

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 1, 2011

The DeKalb County Stormwater Management Planning Committee (SMPC) met on September 1, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Administrative Building, Conference Room East, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Committee members Roger Steimel, Bill Lorence, Joel Maurer, Donna Prain, Pat Vary, Joe Misurelli, Norm Beeh, Mark Biernacki, and Paul Miller. Also in attendance were John Laskowski, Nathan Schwartz, Dan Templin, Andrea Litewski, Peggy Doty, Greg Milburg, and Mark Phipps.

1. **Roll Call** -- *Mr. Miller noted that Committee members Ken Andersen, Bill Nicklas, and Tom Thomas were absent.*
2. **Approval of Agenda** -- Mr. Miller stated that a discussion item from Roger Steimel would be added to the agenda.

Mr. Misurelli moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Mr. Lorence, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Maurer arrived.

3. **Approval of Minutes** -- *Ms. Vary moved to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2011 meeting, seconded by Mr. Lorence, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Ms. Prain arrived.

4. **Watershed – Approach to Stormwater Management Update**

Mr. Miller reminded the Committee that, at its meeting of June 2, 2011, it had voted to forward to the DeKalb County Board a recommendation to adopt a strategy toward developing a watershed-based approach to stormwater management. He explained that staff subsequently prepared and submitted a Resolution for consideration by the County Board. The Board adopted the Resolution at its June 22, 2011 meeting.

5. **DeKalb County Community Foundation Grant Opportunity**

Dan Templin of the DeKalb County Community Foundation (DCCF), addressed the Committee regarding the possibility of a grant in the category of land use that might be applied to the efforts on stormwater management and watershed planning. He explained that the Foundation had surveyed municipalities in DeKalb County and found that stormwater management, flooding, and groundwater were frequent issues of interest. The Committee's effort toward watershed management seems in line with the Foundation's desire to support land owners and decision-makers in their land use programs. Mr. Templin explained that DCCF has funds available that may be applied to the watershed study recently advocated by the Committee.

Ms. Prain explained that she envisioned the funding of a watershed planning process would reach outside the SMPC and result in the forming a working group of stakeholders. She noted

that such an approach would go beyond the “theory of the flood” approach by not only dealing with flooding issues but also water quality, environmental restoration, and regulation. The stakeholder group would consist of private land owners, governments, and regulation agencies.

Mr. Maurer noted that there are already existing regulations which if enforced would address many flooding issues.

Mr. Lorence noted that Ms. Prain is seeking to improve water quality, and not just minimize quantity.

Mr. Miller explained that the SMPC is responsible for the Stormwater Ordinance and its effects on the County’s Comprehensive Plan. He appreciated a potential funding source but stated he was not clear on what was being proposed by the DCCF funding and who would have the oversight.

Ms. Prain suggested that funding would pay for an engineering firm to utilize the EPA’s 319 program as a framework for a watershed study. She elaborated that the preliminary study could be done of the East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River, which is the watershed previously selected by the SMPC.

Mr. Miller asked if DCCF would create a Request for Proposal (RFP) in order to select an engineering firm to act as the project coordinator for the watershed study. Mr. Templin agreed and emphasized that the DCCF grant would try to assist the stakeholders in achieving other grants and funding.

Mr. Lorence clarified that it would be an important aspect to determine who would create the RFP because if the money were being given to a government, there are additional standards which could add to the time and cost of creating the RFP. He added that the public budget would have to be amended to include even pass-through funding.

Mr. Templin inquired as to how the Committee decided on the East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River watershed. The Committee briefly explained the methods and rationale used for determining which watershed should be an initial study area. The amount of damage from flooding and the convergence of many water sources were part of the rationale for the selection. The Committee also noted its vision for focusing on one watershed plan to create a method for future watershed plan creation.

Mr. Templin noted that, provided it is considered a pilot program, the entire County could benefit from the lessons learned from the first watershed study.

Mr. Steimel asked for an approximation of the amount of funds the DCCF would have available for the study. Mr. Templin said that approximately \$32,500 could be available in the next two years.

Mr. Phipps of Baxter & Woodman brought to the Committee’s attention that there were other potential funding sources in addition to 319 grants which could be considered for finding additional funds for instituting improvements to the watershed.

Mr. Misurelli motioned that the Stormwater Management Planning Committee participate in the selection and hiring of an engineering firm by agreeing to be a member of the stakeholder committee overseeing the creation of a watershed plan for the East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River watershed, seconded by Mr. Lorence, and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Roger Steimel Discussion Topic

Mr. Steimel brought to the Committee's attention his concerns, and those brought to him by local farmers, regarding the implementation of the Stormwater Ordinance as it relates to dredging of creeks and drainage ways on farms. Mr. Steimel indicated that his understanding was that agricultural practices such as maintenance of drainage ways were exempt from the Stormwater regulations.

Mr. Miller explained that when it comes to regulatory floodplains, per State statutes agricultural grading and dredging activities are not exempt. This has been the case since 1996. The County is required by F.E.M.A. to enforce its floodplain regulations in order to participate in the National Flood Insurance program.

The Committee discussed the differences between floodplains and drainage ways. The regulations and the appropriate level of enforcement were also discussed.

Following the discussion, Mr. Steimel asked that County staff, members of the Soil Water Conservation District, and local farmers referred by the Farm Bureau sit down to discuss the regulations. Mr. Miller agreed to the meeting.

7. Next Meeting:

After a brief discussion the Committee decided to meet November 3, 2011 at 3pm in the Conference Room East.

7. Adjournment -- *Mr. Steimel motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Lorence, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Paul R. Miller, AICP
Chairman, DeKalb County Stormwater Management Planning Committee