



Meeting Minutes

North Shore Study Area Open House

Date and Time of Meeting: September 21, 2017, 7:00 PM

Location: City Hall

Attendees: See sign-in sheet for attendance

Mike Magnuson began by introducing himself and the other staff members present. He said that the City has developed a concept to improve drainage in the North Shore Area. However, staff does not want to move forward with refining this concept unless the residents concur with the preliminary concept. The primary purpose of this meeting is to present and discuss the approach, and then have the residents concur with the direction. He presented the agenda for the meeting.

Mike gave an overview of the study areas. He said that since July 18, there have been 14 meetings with residents from the 9 study areas.

Mike reviewed that the City has initiated an application for FEMA funding to mitigate flooding in the Pine Street/Oriole Trail Study Area. He said that the parameters of the grant are a good fit for proposed stormwater management solution in this area. The City is proposing to purchase and demolish some of the houses in this area to create a storm water storage area. Mike gave a brief overview of the stormwater issues in the Pine/Oriole Trail area. He said that the grant application deadline is in November, and that the application is lengthy, which is why they are prioritizing the application for this grant. Mike also indicated that the storm sewer in this area drains to Cove Pond. Therefore, more storage in the Pine-Oriole area will indirectly benefit the North Shore Area.

Mike reviewed the Green Oaks study area. He said the concept is to create additional stormwater storage on City owned property in the area. This study area also drains to Cove Pond. Improvements in the Green Oaks Study area that create more storage will indirectly benefit the North Shore Area.

Mike reviewed the Woodland Drive study area. He described the existing and former conditions with the drainage from Woodland Channel. He said one solution in this area would be to reconnect Woodland Channel to Crystal Lake via the existing storm sewer system. There was a connection pipe at one point in time, but it was later disconnected. During the workshop meeting for Woodland Channel, one of the residents indicated that it was disconnected at the request of the home owners at that time. The City has no documentation about why this was done. The current Woodland Channel residents are in favor of reconnecting to the storm sewer. Again, this will have an indirect benefit to the North Shore since Woodland Channel water levels affect groundwater in the general area.

Mike reviewed some questions that had been asked at previous meetings. There was a question about when the creek that connected the Cove Pond area and Crystal Lake was filled in. Mike said that the existing outlet pipe was constructed in 1968. He also said that "Dog Lake" does not appear in the 1962 aerial picture, but the Woodland Channel does. Neither of these features appear on a 1953 aerial.

Mike said that the Cove Pond project was supposed to help water quality by decreasing the depth of the pond while spreading it over a wider area. He said that the City would be hiring a surveyor to determine if the pond is working as it was designed to. He said there is a possibility that there has been sediment and siltation over the years, which would lead to reduced capacity for stormwater storage.

Mike said that the spillway was constructed in 1921.

Mike briefly touched on vacant and foreclosed homes. Mike said the City's powers for forcing upkeep of foreclosed homes are extremely limited until the foreclosure is complete and the bank takes ownership of the property. Mike said the only exception is weed and grass maintenance.

Mike then moved to the portion of the presentation where he presented concepts for dealing with the flooding issues in the North Shore area. He emphasized that these are only preliminary ideas, and that they still need further vetting and costs identified.

Mike said that in 2010, the City proposed a series of storm sewers, bioswales, and box culverts in this area to improve drainage. However, the homeowners in the area at that time rejected the plan due to the impact on the beaches.

Mike presented a revised concept plan that would install storm sewers in the roadway right of ways under the roads that would connect to basins that would be created out of current vacant lots in the area. There would be inlets in low spots in back yards that would connect with the storm sewers via strategically placed laterals. These drainage facilities would outlet to Crystal Lake via storm sewers that connect into the existing outlets to Crystal Lake. The concept would be to place the storm sewers under the existing sidewalks on the North Shore beaches. This would decrease impacts, particularly to mature trees on the beach property. Mike said that this system would have less capacity than the 2010 concept (accommodate a lesser intensity storm), but it would also have less impact on the neighborhood, especially the beaches.

Mike also said that the City will be requesting that the Park District make additional improvements to Lippold Park, including extending the berm on the southern boundary west to Lakewood Avenue and modify the outlet by raising the restrictor plate to the top of the structure and raising the berm to hold back more water.

The residents started asking questions about the details of the plan. One had concerns that the new basins would increase mosquitoes in the area. Mike said that the basins would fill with water when it rains and then slowly drain down. The idea is that it would be dry most of the time.

Mike also said that the City did not consider using the alleys for storm sewer. The narrow width (14 feet) of the alleys made them problematic for actually constructing and maintaining storm sewers if they were located in them.

A resident asked if the City had televised the existing storm sewer in the existing area owned by the association next to the Lake. Mike said yes, and they are both in terrible condition.

