

Hickory Creek Watershed Planning Group
July 30, 2010 Meeting Minutes
Village of New Lenox

Attendance: Dale Schepers, Village of Tinley Park - Vice Chairman; Allison Walk, AECOM; Derek O'Sullivan, Will County Land Use; Paul Pearson, Village of Mokena; Jesse Elam, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning; Matt Bardol, Geosyntec; Tom Schwerha, City of Joliet; Cindy Skrukrud, Sierra Club; Robin Ellis, Village of New Lenox; Mark Willobee, Geosyntec; Rick Suttle, Ruettiger, Tonelli & Associates; Jane Turley and Ed Wilmes, Village of Orland Park; Art and JoAnne Mackay, Spring and Hickory Creek Committee; Mary Brauer, Pilcher Park Nature Center; Tim Good, Forest Preserve District of Will County; Matt Panfil, Village of Tinley Park; Adam Nielson, Village of Frankfort; Andrea Cline, The Conservation Foundation; Bill Eyring, Center for Neighborhood Technology – Coordinator.

The meeting was called to order by Dale Schepers at 9:08 AM.

The minutes of the May 26th meeting were approved.

Update on Watershed Plan Development

Jesse Elam introduced his memo "Project Charter for Hickory Creek Watershed Plan." It will be included on the website www.hickorycreekwatershed.org. There was agreement that our process will conform to the charter and the committee structure, discussed later in the meeting, is designed to achieve the objectives in the charter.

Watershed Reconnaissance and Initial Ideas for BMP Upgrades

Mark Willobee presented slides documenting some of the visual observations of the stream corridor. He cautioned that there are a lot of conditions in the watershed that are unusually good, but that the emphasis of his report is on the conditions that are not satisfactory. Each of the points that he and his crew visited is mapped using GPS. His report will be included on the website.

Examples included trash, channel modifications, online detention, and changes in stream dynamics and temperature. Mowing to the edge leads to erosion and excess nutrients due to fertilizers. Carp sometimes stir up large amounts of sediment. Neighbors often are resistant to changes, so that education will be important. Our purpose will be to provide support to municipalities so that people begin to understand the importance of sustainable practices and their role in watershed management.

Orland Park has about 400 ponds, some owned privately and some publicly. We have to be clear how best to design new ones. Low flow pipes with high flow bypasses may be effective for small streams. Homeowners don't have the means or desire to work cooperatively on streambank stabilization.

The county is working on similar projects and has had to identify all stakeholders.

Criteria for setting priorities must be specified.

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Straightening and chlorides are problems on Marley Creek. There was a major re-meandering project on Jackson Creek, which is just south of Hickory Creek, but it took a long time to implement.

Spring Creek has a 20-foot eroded bluff at the Joliet line. We will have to decide whether stabilizing is as effective as upstream watershed runoff reduction. In Los Angeles they are removing concrete liners. Also it is important to decide whether erosion is due to downcutting of the stream or just bank erosion. Sometimes you can keep the flows away from the banks.

There is a 4-foot dam just upstream of the rail yard on Spring Creek that may be as much of a fish barrier as the long pipe under the yard. The larger dam in Pilcher Park causes algae blooms upstream and may cause erosion downstream where there is a 35-foot eroded bluff. Mary Brauer asked how it would be determined who is responsible for the dam – all agreed that there is likely not to be an easy answer. Mary also said that there is a lot of sediment coming from the small drainage features within the park. Mark offered to meet with Pilcher Park staff.

Matt reported that there is a recent article in Stormwater Magazine that quantifies the effect of sound BMP strategies for runoff reduction. Detention basins are not effective for reducing the volume of runoff. The Panduit parking lots are good examples – they include bioretention, vegetated swales and permeable pavement. There are effective filter devices for retrofitting streets. Other retrofits can include downspout disconnection, lowering parking lot islands, and adding check dams to conveyance channels.

Detention basins should probably include diverse, abundant vegetation on the banks. It can repel geese, as well as stabilize soils. Designers should avoid uniform shapes. Carp must be controlled. Concrete low flow channels should be avoided, but may be necessary if there are constant sump pump flows.

The short term implementation plan will be developed from the analysis of problems and opportunities. Projects in this plan should have a clear ability to help, property owner willingness and ability to act, cost-effectiveness, repeatability, demonstration opportunity, and severity of problem as documented by loading estimates.

Bill Eyring suggested that the short term implementation plan include projects for which stimulus funds will have been requested.

