

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Stormwater Management Planning Committee at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
(March 17, 2016)

The DeKalb County Stormwater Management Planning Committee (SMPC) met on March 17, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building, Conference Room East, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Committee members, Mark Bushnell, Paul Miller, Nathan Schwartz, Les Bellah, Tom Thomas, John Laskowski, Pat Vary, Paul Stoddard, Roger Steimel, Joe Misurelli, and Donna Prain. Also in attendance was Planning and Zoning Department staff Rebecca Von Drasek.

- 1. Roll Call** -- *Mr. Miller noted that Committee members Kevin Bunge and Derek Hiland were absent.*
- 2. Approval of Agenda** – *Mr. Bushnell moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Mr. Steimel and the motion carried unanimously.*

Ms. Prain asked for an update regarding future 319 Grant applications, Mr. Miller agreed to report to the Committee in June on this issue.

- 3. Approval of Minutes** – *Mr. Bellah moved to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2015 meeting, seconded by Mr. Misurelli, and the motion carried unanimously.*
- 4. Watershed Steering Committee / Watershed Coordinator Recommendation**

Mr. Miller explained that the Watershed Steering Committee was appointed by the DeKalb County Stormwater Management Committee in December of 2012, and charged with overseeing the creation of the East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River Watershed Plan. The Steering Committee membership consists of Anita Zurburgg of the DeKalb County Community Foundation, County Engineer Nathan Schwartz, Donna Prain, Dean Johnson with the DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District, Roger Steimel representing drainage districts, Karen Miller from Kane County, Jeremy Lin representing Maple Park, Brian Gregory representing Sycamore, and County Planning Director Paul Miller.

The East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River Watershed Plan was completed and adopted by DeKalb County in October of 2014, and was endorsed by several municipalities and drainage districts within the watershed boundaries by December of 2014. Since then, the Watershed Steering Committee has been focused on implementation of elements of the Plan. In March of 2015

the Stormwater Management Committee agreed, at the request of the Watershed Steering Committee, to make that Committee a permanent entity, although membership could change over time. Throughout 2015 the Steering Committee worked on implementation efforts. After several months of doing so, the question was raised within the Committee itself as to whether the Committee is in fact the best vehicle for implementation, or if the Plan might be better served by a single person charged with directing implementation programs and efforts. It was suggested that a Watershed Coordinator may be an alternative to the Committee, and further that Dean Johnson might be an ideal candidate. Mr. Miller noted that Mr. Johnson was in attendance and asked if he would like to further discuss the Watershed Coordinator role with the Committee.

Mr. Johnson explained his thoughts on the position and explained that he would use an informal advisory board, made up of previous Steering Board members to oversee future implementation projects.

Mr. Miller stated that the idea of the Watershed Coordinator position should receive endorsement from the Committee.

Ms. Vary inquired as to the Kane County's thoughts of the position. Mr. Miller responded that they have requested a quarterly updates from Mr. Johnson and an annual meeting to discuss projects.

Mr. Steimel stated that he felt fortunate to have Dean Johnson available to fulfil the role of coordinator.

Ms. Vary made a motion to create the Watershed Coordinator position and to dissolve the East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River Watershed Steering Committee, seconded by Mr. Thomas, and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Wetland Regulation Review

Mr. Miller explained that the policy of the County has been to require depicted wetlands to be protected from development. This has been achieved either by restricting earth-moving from taking place within 100 feet of a wetland depicted on the GIS maps, or by requiring delineation to refine the boundaries of a wetland and then restricting grading in proximity to those refined limits. Grading plans, including those for properties that contain wetlands, are reviewed by the County Engineer, who has the discretion to require various measures to protect wetlands.

Mr. Miller noted that another possibility is mitigation of a wetland by participation in the County's wetland banking program. Under this program, a wetland can be filled as part of a development project, provided the developer provides sufficient funds to expand the wetlands in the Afton Forest Preserve by at least an equal amount. The wetland banking program is administered by the DeKalb

County Forest Preserve District. However, the Stormwater Ordinance does not make any direct reference to mitigation of wetlands nor the wetland banking program. The authority to allow mitigation of wetlands is inferred from the authority of the Planning Director to “waive the requirements of this Article 1 for any proposed land disturbing activity, if the permit is deemed unnecessary.” (Sec. 7.19). To date, few applications have been made for mitigation of wetlands. This is largely due to the fact that there is little development within the unincorporated portions of the County, which are subject to the Stormwater Ordinance regulations.

Several municipalities, however, have substantially similar regulations, and the possibility of a request to mitigate wetlands as part of a development project is much higher within corporate limits. At issue, then, is whether or not the Stormwater Ordinance should more clearly regulate wetlands (in general), and address possible wetland mitigation and the wetland banking program (in particular). Mr. Miller stated that philosophically there might be a desire to protect all wetlands but not at all costs.

The Committee briefly discussed delineation of wetlands and the description of “jurisdictional” versus “non-jurisdictional”. Mr. Schwartz stated that the County was attempting in its interpretation of the regulations to respect all agencies involved in the process.

The Committee noted that other Counties might have the same difficulty in determining how wetlands are identified and mitigated. Mr. Bushnell stated he was familiar with Kane County’s method and felt that surrounding agencies had indexes which direct staff on how to appropriately mitigate wetlands.

Ms. Prain agreed with Mr. Bunge’s March 17, 2016 e-mail that there is difficulty in creating only one specific delineation but noted that the intent is to protect infiltration areas.

Mr. Miller asked that the Ordinance language be amended to clarify the method of regulating wetlands so that it is not left to the future interpretations of staff.

Mr. Misurelli made a motion to direct staff to contact surrounding communities to review their authorities regarding wetlands and to the create a proposed revision to the Stormwater Management Ordinance, seconded by Ms. Prain, and the motion carried unanimously.

6. **Next Meeting** – The Committee will next meet at 3:00 p.m. on June 9, 2016 in the Conference Room East.
7. **Adjournment** -- *Mr. Bellah motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Thomas, and the motion carried unanimously.*

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Respectfully submitted,

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

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