

DRAINAGE TASK FORCE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

**Thursday, October 8, 2009; 7:00 P.M.
City of Centerville, Law Library**

Attendees: Council Member James Singer, Committee Chair; Council Member John Beals; Task Force Members David Blake, Ron Greive, Regis Lekan, Harvey Smith, and Dick Welch; Staff Members Robert James, Public Works Director; Doug Spitler, City Engineer; John Sliemers, Assistant City Engineer; Steve Feverston, City Planner, and Mary Lou Pence, PW Operations Manager.

I. Introductions

Mr. Singer opened the meeting and asked for and received approval of the October 2008 meeting summary. Mr. Smith made a motion to accept the meeting summary. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. The Task Force approved the summary as written.

II. Overview of roadway and drainage improvements in 2008 – 2009 (refer to hand-out)

Mr. Singer turned the discussion to drainage improvements in 2009. Mrs. Pence reviewed the drainage related work detailed on the hand-out entitled “STORMWATER DRAINAGE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND EXPENDITURES - 2009”. The Bigger Road resurfacing project that appears on the list was not a 2009 planned project; however the City received stimulus funding for this work. Work will include repair and resurfacing of the roadway from Alex-Bell Road to the City’s north corporation limit (near Hewitt Road). Special note was made that even on street resurfacing projects – the annual street program and projects such as the Black Oak neighborhood improvements and the Bigger Road resurfacing – approximately 10 percent of the project cost is drainage related. This work includes repair and/ or reconstruction of deteriorated catch basins, replacement of storm sewer laterals (typically due to pipe sections being mis-aligned), and installation of underdrain.

Mr. Spitler continued the discussion showing photos of the various capital improvement program projects. In addition to photos of the Black Oak South (roadway) improvements, photos of the work underway in the Millbank ditch were shown. At the time of this meeting the contractor, Flora Excavating, had finished removing silt from the ditch flow line and replaced select concrete panels along the ditch between Marshall Road and Laurelhurst Lane. The contractor was currently working on the section south of Marshall Road. As shown in the photos, the area above the concrete lining has been re-established and restored with seed and mulch. This will hopefully allow (and encourage) residents to better maintain their properties down to the concrete. Work remaining in this contract includes the section between Laurelhurst Lane and Ironside Drive. This section was originally to be Phase 2; however was added to this year’s work. Phase 3, the (improved) section north of Ironside will be recommended to be included in the 2010 CIP. Phase 3, approximately 220 LF will be especially challenging due to tree removals and slope stabilization needed. With the photos shown, Staff hopes that Task Force members have a better understanding

of the challenges in planning and having these types of projects performed. Mr. Spitler also showed photo evidence of grass clipping and debris having been dumped in the ditch as this is the type of thing that needs to be addressed with residents. Of final note on the Millbank ditch project is Staff's plan to investigate the best way to seal joints and cracks in the concrete ditch lining.

III. Development Projects (refer to hand-out)

Mr. Spitler reviewed development projects that have occurred over the last year or are underway at this time. The handout provided a summary of current projects.

1. Public Works facility on South Suburban Road is underway with a new detention area in the southeast corner of the site. The site had been almost completely impervious; however detention as well as water quality control measures have been included in the project.
2. LA Fitness on the NW corner of Alex Bell and SR 48 was completed earlier this year. It has an underground detention system comprised of 6 foot diameter pipes. There was also a wetlands on the site that had to be maintained with the construction of the project.
3. Centerville Mall (NE corner of South Main and Spring Valley) has parking lot drainage concerns that have surfaced with a newer tenant use of the parking lot. Following months of research and meetings, the tenant has just recently agreed to have a storm water analysis done to determine what, if anything is warranted or can be done to alleviate the ponding water in the parking lot and re-direct it elsewhere while meeting the storm water drainage ordinance requirements (UDO). Currently the tenant's clients walk through ponding water between the parking stalls and the door to the business due to (existing) poor surface drainage on the site.
4. State Route 48/ Far Hills Avenue and Alex-Bell Road roadway improvements included an exfiltration trench in the curb. The trench is nothing more than an area backfilled with gravel with an underdrain pipe in the bottom of it that collects storm water that filters through the gravel, enters the underdrain, and then flows to the storm sewer or to daylight. The exfiltration trench is to collect pollutants – filter them out – before they reach the storm system. On the whole, the Task Force members expressed a dislike for this installation as it looks like unfinished construction. They also questioned how the installation was to be maintained so that it would remain functional.

IV. Ohio EPA Requirements – Phase 2

See comments within meeting handout– copy attached.

V. Montgomery County Project Update

See comments within meeting handout– copy attached.

VI. City's Ditch Policy

Mr. Singer introduced the discussion on the 'DRAFT' ditch policy memorandum currently

under review and discussion by City Council and Staff. In developing this 'DRAFT' policy Mr. Singer cited a need for such saying the City's existing ditch information is scattered throughout various documents in the City and he thinks there should be a single document dealing with this topic. Staff has developed the current 'DRAFT' policy memorandum.

