

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
Stormwater and Flood Plain Oversight Committee Meeting
January 27, 2005, 6:45 p.m.

Downers Grove Public Works Facility
5101 Walnut Avenue, Downers Grove, Illinois

Call to Order

Chairman Eckmann called the meeting to order at 6:45p.m.

Committee Members Present: Messrs. Beckman (arrives 6:50 p.m.), Bollenberg, Crilly, Gorman, Nystrom, Ponstein and Chairman Eckmann

Staff Present: Mr. Michael Millette, P.E., Asst. Dir. of Public Works Engineering; and Ms. Sharon Connell, Recording Secretary.

Approval of November 18, 2004 Minutes

A change was noted on page 3, middle paragraph, revise "the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District" to "Downers Grove."

Minutes were approved, with noted change, on motion by Mr. Gorman, seconded by Mr. Crilly. Motion carried by voice vote: 6-0

Public Comments - None

New Business

- A. Downtown Area Watershed Plan-** Mr. Millette discussed the two-year history of the watershed plan and its goal, i.e., to develop a specific plan for the St. Joseph's Creek watershed in the central business district and to adhere to the county's ordinance. By adhering to the county's stormwater floodplain ordinance it would require some of the larger parcels to develop a retaining facility to control water runoff. Due to the constraints of some of the land and the age of the infrastructure, in some cases it would lead to a hardship that would not promote redevelopment in downtown. Therefore, the Village created the watershed plan in order to present it to the county as a way to show the downtown area as being a unique parcel and that the Village recognized that it would be impossible to adhere to the county's ordinance one hundred percent. Instead, if the Village provided a net benefit by providing the steps to reduce water runoff by 1 CFS, it was better than doing nothing at all.

Mr. Tom Burke, with Christopher Burke Engineering, presented a map of those properties affected by the watershed discussing noting that the St. Joseph's Creek as being located underground through an 11' foot pipe under the downtown district and reiterating the goal of how to benefit those businesses who wanted to redevelop in the downtown district but on a regional aspect. He discussed the various areas within the "yellow" map area that already provided water detention. Working with the village, Mr. Burke identified potential detention basins at Forest and Warren (2.6 acre detention), south of the railroad tracks at Village Hall (4.5 acre detention), and at the library (1.6 acre detention), explained that fees in lieu of individual detention facilities could be collected for future redevelopment. It would have to be conveyed to the county that the money would go toward those three locations but also that the village would review St.

Joseph's Creek downstream where stream bank stabilization would take place and include flow traps to collect debris as well as installation of storm sceptors for water quality.

The watershed plan was divided into a north/south delineation, i.e., north of the railroad tracks and south of the tracks. Mr. Millette confirmed the county reviewed the watershed plan and submitted its comments to staff, which were, overall, positive.

Questions followed on how detailed the watershed plan was reviewed as it related to future development, i.e., potential townhouses at Warren and Saratoga Streets, wherein Mr. Millette indicted the plan did not get specific but, instead, by working with the Village's zoning department and planning department, refined and reviewed the areas as to what zoning was allowed and took a conservative estimate. Confirmation was also made that the central area of the district would contain 100% redevelopment; however, it would not mean 100% impervious surface and a net loss of pervious would was accounted for by staff. Mr. Gorman inquired whether Mr. Burke took into account the new amendment to the countywide ordinance, which Mr. Burke indicated that it was done prior to the ordinance amendment and, thus the Village was actually over conservative. Chairman Eckmann conveyed his understanding of the plan, which was that only a limited amount of detention existed in the Village and that the Village was moving away from water flow to water quality. Per a question, Mr. Burke surmised that the county would not ask whether the Village maximized out its water storage. Instead, creating a watershed plan allowed the Village to rewrite the ordinance criteria for the specified area that it was working in, which was a benefit to the region.

Discussion followed by Mr. Burke on how the Village of Elmhurst created its detention for its downtown redevelopment using the quarry and the fact that it became economically unfair to other villages in the county. He further explained that providing detention was not meant to solve all flooding problems of today.

Mr. Millette discusses the fact that the county does take into consideration the benefits of the Village's water study, the release study, and the improvements downstream to improve the release of the downtown water release. Discussing water quality, the chair pointed out the "T" in Curtiss Street probably drew in most of the oil into St. Joseph's Creek. He also asked that Mr. Burke review the acre feet listed at the bottom of page 6 and at the top of page 7 of the report to accurately total 11.9 acre feet.

