

Minutes of the City of Prospect Heights Ad Hoc Willow Road Committee Meeting, August 14, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ludvigsen

Present: Committee Members Ludvigsen, Morgan-Adams, Kupczyk and Wade

Absent: Committee Member Colombe

Minutes: Upon motion by Member Morgan-Adams and second by Member Kupczyk, minutes of the February meeting were approved.

Mr. Ludvigsen noted the City had obtained responses from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District regarding questions and concerns posed by the Committee, and asked Mr. Wade to review the MWRD communication.

Mr. Wade noted the responses were detailed and he would provide an issue by issue review of MWRD's answer to Committee questions.

1. No Silt Control Provision for Willow Road Reconstruction. Concern noted that because culverts under Willow are being expanded, more silt will go to the Lake.

MWRD Response: The MWRD is open to the investigation of sedimentation removal options, and sharing the results with the Committee at a future date. Additionally, the MWRD recommends the Committee consider performing education to residents along the lake and tributary areas upstream on efforts residents can take to limit the introduction of sedimentation into McDonald Creek/Tributary A system.

2. Destruction of only wildlife refuge area on Hillcrest, southeast corner of Hillcrest Lake

MWRD Response: The three potential compensatory areas were previously identified as conceptual alternatives. Although other potential compensatory storage options in the Tributary A watershed are limited, other storage locations could be studied and implemented if the southeast corner of Hillcrest Lake is no longer a viable option. The current estimate for compensatory floodplain storage volume required for the project scope to include raising both Willow Road and Hillcrest/Owen (local roads) is 7,200 CY. Less storage volume would be required if the scope of work is reduced by removing the proposed road raise of the local roads from the project.

3. 600 per cent increase in lake outflows, coupled with lower invert elevation of the new culverts will cause irreparable harm to the Lake (Because outflow pipe is 1 ft. lower than existing, outflow from Lake will be increased).

MWRD Response: The project as proposed includes the installation of six-2 foot diameter culverts, after Owen Court is raised, in order to take flood flows from the lake. The six culverts are designed to maintain the existing 100 year flow that currently overtops Owen, and continue along the existing overland flow route toward Wheeling Road. The normal water level of Hillcrest Lake is 647.5. Based on the preliminary plans, the new culverts will be at the same elevation (646) of the existing culvert. The drawings are preliminary and details in regard to their pitch and inverts of the proposed pipes still need to be finalized, and adjustments can be made to alleviate concerns.

Secondary Areas of Concern

1. Major prolonged construction disruption to homes along Hillcrest Drive

MWRD Response: As discussed in the MWRD Preliminary Design Report, pages 29 & 30, construction of the overall project could be structured in phases in order to limit the amount of disruption for the local residents. The construction bid documents could be written in such a way to enforce specified performance standards that the contractor must meet in regard to limiting the amount of disruption, for residents, to the greatest extent feasible.

2. Flood waters being diverted behind homes along Owen Court (Flow of lake doesn't want to go north to the creek, but east toward Wheeling Road.)

MWRD Response: During severe storms, flood waters, from the lake, will travel through the backyards located between Hillcrest and Owen Court toward Wheeling Road. Since this is a natural drainage way, Illinois law requires this drainage way is maintained, thus the reason for the proposed six-2-foot diameter culverts in order to maintain this floodway.

3. Permanent standing water in side yard directly west of 408 Owen. Will the elevation of culverts and pitch of the pipe exacerbate this?

MWRD Response: The standing water located directly west of 408 Owen Ct. may be the result of blockage or the location (elevation) and pitch of the existing drainage culvert that drains water from inland into the lake. If there is a blockage, water may

not be allowed to drain into the lake. If the drainage pipe is at the wrong elevation and/or pitch, the lake may be draining into the roadside ditch. The location of the existing culvert and the proposed placement of the six new culverts will be further investigated during final design in order to ensure ponding of water, etc. doesn't occur.

4. Aesthetic changes to Owen caused by 3 ft. elevation increase of the roadway and installation of guard rail (Residents will have impeded view of the Lake.)

MWRD Response: Attractive guardrail options can be explored, during final design, for use in the affected project areas. The City, the City's Committee and CCDOTH will be asked for review comments of the construction bid documents, including drawings, during the 60% and 98% design phase.

Other Resident Expressed Concerns:

1. Loss of trees (will there be replacement plantings of trees and bushes?)

MWRD Response: A detailed tree removal and replacement plan can be incorporated into the project.

2. Will a raised Hillcrest and Owen cause water to pond between the road and the homes, where it now drains naturally into the lake.

MWRD Response: Due to the proposed raising of Hillcrest and Owen, a detailed design for maintaining existing positive drainage (interior roadway drainage ditches) between the homes and the roads would be designed to prevent water from ponding between the homes and the roadways.

3. Will residents have to pay driveway change and restoration costs?

MWRD Response: The driveway construction and restoration costs, associated with the portions of residents' driveways that need to be adjusted due to the proposed elevation difference, would be incorporated into the project cost.