One example of a potential project is the area including the Mokena Fire Department. Retrofitting of stormwater conveyance and detention facilities are being evaluated.

Each project in the plan has to be evaluated for load reduction.

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Each of us should identify other projects and let Geosyntec know about them. They should be considered for stimulus funds, too. Bill and Hal Sprague can help with stimulus applications.

Dale reminded us that developers will be wary of any new requirements. We will have to demonstrate their cost-effectiveness (from the developer's perspective) and their positive effect on marketing. We need to focus on quantifying the benefits of our proposals and become experts so that we are the go-to guys for our communities and developers. We have to be prepared to give credit for stormwater volume reductions and to monitor performance over the long term. We should document costs and benefits wherever possible.

Panduit's new headquarters building in Tinley Park is an example. It has a high LEED rating but the benefits of its green features may not be obvious. We should help document their performance, cost comparisons with typical development, and publicize the results. (Dale is trying to arrange a tour of that facility.)

Vice Chair and Committee Activities

Jesse described the memo that he had introduced at the May meeting about potential governance recommendations for the HCWPG. The main recommendation was for a Steering Committee that would be the decision-making body for acting on Watershed Plan recommendations. Jesse recommends a 12-person committee described in the July 2010 memo *Potential governance structure for Hickory Creek Watershed Planning Group*. The Group consensus was to approve this structure. The following volunteers were approved as Steering Committee members.

Stakeholder group	Organization	Name
Implementers	Will County	Derek O'Sullivan
	New Lenox	Ron Sly
	Mokena	Paul Pearson
	Frankfort	Adam Nielson
	Tinley Park	Dale Schepers
	Orland Park	Jane Turley
	Homer Glen	Not present, but either Mike Salamowicz or Erin Venard
	Joliet	Tom Schwerha
	Forest Preserve Will County	Tim Good
Advocates	Sierra Club / Prairie Rivers	Cindy Skrukud
Resources	CMAP	Jesse Elam
Citizens		Rick Suttle

Agencies such as the Corps of Engineers (and CMAP) as well as the Group's consultants Geosyntec and CNT will be resources to the Steering Committee. Since the Corps is a

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key actor, and is generally favorably inclined toward green infrastructure, we should encourage them to be active with us.

The Group confirmed that Ron Sly should serve as Chairman and Dale Schepers should serve as Vice Chairman of the Steering Committee.

Technical Subcommittee – They will determine what the benefits of potential projects are, how much pollution reduction is needed for a priority project, and will review BMP projects. Meetings could be by conference calls, webinars and in person. Volunteers for the committee were Paul Pearson (Mokena), Allison Walk (AECOM), Derek O’Sullivan (Will County), Cindy Skrukud (Sierra Club), Bill Eyring (CNT), Mark Willobee (Geosyntec). The committee will work closely with the municipalities in which potential projects are located.

Policy Review Subcommittee – They will determine what policy changes are desirable and practical. Cost effectiveness will be a major factor. Dennis Dreher is reviewing existing policies and ordinances and may recommend charrettes and workshops. The municipalities will be asked to compare their policies with a checklist developed by Dennis and reviewed by the committee. Also reviewed will be municipal plans and maps to look for corridors of importance and examples where credit is given for green infrastructure. Dale mentioned that this is timely to respond to the for USEPA requirement for volume reduction. We can get in front of curve and let our elected officials know why we are going in this direction. Volunteers for the committee were Matt Panfil (Tinley Park), Robin Ellis (New Lenox), Hal Sprague (CNT), and Ed Wilmes (Orland Park).

Communications and Public Outreach Subcommittee – This committee first met on February 26th. Members include Ann Piasecki, Robin Ellis, Tim Good, Julie Arvia, Bill Eyring and Lynn Rotunno.

Workshop on MS4 Regulations

Discussions at previous meetings had confirmed interest in the Group organizing a training workshop for meeting the MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) regulations. Mark Willobee thought we could gain participation by a Geosyntec engineer with experience in California as well as a representative from the Illinois EPA. Derek O’Sullivan thought that the Will County Stormwater Committee would be interested in co-sponsoring the workshop (Derek has since confirmed their interest).

New Business

Art Mackay reported that Rita Lee from the Illinois DNR submitted info to the Corps of Engineers about continuation of the Hickory/Spring Creek flood protection project. Art suggested that the Group support the project. Tom Schwerha and Jesse Elam will check into the latest status and how we can best become involved.

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Next Meeting will be on September 24th 9 AM until noon at the Orland Park Police Station.