Another question followed on whether the report covered the formula on what the fee would be and whether there was a structure discussed, wherein staff indicated it did not; however the Village could structure the fee as it liked. More recently there had been discussion on how much the detention would cost. Millette proceeded to discuss how the fees for the Turner Construction were calculated and the options that were available to the Village Council. Lastly, a question arose on whether the county indicated that the Village had to have storage in place prior to approving the developments that would pay in, wherein Mr. Burke indicated enough storage was in place to show that the Village had a watershed benefit in order to move forward.

Discussion was raised that the watershed plan was a living document and that revisions, be they significant or not, could be made to the plan. (Mr. Burke leaves meeting)

Mr. Bollenberg discusses his understanding of the report in that it addresses the fact that all developers will choose the fee-in-lieu-of over detention as long as it is affordable.

While the intent was to encourage downtown redevelopment thereby making the fee affordable, it would mean that certain developers would not have to come before the Village asking for a variance, etc. and the developers would pay the fee because it was considerably less than the actual installation of a detention. Mr. Millette concurred and indicated the process would become an administrative function reported annually. Mr. Bollenberg further asked what benefits would result from the fees collected and queried whether the Village would get a good return for the dollar. In response, Mr. Millette discussed the benefits of certain projects getting completed through the collection of fees, specifically, as it relates to keeping pollutants from flowing further down the St. Joseph Creek. Maintenance could take place on that type of a project either weekly or monthly. Smaller scale projects could also be done using the fees.

Staff proceeded to discuss the fact that it had the ability to track the funds for the projects and that it should. However, the chair indicated that the Village could not set up a fund for a longer period of time than what the majority of council voted for at the time.

A question was asked about the benefits of redevelopment to the residents and the non-profit organizations in the Village, wherein staff explained that the Village Council had the authority to waive the fees for a church or the fees could be reduced. However, it was brought up that the fees could be incurred if the church grew to a larger size unless the church property is more than 80% impervious, provided the county-wide ordinance amendment is adopted by the village. A question followed on how the rule would apply to the Downers Grove First United Methodist Church, since it would be purchasing additional land. Mr. Crilly asked that after the fees were used for projects, how would future projects be paid for using the fees, wherein staff surmised that funds from the utility debt fee could be used or funds would have to come out of the capital budget. Discussion followed on how the Curtiss block would be affected and how the developer might consider his or her options financially. Crilly suggested setting the fees for inflation. Mr. Gorman concurred, noting that making the fee overly inexpensive to the developer becomes a financial cost to the Village. However, the chair indicated that the purpose was to create a viable downtown with the cooperation of everyone involved.

After receiving comments, Mr. Millette offered to return the Watershed Plan back to the committee once the county reviewed it, which could be as early as the March meeting.

Old Business

Dialog followed on the results of the ordinance revision to the floor elevation requirement for new or substantially improved buildings from three (3) feet to one (1) foot above the base flood elevation. Mr. Millette conveyed the Village Council did hear a presentation on the matter and listened to the comments from this committee and agreed not to change the ordinance.

A status of the surveys followed, noting that college students and forestry representatives have been assisting the Village. Staff indicated the response rate was good and the entry of data should be completed by next month. To date, staff did not know the status of the Village's Stormwater Master Plan, noting it was tabled in December, 2004 with no definitive date to come off the table. Mr. Millette proceeded to explain how he conveyed the master plan to the Village Council but to date, he was not sure how the Village was addressing the matter. Chairman Eckmann suggested that staff think of a motion to forward to the Village Council next month in order to move the Stormwater Master Plan forward. Mr. Millette summarized that a time constraint did exist and had he received a concurrence, the project would have been underway already.

Minor discussion followed on the watermain break on Sherman Avenue; staff would follow up. Secretary Connell recalled receiving numerous calls in the office from residents about the rain and snow. Chairman Eckmann asked that the consultants be aware of this matter because the sanitary district in the area just completed tightening up the sewers. The chair also conveyed the discussions and concerns he had on this matter with the Village manager some time ago as it relates to the sanitary district sewer system and he believed there would be more water if the Village did not install a good storm sewer system.

Lastly, Chairman Eckmann raised conversation about whether money existed for a televised inspection system, wherein Mr. Millette stated it was a part of the master plan but a schedule was necessary as when to operate the system. Currently no money existed and the matter was deferred. Chairman Eckmann indicated that next year money should be set aside in the budget for any bad sewer sections. Staff would remind the director of this matter.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. on motion by Mr. Bollenberg, seconded by Mr. Crilly. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote of 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,
(as transcribed by tape)

/s/ Celeste K. Weilandt
Celeste K. Weilandt, Recording Secretary