There was some discussion about the various lots that are currently available for purchase in the area.

A resident asked about the maintenance of the proposed storm sewer system. Mike said that since it would be in the City right-of-way, it would be maintained by the City.

A resident asked about the safety of the basins and what would be done to keep children from being hurt in them. Mike said that they would be similar to detention ponds in other subdivisions and would not be deep.

There was further discussion about the proposed idea among the residents.

One resident said that the bigger problem is that water is generated to the north of this area and then drains into this area. They said something should be done about that.

Former City Council member and current County Board member Jeff Thorsen spoke up at this point and said that stormwater and drainage have always been a problem in this area. He said that he would like to

see the old tile line surveyed to make sure it is still functional. He also said that this area was largely unbuildable for a period of time because the houses could not be built with septic systems that met the minimum requirements. When this area was annexed and water and sewer lines were extended, it made building more houses in this area feasible. Since then, stormwater regulations have changed so that it is extremely hard to build any houses in this area again. He also said that the City cannot prevent someone from using and enjoying the property they own, if they do it legally.

One resident said that she had heard from the workers on the water and sewer extension project that the old drain tile system was broken during the construction of Lippold Park.

One resident asked that a drainpipe be placed down Crandall Avenue to help drain the new houses in this area.

There was a discussion about placing a moratorium on new buildings and additions to existing buildings in the area. There was some discussion about how one house had filled in their lot without a permit.

One resident said that the City should take advantage of the existing alleys for routing storm sewer. Another resident disagreed, saying that if the storm sewers were under the road, the City would maintain them. The first resident said that the association would gladly donate the alleys to the City. Mike said that because the alleys are so narrow, the City would have difficulty maintaining them. Mike said that the City could not fit its very large Vector truck, which is a primary tool for clearing sewer blockages, down this narrow path.

In response to questions on building regulations, Mike said that staff is identifying ways to improve current permit practices and engineering requirements. In addition, staff is researching how other communities with established neighborhoods built without storm water conveyance systems permit additional impervious area. There was some discussion about removing diseased and dead trees behind properties along North Shore Drive. Mike said that the City was moving forward with tree removal on City property, but they needed to have permission from every single homeowner to access the area to move forward.

Mike addressed the drainage near Baldwin and Crandall. He said that the storm sewer handles low flows, but there is opportunity to collect more areas/ improve drainage during small rain events.

Mike said that the Public Works Department is going to propose an enhanced sewer-lining program in the coming years. Mike said that some of the sanitary sewer near the lift station had been lined a few years ago, but more needed to be done. Mike said that this would be a multi-year effort. This effort will reduce the volume of storm water from getting into the sanitary system, which should also help reduce sewer backups and other stress on the system.

Mike also indicated that staff is in the preliminary stages of investigating the feasibility of a cost-sharing grant program for overhead sewer connections to homes. He said other communities have done this in the Chicagoland area, but the City will have to research more about this program, one resident asked how much it would cost to retrofit a house. Mike said he had heard that it would cost between \$7,000 and \$10,000, but that was only a rough estimate. Additional staff work is required.

Mike recapped the agenda for the night, and then asked the audience if the storm sewer concept presented tonight is the direction they would like to help address the drainage issues in the area. The consensus of the audience was that this direction was acceptable.

One resident asked if a short-term solution could be doing some regrading to drain more areas to the existing storm sewer. Mike said that it was a possibility with the understanding that the storm sewer is in terrible condition and may not provide much relief.

One resident asked if the Lippold Park drain tile had been scoped. Mike said that parts of it had, but a comprehensive evaluation has not been done.

One resident said asked if the area around East End Drive could be done sooner since it had more areas of pocketed flooding. Mike said the concept project could be broken into several components and phased.

One resident asked about the possibility of lowering the level of the lake, or making the spillway adjustable to accommodate differing water levels. Mike said that adjusting the outfall of Crystal Lake is a very complicated matter. First, the impacts of residents downstream, especially of the adjacent Country Club area, have to be considered. Second, the lake is under joint jurisdiction of the City, Lakewood, and the Crystal Lake Park District. All three would need to agree to any adjustment of the lake level. Additionally, the City would have to get approval from the Army Corps of Engineers along with other state and federal regulatory agencies, which would take several years and additional studies.

Mike noted that the groundwater levels in the area were still very high, despite very little rainfall in August and September so far.

One resident asked what kind of timeline the City is looking at to implement this solution. Mike said that is unknown at this time. He said that each of the nine study areas needs to be addressed, and that the City has to plan for each of these projects, including a cost estimate. Then, projects need to be prioritized and funding sources identified. A resident asked if tax bracket would be a determinant in prioritization. Mike said that at a staff level, improvements that provide benefit to high impact areas would likely rank highest.

Mike wrapped up the meeting by thanking everyone who attended.



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