Charleston City Plan: Land and Water, a discussion with WT

Minutes

**Date**: 9/9/2020

**Time**: 6p EDT

**Facilitator**: Petar Lemajic

# In Attendance

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| Anna Lee Turner  Amanda Gurski  Andrea Grabman | Andy Sternad  Amy Kunza  Dale Morris | David Waggonner Owen Meislin  Mike & Jean Turner | Petar Lemajic  Susan & Jim Wigley |

# Wagener Terrace Residents and Guests

Petar introduced WT residents and Dale Morris, The Water Institute of the Gulf. We reviewed the agenda.

Agenda

WTNA would like 5 WT residents to join us in a discussion with Dale Morris, City of Charleston advisor for the “Land and Water” portion of the 2020 City Comprehensive Plan update. There are 2 objectives for this meeting:

1. Gain a historical perspective of the flooding issues and where they are currently occurring in WT. [https://www.charlestoncityplan.com/](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.charlestoncityplan.com/&sa=D&source=calendar&ust=1600112964799000&usg=AOvVaw3Tppbj-fpYzSY6NrjA7l2c)
2. Gather WT feedback on the US Army Corps of Engineers proposed Perimeter Protection System for the Charleston Peninsula. [https://www.sac.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Supplemental-Funding/Charleston-Peninsula-Study/](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.sac.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Supplemental-Funding/Charleston-Peninsula-Study/&sa=D&source=calendar&ust=1600112964799000&usg=AOvVaw3Avp14sBgpy-Hb-Em0ZItb)

# Notes

**Amy Kunza** **(Wagener Terrace resident)**- Andrea and Petar. Y'all should push for the culvert at 12th and Simons to be upsized. If you have that much ponding behind. That should be draining to the creek. Although it could backfire and you get more tidal flooding. Get an H7H study.

**David Waggonner** – David is the founding principal of Waggonner & Ball, an internationally active architecture and environment practice based in New Orleans. David’s firm is contracted by the city of Charleston to build out the Land and Water use portions of the Comprehensive City Plan. As a community you should continue to ensure you provide input to the land and water portion of the City Plan via your observations on areas to explore for water retention -

**Susan Wiggly (Wagener Terrace resident)** - Lives on the Ashley River at the end of Grove and St Margaret Streets. The proposed "wall," as drawn, crosses our dock, cutting off the dock house and putting an 8' wall in her view. Her questions are:

1. What kind of environmental studies are being done to determine the impact that impeding the tide flow will have on the health of the marsh along the Ashley?

2. From Susan’s perspective, the presence of the wall will seriously affect the quality of life and the value of her waterfront property. She would like to understand how she will be compensated for the loss of property, view and the (current) $2mil value of her house?

3. What will the presence of an 8' wall do to Lowndes Grove, a historic property on the National Register?

4. Why would we spend $2bil on a wall that would not have protected us from Hugo?

In addition, Susan added, “old creeks continue to run.” Grove St is built over such a creek and requires constant maintenance as sink holes form. Filling in Gadsden Creek will have the same effect.

**Dale Morris** – Dale is the Director of Strategic Partnerships at the Water Institute of the Gulf. His firm is contracted by the city of Charleston to build out the Land and Water use portions of the Comprehensive City Plan. David will give analysis to the city based (9/23/2020) on what we’ve discovered for factors to consider in the next month to city planning department to combine with other analysis with other committees for planning commission to finesse for city council. 9/23/2020 we will be providing a webinar to citizens of Charleston to describe the nature of their analysis at midday and 6pm.

**Edmund Most (Wagener Terrace resident - Ashley Ave.)**

An H&H study should be performed at Simons St. and Piedmont Ave. and 12th Ave., but will require a larger study area to understand the tributary area.  The flooding at (Maple Ave. & Piedmont Ave., Maple St.& Ashley Ave., and mid-block of Gordon St., between 12th and Rutledge Ave) are contributing to the storm water time of concentration at Simons St. and Piedmont Ave. and 12th Ave.

The wetlands behind the AME church (78 Gordon St.) are a fantastic buffer for storm surge which is likely why our flood zone is being reduced on the new flood maps. Edmund believes society has learned a hard lesson with regards to filling wetlands feels fortunate we still have a piece of them in our backyard.   Upsizing the pipe at 12th could help the initial outfall but he agrees it could invite a bigger problem.  It is a natural wetland that should be protected and preserved so you cannot simply put a backflow device on it.  Possibly enlarging the wetland on the east side of Piedmont Ave. and 12th Ave. would help with needed capacity.

The H&H study would provide the necessary recommendations, but it should study the restriction at double pipe under 10th Ave. next to the old radio station (47 10th Ave).

There are 3 low hanging fruit suggested by Edmund.

1. Reintroduce the ditch that ran along 12th Ave. between Gordon St. and the marsh outfall.  It would eliminate the standing water we constantly have there after a rainstorm, it increases volume storage and infiltration. It would require a pipe installed under the drive apron to the AME Church (78 Gordon St.) on 12th Ave.
2. Camera the existing clay tile pipe under Gordon St. and clean (using Vactor excavation) it out if need be.  The pipe is likely clogged and possibly caved in in multiple locations as this common in Wagener Terrace.  The constant flooding along the mid-block is impacting homes values there but also at the dead end of Middleton Place and Kyle Place.
3. Camera the existing clay tile pipe under piedmont and clean (using Vactor excavation) it out if need be between Maple St. and Ashley Ave.).

**Owen Meislin (Wagener Terrace resident)**

Emphasized an immediate need for maintenance of the existing storm drains. They are so easily and often clogged that even the often attention they get is insufficient.

For example, since the new surface was laid on 10th Ave, the drains at Grove St. are terrible, since asphalt laid about 2 years ago. Owen indicated our neighborhood should do about it, but it is clear to him machinery is needed.

**Andy Sternad**

Andy is a LEED certified Architect with Waggonner and Ball Architecture. His firm is contracted by the city of Charleston to build out the Land and Water use portions of the Comprehensive City Plan.

Place to post your comments regarding the city plan

[https://www.charlestoncityplan.com/get-involved/#engageonline](https://www.charlestoncityplan.com/get-involved/%23engageonline)

His additional comments are as follow:

“*One additional note that may be help clarify next steps: our current City Plan analysis is broad and covers the entire city, so we are not able to get too specific in terms of recommendations for individual streets, homes, intersections, etc. However, there were ideas and approaches raised yesterday that are both specific to Wagener Terrace and relevant as prototypes across the city (a few examples among many are Amy’s tide/drainage observations and identification of need for internal reservoirs behind “the wall,” Andrea’s idea for freshwater retention in remnant creek at the end of Simon, Owen’s point about permeable ground cover). These are particularly helpful for our current effort but any and all feedback is most welcome.”*

# Actions

Petar – Collect / document community feedback for areas of concern regarding land and water use and possible areas of retention for water, remediation of local drain issues, etc. Provide commentary to Dale Morris by 9/23/2020.

Wagener Terrace Residents – Get engaged! Attend / comment in future public forums and document your situation with suggestions on the shape of future land and water use policy. See [https://www.charlestoncityplan.com/get-involved/#engageonline](https://www.charlestoncityplan.com/get-involved/%23engageonline) and/or send them to [wagenerterrace@gmail.com](mailto:wagenerterrace@gmail.com) to ensure your voice is represented.