of nature (while protecting for future use/for the future).
- Working together (with federal, local, private, and community partners), DC will be(come) an urban oasis/model (with green, connected, accessible spaces), where



people have access (and are connected) to green spaces, and where there is habitat for diverse natural populations, and we sustain health and well being (wellness) of all.

- Working together (with federal, local, private, and community partners), DC will be(come) an urban oasis/model (with green, connected, accessible spaces), where humans and nature thrive together, and where humans and nature can connect.
- The natural systems in the District will be respected as a central consideration to city planning and activities. Residents will be connected to safe and healthy green spaces through education, greater access, connectivity, protection, and the cultivation of youth and community stewards.
- DC residents are connected to natural systems in the District and work together towards an urban oasis/model.

For now, our draft vision statement is as follows (this can and will probably be amended in future meetings):

DRAFT VISION STATEMENT

Working together, DC will become an urban oasis where all of our actions reflect an understanding and appreciation for nature.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES (from Kick-Off Meeting)

- 1) Inventory and protect land/resources
- 2) Increase access and connectivity: focus on the people and through empowerment, increase sense of ownership
- 3) Foster involvement and investment

Next Steps: At our next meeting (Meeting 3), we will formulate the Nature goals for the Sustainable DC plan.

Please review the background information provided on the Sustainable DC Working Group Resource Center (<http://green.dc.gov/green/cwp/view,a,1282,q,464229.asp>) prior to the next meeting.

Date for next meeting: Tuesday, January 17th, 6:30PM

Location for next meeting: [TENTATIVE] Josephine Butler Parks Center, 2437 15th St, NW

Questions? Email sustainable.nature@dc.gov