

February 19, 2015

Deputy Commissioner Chris Crockett
Philadelphia Water Department
Aramark Building
1101 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107

cc: Howard Neukrug
Vicki Lenoci
Jeremy Chadwick

RE: PWD's Proposed Changes to Stormwater Management Rules and Guidance for Development Projects

Dear Deputy Commissioner Crockett:

Please accept the enclosed letter on behalf of the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia (SBN), the Delaware Valley Green Building Council (DVGBC), Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), PennFuture, and their respective memberships as a formal expression of our support for *Green City, Clean Waters*. We believe that the successful implementation of this plan will provide significant triple bottom line benefits to the City and region, and will continue to secure PWD's position as a leader in urban stormwater management.

We believe that some of PWD's proposed changes to the stormwater management rules and guidance for development projects include important steps in the right direction. In other respects, however, PWD's proposed changes fall short of best engineering practices and best policies adopted by other jurisdictions. Further, in some instances, elements of PWD's proposal seem to be a step in the wrong direction.

We offer the enclosed recommendation letter in the spirit of the constructive dialogue that PWD has fostered, and with the goal of improving the implementation of PWD's proposed July 2015 regulatory changes in order to support the maximum success of *Green City, Clean Waters*. We express support for specific elements of PWD's proposal and propose specific revisions that will better facilitate and provide more incentive for the use of green practices, reduce compliance costs for developers, and help PWD meet its own water quality obligations cost-effectively. We also identify several questions about the basis for, and the implications of, some of PWD's proposals, and ask that PWD provide answers before proceeding with these proposed changes.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss these items further and will be in touch shortly about setting up a meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Jamie Gauthier, Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia
Anna Shipp, Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia
Larry Levine, NRDC
Michael Helbing, PennFuture
Alex Dews, DVGBC
Holly Shields, DVGBC

Summary of Top Recommendations to PWD re: Proposed July 2015 Regulatory Update:

PWD should make the following changes to its proposed approach to ensure that vegetated practices are prioritized and facilitated wherever practicable, and to address the concerns and challenges expressed by the development, engineering, and design community:

- Modify the existing flood control requirements and calculation process to reflect the benefit of the increased amount of stormwater managed under the revised WQv standard while maintaining existing flood control and flow rate protections.
- Update calculation methods to account for the full functionality of green stormwater infrastructure when evaluating SMP capacity and SMP release rates and determine compliance based on these updated calculations.
 - Appropriately tailor the soil storage credit to account for the different performance capacities of different types of soils and to differentiate the dynamic nature of soil from the comparably static nature of an underground basin.
 - Give more credit to highly absorptive landscapes that perform above and beyond the capacity of a traditional urban lawn.
- Revise the basic “infiltration” requirement to make it a “retention” requirement, where retention is defined as capture without discharge.
- Provide the water quality modeling and technical analysis it has used to support the assumptions it is making with regards to the following proposals. If the data show they weaken the City’s water quality protections and disincentivize vegetated practices, PWD should adjust or withdraw the proposal to ensure otherwise.
 - Shifting from “volume reducing” practices to “pollutant reducing” practices to manage runoff that is not infiltrated, and
 - Excluding any roof runoff that cannot be infiltrated from water quality treatment requirements for non-infiltrating systems in the CSO area.
- Elevate infiltrating and non-infiltrating vegetated practices in the proposed SMP hierarchy in the Guidance Manual, and effectively require that project submissions show that these individual vegetated practices and combinations of these practices be exhausted prior to a submission that includes a non-vegetated approach.
- Promote the use of green roofs, including through regulations.
- Tailor loading ratios to account for several key factors, including the type of SMP, the source of the runoff, and subsurface conditions.
- Continue its work to develop a comprehensive set of operation and maintenance best practices for *both* public and private SMPs, and for vegetated practices in particular.