Committee Discussion Points:

1. Can the project be separated? Ex. Can we do Willow without addressing the interior neighborhood? Or, can we do the interior neighborhood in segments? (Ex. Raise Owen, but at a lesser grade, while leaving Hillcrest at the same grade. And, if we raise Owen, will that redistribute flooding elsewhere around the lake?

MWRD Response: The current scope of work for the proposed project could be revised. The original project just involved the raising of Willow Road, but the City also asked that MWRD take a look at how flooding affects the interior roadways as well. The flooding of the interior roadways was also identified in MWRD's Lower Des Plaines River Detailed Watershed Plan. Any modifications to the current proposed project/scope of work will affect flooding in the area and each scenario will have to be modeled to determine the extent of flooding. The decision to change the scope of work, i.e. remove the interior roadways from the project, should be decided prior to moving forward with the design of the project.

2. Could the project be modified? Ex. One of the Committee members believes raising Owen just 1 ft. would be effective in most situations. If we did this, what would be the impact on the larger project? There was significant concern about the second order effects of raising Owen, and the impact of where that displaced water will end up.

MWRD Response: If the scope of the project is revised, additional modeling would be needed to determine the effects of flooding. This scenario could be evaluated during final design.

Mr. Wade reported MWRD has asked the City to determine the scope of the project and they are transferring the lead role of the project to the City. The Agency feels if the City led the project effort, it could better respond to public concerns. Project responsibilities would be formalized through an intergovernmental agreement with the City, MWRD and Cook County Department of Transportation.

Additionally, MWRD recommended the City pursue the possibility of water quality improvements, such as increasing the depth of the Lake, with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Mr. Wade noted the MWRD has consistently advised this project is for flood control and does not address water quality.

The next steps for the project would be consideration of the scope of the project by the City, development of an intergovernmental agreement among the agencies, and securing needed compensatory storm water storage.

Mr. Ludvigsen capsulized the project as it stands, noting Willow as an area connecting street, access needs to be improved and the elevation raised. He stated the elevation of Hillcrest has been removed from the project, and Owen is still under consideration.

Mr. Ludvigsen then asked if there were comments from the audience.

Mr. Richard Solberg, 406 Owen Court, stated there is not flooding at the intersection of Hillcrest Lake and Owen, and suggested that may be the elevation needed for Owen Street. Perhaps raising the elevation 1.5 feet will work.

Ms. Morgan-Adams noted the City needs to make sure a 1.5 ft. elevation increase to Owen Street is effective.

Mr. Ludvigsen said as the City is improving the storm water management of Willow Road, but future flooding of Hillcrest and Owen continue, it must be recorded and memorialized why the City made the decision of the scope of the work, by listening to the preference of the neighborhood.

Mr. Kupczyk expressed concern about the placement of culverts under Owen Street., referencing the height needed for the elevation of Owen Street in order to provide for culverts.

Mr. Kupczyk also asked if the City would explore silt control for the entrance to the Lake. And suggested a clean-out box for sediment.

Mr. Ludvigsen said a slower flow of water will enter the Lake because there will be larger culverts.

Mr. Kupczyk referenced the clean-out box had been recommended by a former City of Prospect Heights Engineer, Ed DeSol.

Mr. Ludvigsen said the clean-out box may be needed at Elmhurst Road, where McDonald Creek enters the slough.

Mr. Kupczyk said the City needs to find out what the impact of this project on the Lake will be and how it can control future sediment entry into the Lake.

Continuing public comments, Mr. Greg (last name not understood), 205 Willow thought larger pipes will allow for more sediment. He asked for dates of the project.

Mr. Wade said the City does not know when construction will begin as there are many contingencies: an intergovernmental agreement must be drafted, and reviewed and approved by the City, MWRD, and Cook County; a request for proposal and selection process of an engineering firm must be made; the project designed; bidding etcetera. It might be two years before this project begins.

Mr. Greg asked about traffic and the safety of pedestrians.

Mr. Wade said the original plan proposed separating a pedestrian walk from the roadway with guardrail.

Mr. Greg then expressed concern of how the pedestrian path and guardrail will displace parking on Willow. He said it is a rural area and an asset to the City. Most of the traffic is people avoiding the light at Elmhurst, and he did not think local people used the road.

Mr. Roger Kloss, 410 Hill Court, thought the slough and the Lake are filling in, and would like to see the Lake preserved. He is concerned the elevation of the pipes is a foot lower and will impact the Lake level. He also asked if the City had checked with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for financial assistance.

Mr. Wade said he had checked with several agencies earlier, but money was not available. MWRD has advised there may be money available now, so the City will follow up.

Mr. Ludvigsen said the City is not opposed to dredging to add depth to the Lake, but it is a matter of resources.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Member Morgan-Adams, seconded by Member Kupczyk to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted:

Joe Wade, City Administrator