Mr. Singer turned the discussion over to Steve Feverston, City Planner as Mr. Feverston has taken the lead in developing the 'DRAFT' policy. Mr. Feverston stated that in developing the 'DRAFT' policy, Staff looked at various things including existing ditches/ drainage ways in the field so as to understand where concerns exist. A 'Purpose and Intent' (for the policy) was then established. The 'DRAFT' policy proposes that the City will endeavor to annually inspect drainage ways that are within dedicated easements. The 'DRAFT' policy further defines 'public' versus 'private' drainage ways, who is responsible for what, and references applicable laws and codes.

Mr. Feverston described information in the 'DRAFT' policy that talks about the City's obligation for maintenance and major improvements. Previous documents talk about ways to fund such projects. The new Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) speaks to responsibilities of both the City and of property owners. The new policy 'DRAFT' would repeal all older policies, statements, etc. Its purpose is to define how the City addresses public drainage ways - all equally and the same.

Mr. Singer thanked Mr. Feverston for his presentation and opened the floor to discussion from the Task Force members. Mr. Smith, speaking on behalf of the Centerville-Washington Park District (CWPD) stated that since some of the drainage ways under discussion are within CWPD properties, he would like to take the 'DRAFT' policy to the Park Board for their consideration and input. Mr. Singer agreed with this asking if such a review could be completed within the next month or so.

Mr. Lekan expressed concern from his personal perspective saying that he is not very familiar with other ditches in the City, only the one in his backyard – the Village South ditch – and takes exception to the 'DRAFT' policy revoking the 1985 letter whereby the City agreed to mow the Village South ditch two times annually.

Mr. Feverston stated that the ultimate goal of the policy is to have everyday maintenance of drainage ways be the responsibility of the property owner. Everyday maintenance would include, but not be limited to, things like mowing, not dumping grass, leaves, brush, etc in the drainage easement, removal of trash and debris from the drainage easement, and weed eating or string trimming to keep brush, weeds and saplings from taking root. The City would come in for conditions that are beyond the control of the individual property owner. This could include removal of large deposits of silt, re-grading the ditch flowline, and reconstruction of failed concrete ditch lining sections.

Mr. Lekan showed photos that he has taken over the past months and says that since the 2005 project there is more water standing in the ditch than prior to the project. He states that this is a

difficult area to mow. (Staff notes that it appears there is a spring in the ditch that is adding to the flow.)

Mr. Singer asked Mr. Lekan to summarize his main concerns. Mr. Lekan responded by saying that his two main concerns are:

1. It takes an 'extraordinary effort' on the part of the residents to keep the ditch maintained.
2. There was a joint City/ Village South resident project in 1985, but a 'unilateral ending' of the (1985) agreement by the City is proposed with this 'DRAFT' policy.

A question came up about how long the (Village South) ditch had been there – was it just installed with the 1984/ 1985 project or was it original to the development? Mr. Spitler responded by saying that the original construction plans (from the 1960's) show a graded ditch. The concern is that it is very flat - 0.2 %. A typical paved street is constructed at 0.5 percent. The 1984 and the 2005 projects were both designed to be maintenance projects. They each have a useful life and, as the ditch with the very flat grade fills in over time with silt, a project is done to remove silt and reshape the cross section and flow line.

Mr. Singer stated that the City is trying to come up with a policy for the City to best maintain drainage ways. He went on to say that dealing with the concern about the recent Village South project needs to be a separate issue. Mr. Singer then expressed his concern about doing away with a policy that the Mayor had approved and having the new policy approved by the City Manager. Mr. Singer stated that he was not aware of any other 'policy memorandum' documents that carry the City Manager's approval versus that of the Mayor (with Council review).

A discussion then ensued about the 1985 letter (to Village South residents who back up to the ditch) by then Assistant City Manager Jon Bormet. It was stated in the letter that a public/ private partnership was needed in order to maintain the ditch. Mr. Lekan stated that the City had done string trimming/ weed eating in the (Village South) ditch 3 times this year. Mr. Feverston re-iterated that it remains the property owner's responsibility to maintain the ditch and pointed that this included in Mr. Bormet's letter.

Mr. Welch stated that he had read the entire 'DRAFT' policy and it appears to have been written by an attorney and that it would likely take an attorney to interpret and enforce it. He offered a solution saying that the greatest concern in ditch maintenance for individual property owners comes when said owners do not have the means – either physical or financial – to properly maintain ditches. Mr. Welch stated that the City needs to do a responsible job of ditch maintenance though budget planning – the City must find a way to solve the problem. Please refer to the attachment of Mr. Welch's letter sent to Mr. Singer that summarizes his comments made during the meeting.

Mr. Smith pointed out that there is no appeal process for a property owner if he can not properly

maintain a drainage way (on his property). Mr. Feverston responded by saying that there is an appeal process in the City's Property Maintenance Code.

