

# DRB Approves Stream Project

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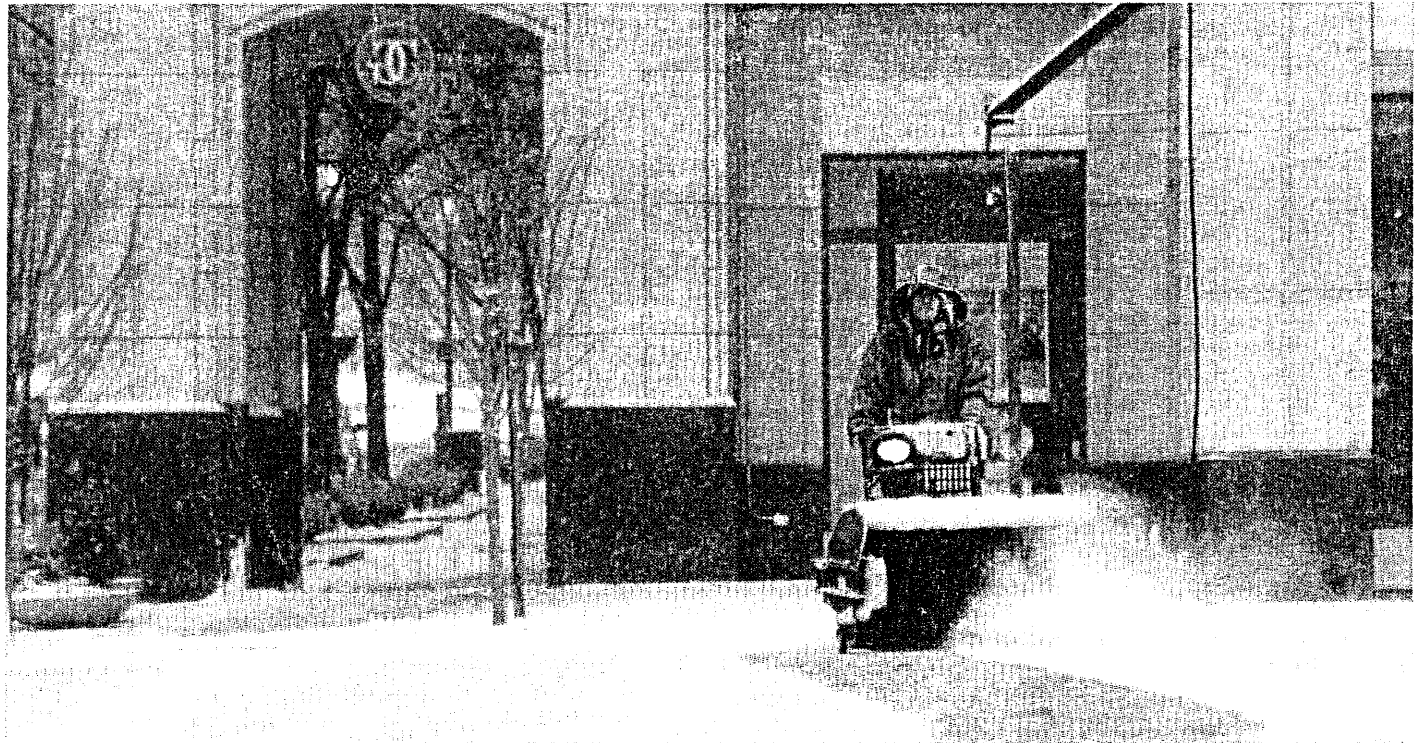
Reston Association's Design Review Board approved the application submitted by RA and Wetland Studies and Solutions Inc. for first three reaches of the Glade stream valley on Tuesday night. About 100 people attended the meeting, which lasted late into the night.

DRB Chairman Richard Newlon said he said he wanted the crowd to keep in mind that "we're all Restonians" and they should get through the meeting as quickly as they can in a civil manner. Newlon also reminded everyone that the DRB was there to look at the design of the project and not other aspects of the project. "What we're going to be looking for is the visual impact," he said.

Mike Rolband, WSSI owner presented information on the changes that have been made to the project, including changing the bridge style, using paved pathways to save trees and refining their limits of clearing to avoid high-value trees. Rolband said moving forward they will ensure they have community dialogue meetings before the project comes before the DRB. He said they will also make firewood available to Reston residents for free from the trees they cut down.

Stella Koch of the Audubon Naturalist Society said she has worked with stream restoration projects in the past and supports the project. "The saddest thing to watch in this county is the streams," she said. She said for a stream valley to heal the water must be treated first and compared the project to facial reconstruction surgery. "The surgery part of fixing your

## BLOWING THROUGH THE SNOW



Observer Photo by Christopher L. Moore

A worker clears the pedestrian walkway at Reston Town Center Tuesday morning, hours after the first major storm of 2009 brought significant snowfall and ice to the area.

Stream, From Page 1

face is disgusting," she said. "But the end result is better."

Members of area groups stood up in support of the project including Jerry Volloy who was the CEO of RA when the project was initiated and John Gasson, president of Friends of Reston. Gasson said they support the project and it is in their charter to look out for Reston's open spaces, nature education and Walker Nature Education Center. Other groups that support the project include Trout Unlimited, the RA Parks and Planning Committee and the RA Environmental Action Committee.

Diana Carter, representing Save the Glade, also gave a short presentation in opposition to the project. She said they wanted to thank WSSI for being able to work well with them and also thanked community members for getting involved. She said the first three reaches of the Glade project do not show the amount of destruction that residents will see when WSSI moves further down in the project.

Carter said the DRB is the only group able to look out for Reston's open spaces at this point and wanted them to keep in mind that the other groups involved, including the Army Corps of Engineers, Virginia department of environmental quality, Fairfax County and Reston Association, do not look out for Reston's long-term benefit. "You are the only ones in that position," she said.

The Save the Glade group is also concerned that the wildlife study is not



Observer Photo by Leslie Perales

Jerry Volloy, who was president of Reston Association when the stream project was initiated, speaks in support of the project at the meeting Tuesday night.

adequate enough, Carter said. The study should include animals' habitats throughout the year and breeding seasons among other things. "Without this information how can you really say we are doing this at the right time," she said.

More than 40 individuals at the meeting also spoke. While at the Dec. 16 meeting the majority of speakers spoke out against the project, at Tuesday's meeting the majority of speakers were in support of the project. Reston resident Dick Still-

son said he was amazed at the number of educated professionals in fields related to the environment who came to express their support in the project.

Board members asked for increased oversight of the project by RA, including monitoring by the covenants staff, monthly updates and more communication between the DRB and RA board of directors. RA President Robin Smyers said there will also be monthly updates at the board of directors meetings. DRB board

member Neal Roseberry made a motion to approve the project. The board voted unanimously to pass the application.

"I'm thrilled with the outcome and with all the hard work," Smyers said after the meeting. She said she believes the process will be improved because of the work that has been done recently and the dialogue will continue. She said RA will also continue to lobby the county to make sure they are working to treat the cause of the problem. Rolband said he hopes support will grow and they are able to keep restoring the streams in Reston.

Carter said she was disappointed with the outcome. "I feel crushed, I feel let down and crushed," she said. She said she thinks the project is a mistake for Reston because the method used in restoring the streams is still very new and evolving with potential for failure. She said the Glade is magical and once construction starts "we'll never see it again." She said Save the Glade will continue to vocalize their opposition. "We're not going away," she said.