

# Storm Water Maintenance and Open Space Management Workshop

December 5, 2019

**FINAL**  
**1/4/2020 2:33 PM**

## **The presenters:**

- Jessica Watson, Stormwater Program Manager, Sussex Conservation District. Jessica addressed maintenance requirements and impact upon the community
- Matt Messina. SCD Project Manager. Matt reviewed a presentation on community drainage challenges.
- Jim Passwaters. Sussex Landscape. Jim is a vendor of choice of Sussex Conservation District - he briefly reviewed plantings.

**Senators HOA Executive Board Attendees:** James Stevens and Duane Boone

## **Specific questions and answers we had coming to the meeting**

1. Dredging frequency?  
15-20 years
2. Lifespan of a wet pond?  
With proper care - indefinite.
3. What ramifications are there if we let a wet pond go dry?  
There are no regulations.
4. Is there a position with regard to fishing in a wet pond?  
No
5. Will there be more sessions?  
There are none planned. (the session was completely full. There's a demand.)
6. Can we get a copy of the stormwater plan/map?  
Jessica was able to provide a soft copy of the plan.

## **General notes regards Sussex Conservation District (SCD) mission**

1. SCD has responsibility for ponds, and storm water management, not the storm sewers.
2. All properties over 5,000 square feet require a plan and approval by the SCD.
3. Storm water management can consist of wet ponds, dry ponds and catch basins. Pond sizes are calculated for the area they serve. Dry ponds appear smaller but volume of water they can hold is similar to wet ponds. Rumors suggested that wet ponds were no longer being permitted - this is not true.
4. SCD performs maintenance inspections of the storm water management systems
5. SCD has no fine power to hold developers accountable. However, they can hold up permits during initial construction. And, they must sign off after performing a final inspection that the approved storm water plan was carried out in order for bonds to be released.

6. Financial assistance may be available for repair/replacement of eligible projects (applies to design, construction and repair; not maintenance).

### **Drainage**

1. Proper drainage is - 48 hours after a normal rain event, there is no standing water. A major rain event (4" rain) - 72 hours. This is a rule of thumb.
2. Sump Pump discharge and Pop-ups - There are no SCD regulations for sump pump discharge or pop-ups (size or location). SCD does not take sides in any dispute between HOA and homeowners. They only provide technical assistance. Call them and they will come out and investigate for free. They do keep records of every case they investigate throughout the County.

### **Ponds**

1. Pond Buffers
  - a. Best practice is to leave a no-mow zone buffer. This dissuades geese from approaching the pond from land.
  - b. The buffer minimizes the need for dredging by trapping material that might otherwise enter the pond.
  - c. Buffer plantings - there's a list of recommended species on the website. No trees or shrubs.
2. Pond and storm sewer maintenance -
  - d. remove growth from inlets and outlets
  - e. make certain the low flow orifice is not blocked
  - f. periodically clean the rip-rap
  - g. no recommended period for inspecting storm sewers for blockage
3. Pond fences are NOT recommended. Does not stop young children from entering; slows down emergency response.
4. Pond water levels - There is no requirement to maintain a minimum water level in a wet pond.
5. Pond Fountains and diffusers - not required.
6. Hurricane approaching? - suggestion is to shut off pond fill pumps.

### **Miscellaneous**

1. "Tax Ditch" - There is something called a Tax Ditch in Sussex County. This is a private estuary owned by a group of homeowners who are taxed to address ongoing maintenance. We don't have a Tax Ditch within Senators - something to know if you're relocating!
2. See scanned handouts for all URLs. The SCD homepage is <https://www.sussexconservation.org>.
3. Plantings can be purchased directly from SCD - see the homepage for photos, pricing, etc.