Mr. Beals suggested that maybe the City should do heavy vegetation removal within drainage ways every 5 years or so. He cited his experience with an open drainage way at his former residence saying that he mowed it as best he could, but always had to live with water in the flowline as well as the presence of 4 foot tall cattails and other growth. Mr. Beals stated that the homeowner needs to do the best he can without specialized equipment.

Mr. Spitler showed photos of various ditches around town – those listed on the sheet included in the handout entitled '(Improved) Drainage Ditch Inventory – 2009'. (Please note that a second list is included that has been updated to reflect current/ on-going CIP discussions.) The photos showed some of the concerns that Staff sees when we get calls about ditch problems and go to investigate. These problems include overgrowth, broken concrete, grass clipping and brush dumped along or in ditches, and fences built that limit access to the drainage way. One photo showed a fenced in yard with the fence at the top of the slope. The yard inside of the fence was well maintained. The area outside of the fence – yet still part of said yard and that encompassed the ditch - was overgrown with tall grass, brush and tree saplings from the fence line/ top of slope down to the concrete ditch lining. The yard immediately beyond the photographed fenced yard was well maintained – mowed and brush free – down to the top of the concrete ditch lining. Residents must take responsibility for their entire yard – mowing, removing brush, not allowing saplings to grow, and not dump ANY debris into the drainage way.

Mr. James clarified that the 2005 Village South ditch project was designed to clean out silt to allow water to flow in the ditch so that when a large storm (100 year) occurs, storm water will flow and be contained in the ditch. Mr. James acknowledged that the 2005 project was an improvement; however since the ditch is very flat, steady flow without silt build up will be difficult to achieve.

Mr. Blake asked about the Jon Bormet letter being 'grandfathered' into the 'DRAFT' policy. A suggestion from Mr. Singer was to possibly make the letter an example of a 'public – private' partnership. Mr. Singer stated that he has a concern with deleting the Bormet letter. Mr. Lekan re-iterated that he wants to retain the Bormet letter. Mr. Beals asked about how many man-hours it takes PW to string trim the Village South ditch. (PW Staff answer – it takes about 10 – 12 man hours to trim the Village South ditch – approx 1250 LF.)

In closing the discussion on the 'DRAFT' policy, Mr. Singer stated that he would like to meet again in about 1 month, after the CWPD has met to review the 'DRAFT' policy. At this time the Task Force will consider the CWPD's comments as well as those of the Task Force. Also the DTF will look into how to best deal with property owner hardship in maintaining a drainage way on their property. Mr. Singer asked Mr. Lekan to craft some language to supersede Jon Bormet's letter.

VII. 2010 and Beyond Projects – Budget information (refer to hand-out)

Projects currently recommended to be included in the five year CIP include:

- 2010 Millbank ditch improvements – Phase 3 = \$32,000
- 2011 Concept East ditch improvements = \$80,000
Centerville culvert replacements = \$32,000
- 2012 Rose Estates ditch improvements = \$80,000
- 2013 Gracewood/ Cloverwood ditch improvements = \$80,000.
- 2014 Lodewood ditch improvements = \$80,000

Additionally the CIP provides for \$10,000 annually for Phase 2 related expenses and \$10,000 to \$25,000 annually for ditch cleaning. (Please note: This recommendation has changed with subsequent CIP discussions.)

Mr. Singer made mention of the spring fed stream running through Mr. Blake's rear yard, and the concern about the potential for basement flooding. This stream is not in an easement. Previously, Mr. Beals had offered that installing curb on the north side of West Ridgeway Drive may help reduce the possibility of flooding. Mr. Sliemers offered an 'of the cuff' construction cost to add storm sewer and curb on the north side of West Ridgeway Drive across 4 properties (addresses 47 to 93) at approximately \$75,000. Mr. Sliemers also considered another option, which would create a defined roadside ditch section on the south side of West Ridgeway across 6 properties (addresses 20 to 76). This section is longer and would address additional drainage issues. The 'off the cuff' construction cost would be in the vicinity of \$100,000. These figures assume that the existing storm sewer pipe on West Ridgeway Drive and Davis Road could accept the additional storm water directly from pipes and not overland flow as is the existing condition. The cost for an engineering study would be in the vicinity of \$10,000 and a detailed design, approximately \$20,000.

Mr. Singer will set another meeting before the end of the year to review the comments on the 'DRAFT' policy. He stated that overall he is happy with the policy; however it appears that the DTF is hung up on the Jon Bormet letter. Mr. Singer would like the concerns surrounding the 2005 Village South ditch project to be resolved as a separate issue (from the 'DRAFT' policy).

Mr. Singer was asked about the mosquito issue in the Village South ditch area. He responded by saying that he did not yet have any information from the health department.

Being no other comments from the DTF members, Mr. Singer thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 9:40 PM.

Attachments

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