

Lawn and Ophelia Stormwater Improvement Project
February 10, 2021
Discussion with Oakcliffe Community Group

Attendees: PWSA Tony Igwe, Senior Group Manager, Stormwater; Maria Natoli, Project Manager; Rebecca Zito, Senior Manager Public Affairs; Barton Kirk, Lead Designer and Project Manager, Ethos Collaborative; Damon Weiss; Principal, Ethos Collaborative. Representatives from the City of Pittsburgh and Oakcliffe Community Group.

The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority attended the February 10th meeting of the Oakcliffe Community Group to provide an update about the Lawn and Ophelia Stormwater Improvement Project. PWSA introduced project manager Maria Natoli and Ethos Collaborative as the engineering design firm.

Maria provided a brief overview of Pittsburgh's stormwater challenges before Barton Kirk, the lead designer, reviewed the design and project schedule.

Project Overview

PWSA last met with the Oakcliffe Community Group on February 12, 2020. Since last year's update, the project scope was revised to create a more cost-effective design to accomplish the same established stormwater management goals. The updated design includes construction of a rain garden with underground storage, installation of a grassy area to stabilize the upper level of the park, and new catch basins at Lawn Street.

The rain garden is designed to drain within two to three days following a rainstorm. It will capture water from the surrounding streets, R-tanks installed beneath the surface will store excess rain, and as it drains from the storage system, the water will be conveyed to the sewer system. The rain garden will include a vegetated area planted with a flowering, meadow-mix, permeable pavers at the edge of the rain garden near the entrance at Lawn Street, and a 4-foot-wide path around the rain garden.

The vegetated area at the upper level of the park will be planted with a low mow mix that would need to be mowed a couple of times a year.

PWSA is completing the design and anticipates construction starting this summer. PWSA would also maintain the stormwater infrastructure including the vegetation.

Questions and Discussion

- The crosswalk has been removed from the plans. Would like to have conversation with the City about keeping it. Hersh Mernenstein, Local Government and Community Relations Coordinator with the City of Pittsburgh offered to reach out to DOMI to see if it can be included. There was also interest to install an ADA ramp.
- A community member expressed interest to install a picnic table. Asked if it was something the community could do on their own.
- Group members expressed interest in signage to welcome to neighborhood and incorporate information about the project. Would like to be involved in the process to create the sign.
- A community member stated there are sinkholes along Lawn Street. This issue will be investigated.