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MEETING MINUTES

Livingston County Phase II Watershed Planning Public Meeting No. 1

Date: 10/13/04
Time: 7:15pm
Meeting Held: Genoa Township Hall

HRC Job No. 20030566.26

Introduction

- The public meeting began as an open house forum where attendees were able to visit various displays from the following groups and pick up a bevy of informational pamphlets:
 - Sierra Club
 - MSU-Extension—Livingston County
 - Livingston Natural Features Coalition
 - MDEQ
 - Livingston County Drain Commissioner
 - Ducks Unlimited
 - SEMCOG
 - Michigan Lakes and Stream Association
 - Brighton Township Lakes Association

- Brian Jonckheere, Livingston County Drain Commissioner, rounded the attendees up at 7:25pm to introduce them to the watershed planning efforts being conducted throughout the County. Currently, there are two separate watershed planning initiatives: One for the southern portion of the Shiawassee River Watershed (South Branch Shiawassee River Subwatershed) and the other for the northwestern portion of the Huron River Watershed (Huron Chain of Lakes Subwatershed)—both of which serve as headwater portions for each watershed area.

Discussion

- Brian began by introducing attendees to the “watershed concept”—where all precipitation (rain water and snowmelt) within a given topographical boundary runs off to a common drainage point. He made the very important point that the way the land is used and managed within that drainage basin, or watershed, highly dictates the water quality of the region.

- As a result of the realization that land practices dictate much of the water quality, what are called “nonpoint source pollutants” were identified. These pollutants can come from everywhere—which means it is much more difficult to manage—as opposed to point source

pollutants, which are much easier to track and eliminate because they typically come from one point of discharge.

- In order to reduce the impacts from point and nonpoint source discharges, a variety of legislative initiatives were put into place that go as far back as 1972 with the creation of the Federal Clean Water Act. This act required permits for point source discharges to waters of the State. In 1990, an amendment was made to this Act, called Phase I, where municipal discharges with populations greater than 100,000 people had to have a permit to discharge their storm water. In 1999, the Phase II final rule was introduced which mandated that small municipal storm water drainage entities (populations less than 100,000 people, and outside of Phase I permitted areas) were required to obtain a permit for their storm water discharges to receiving waters of the State. All communities that have “urbanized area” were required to file an application for permit coverage by March 10, 2003. Both watershed groups for the County have been meeting for the past two years to prepare for and begin fulfilling the permit requirements.
- To comply with the Phase II requirements, Livingston County has chosen to take a watershed approach to managing their stormwater, meaning that there is a partnership between watershed communities instead of limiting actions only within jurisdictional boundaries. This approach is not only a cost savings to the communities, but also aims to produce a more comprehensive management approach to addressing water quality problems on a watershed-wide basis. One of the most important aspects of watershed management is help from the public to develop the Plan, as well as to implement it. Public support is crucial to the success of a management plan.
- One of the most important aspects of watershed management is educating those that live in the watershed. In addition, it’s trying to get people to change their behaviors to ensure watershed-friendly practices such as in the way they practice:
 - Lawn care (fertilizers and pesticides handling and application)
 - Car Maintenance (grease, oils, soaps, detergents)
 - Waste Disposal (household hazardous waste, pet waste disposal)
- Brian stated that overall water quality for the County is good, but there are definitely a number of threats to the water resources, and with all the growth in the County, a forefront of the management will need to focus on current and future land use and how development is managed.

Question/Answer Period

The floor was opened up to attendees to ask questions of Brian Jonckheere before the break-out groups for each subwatershed planning initiative were to meet. This is what was heard:

Q: Road drainage issues from County Roads—drainage going directly into Lake Chemung from 3 culvert outfalls: Is the Road Commission for Livingston County involved in the planning process?

A: The Road Commission is actively involved in the planning process, and along with other municipal entities and the drain commissioner, will be looking for selection of best management practices (BMPs) to alleviate stormwater runoff issues. Recommendations might include

detention/retention areas for the stormwater drainage, as well as ongoing training for adequate maintenance operations and BMP selections (road salt applications, street sweeping, catch basin cleaning, oil/grease separators, etc.).

Q: Round Lake residents are concerned about the US-23/M-59 interchange drainage impacts to their high quality lake. They've met with Hartland Township to discuss their concerns. What can be done to alleviate/eradicate impacts from the excess stormwater runoff soon to come?

A: Again, BMPs will need to be selected to reduce stormwater runoff impacts. This might include utilizing some sort of stormwater wetland detention area that will act to filter pollutants, promote groundwater recharge and reduce flow velocities. This is an MDOT project and they too are regulated under the Phase II Stormwater permit requirements. As such, they'll need to limit the amount of pollutants in their stormwater discharge to the "maximum extent practicable", as well as regulate stormwater discharge velocities (flow volumes, quantities) to an acceptable level.

Q: Are there any connections between the Road Commission and the Drain Commissioners office that might come into play during the watershed planning process?

A: Each entity stands alone and is committed to working together on various drainage issues throughout the County. They each have separate budgets for maintenance issues, etc.

Q: Is it possible to retain stormwater runoff in the watershed itself?

A: There is no way to have 100% retention of storm water runoff. Efforts are taken to incorporate infiltration of the runoff through detention/retention systems—retention is a challenge though because of all the clay soils in the County (results in little to no infiltration due to highly impermeable soils). The goal is to incorporate innovate stormwater technologies that not only reduce nonpoint source pollution and excess quantities of runoff, but will also aim to treat stormwater onsite—these might include such things as "green roofs", rain gardens, vegetated swales, rain barrels—technologies that be incorporated not only in the business and municipal sectors, but also at your own home.

Q: Resident read an article regarding dewatering operations for the expansion of a local Waste Water Treatment Plant and was concerned about the fact that the groundwater was getting pumped into the Red Cedar River. Would this affect the groundwater aquifers?

A: These types of operations are also permitted and are done on a short-term basis. Dewatering is a common practice in underground construction, and the short-term nature does not pose any threat to drying up groundwater aquifer resources.

Wrap-Up

There were 73 attendees that signed in. The turn out was an overwhelming success, and all members of the watershed planning committee want to thank all attendees for their interest. All look forward to their ongoing support in the development and implementation of successful watershed planning initiatives for Livingston County.

These minutes are intended to be a summary of those items discussed. Any corrections and/or comments should be noted to the writer as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Meeting Minutes
Livingston County Drain Commissioner
HRC Job No. 20030566.26
10/13/04
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HUBBELL, ROTH & CLARK, INC.

Jacy L. Paul

JLP/jp

pc: All present
HRC; M. Synk Kuhn; J. Booth; File