

Hickory Creek Watershed Planning Group

December 10, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Frankfort Square Park District

Present: Ron Sly, Village of New Lenox (Chair); Dale Schepers, Village of Tinley Park; Hal Sprague, CNT; Mark Willobee, Geosyntec; Jesse Elam, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning; Tony Minetta, Village of Frankfort; Robin Ellis, Village of New Lenox; Lynn Rotunno, Lower Des Plaines Ecosystem Partnership; Kim Meyer Ramirez, resident of Frankfort Square; Julie Arvia, Frankfort Square Park District; Bill Eyring, CNT; Michael Salamowicz, Village of Homer Glen; Dan Peloquin, Village of Mokena; Ann Piasecki, resident of New Lenox; Matt Panfil, Village of Tinley Park, Jim Randall, Frankfort Square Park District.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Ron Sly brought the meeting to order. Self-introductions and thanks to our hosts from the Frankfort Square Park District.

II. Minutes from October 30th Meeting

Minutes were presented by Ron. Minutes approved with motion by Dale Schepers, second by Hal Sprague. The motion was approved unanimously.

III. Roles of the consultants

Jesse Elam explained that Geosyntec, the technical consultant, will be responsible for preparing the watershed plan and defining a monitoring plan for 2010. Mark Willobee will lead the Geosyntec team. The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) will be responsible for communications, including brochures, the website, workshops and tours. Bill Eyring will lead the CNT team. CNT will also lead the planning for ongoing activities of the HCWPG after development of the Plan in mid 2011. Jesse also presented a suggested schedule for the 18-month planning period.

Mark requested a point of contact for each municipality. Of those present, the following were designated.

New Lenox – Ron Sly
Tinley Park – Matt Panfil
Homer Glen – Mike Salamowicz
Frankfort – Howard Sloan
Frankfort Square Park District – Julie Arvia

IV. Scheduling and Committees

It was agreed that meetings would continue to be scheduled monthly on the fourth Friday of the month at 9 AM, but formal meetings would only be required every other month. The other monthly timeslots will be available for committee meetings or other events.

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There was discussion about whether to establish an Executive or Steering Committee to enable some decisions to be made quickly between meetings. While there was general agreement that a Steering Committee is a good idea, there were several questions about who should make up that committee and how they would operate. It was decided to bring the issue up at the next meeting and, in the meantime, Bill will contact other watershed groups and distribute a memo before the next meeting about how they deal with such a committee.

Bill suggested that the current Communications and Outreach Committees be combined because they will have a lot to do and most of it will deal with both issues. The Group agreed, and Bill asked for volunteers to review and offer suggestions on drafts for the brochure. Ann Piasecki, Dan Peloquin, Matt Panfil and Lynn Rotunno volunteered.

Bill, Mark and Lynn will work on the website.

Bill asked about communications through the print media. The Southtown and the local coverage once a week in the Tribune seem to be the best bet. Bill mentioned that CNT communicators are getting experienced with Facebook and Twitter, which may be options for the Group to communicate with at least younger stakeholders.

V. Watershed Resource Inventory

Mark and his team are gathering all available data on water quality and other in-stream conditions and sources of pollution. He is still seeking information from some places about their storm sewer networks. CMAP is a resource for the inventory.

VI. Problem Identification

Geosyntec will be preparing for stream walks during mid February. They will be asking for suggestions as to where they should focus their time. Mark will provide information before the next meeting about their criteria for prioritizing stream segments. Permission from property owners to gain access to the stream will, as usual, be an issue. New Lenox and Frankfort Townships will be approached to gain information. Water supply issues will not be part of the work.

Other Business

St. Francis and perhaps Lewis Universities will be important allies.

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Hal reminded us that he and Dana Ludwig from Robertson Engineering have prepared a list of 20 policy issues that should be considered by watershed municipalities. He also mentioned:

- The MS4 regulations have been changed, and many municipalities aren't aware of the changes.
- The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District is preparing to adopt its own storm water ordinance, something all the collar counties have already. It should be helpful in getting Cook County development on the same page as the rest.
- The Illinois EPA is studying how to encourage the use of green infrastructure through the establishment of state-wide stormwater regulations.
- HR 4202 is a draft bill in Congress that does a few things, including setting up Green Infrastructure Centers of Excellence around the country, establishing a Green Infrastructure Office at USEPA, providing funds for green jobs, and assistance for municipalities to learn and implement GI strategies. It also encourages states to help local governments adopt GI Portfolio Standards to increase the use of GI.
- The next water stimulus funds will come through the State Revolving Fund again, so Hickory Creek members should get more familiar with that process and be prepared to submit applications for funding through the SRF for 2010.

Dennis Dreher, a subcontractor to Geosyntec, will be focusing on policy issues during the summer of 2010. We all should be working toward cooperating with that effort.

The next meeting of the HCWPG will be on January 22, 2010 at 9AM. Homer Glen will be our host, and the meeting site is at the Village Council Chamber & Conference Room 14917 S. Founders Crossing (In front on the east side of the building).

The agenda will be distributed prior to the January meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at about 11:30.

Submitted by Bill Eyring.