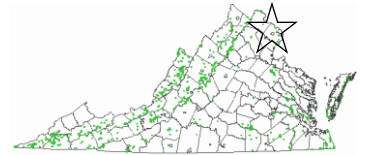




MOUNT VERNON GROUP VIRGINIA CHAPTER

THE CITIES OF ALEXANDRIA & FALLS CHURCH, ARLINGTON COUNTY, AND
EASTERN FAIRFAX & PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTIES



November 6, 2020

Dear Mayor Wilson and members of City Council:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Mount Vernon Group, Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club about the proposed Taylor Run stream restoration. After attending the city's recent presentation about the plan and participating in walk-throughs of the site, we are concerned about the full implementation of the plan and support additional review.

We believe Taylor Run is in need of restoration to stabilize the stream bank and reduce pollutants washing down the Run and into the Chesapeake Bay. However, there are options that need to be considered to limit the impact on the tree canopy, the rare biotic community and the isolated wetlands on the site. In addition, ground disturbance and compaction caused by construction can lead to long-term damage. It is also critical to plan restoration of the areas around the stream to prevent the growth of invasive species. Stream restoration can improve the stream ecology, if done correctly. But if done incorrectly it would cause other issues in the future.

We do not object to all stream restoration projects. Two other restoration projects currently being considered in Alexandria along Strawberry Run and Lucky Run would disturb streambeds that are much more degraded than the stretch of Taylor Run that is targeted by this project. The Taylor Run project merits additional review, because of the exceptional ecological value of the area.

Members of the community, including impacted civic associations, have requested further investigation to ensure that the best possible result for the stream, the surrounding forest, and the biodiversity of the area. They have requested that the City convene an "experts group" to meet onsite at Taylor Run to discuss alternatives or modifications to the proposed plan. This group would consist of representatives of the City's stormwater team and their outside consultants, the City's chief naturalist, the City Arborist, a representative of the State Department of Environmental Quality, and an outside expert in stream restoration. A member of the City Council and a representative of the public would also attend. We support such a meeting or for the City to convene a similar review process. The fate of a truly special forest area, which is a favorite walking path for many in the city, is at stake. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Rick Keller
Chair, Mt. Vernon Group
Virginia Chapter, Sierra Club
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