

**FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES
May 18, 2010**

The DeKalb County Forest Preserve District Committee met Tuesday, May 18, 2010 at the Afton Forest Preserve at 6:00 p.m. In attendance were committee members, Ms. Fauci, Ms. DeFauw, Mr. Newport, Ms. Turner, Mr. Gudmunson, Mr. Anderson and Superintendent Hannan. Mr. Walt arrived after the meeting was called to order and Mr. Augsburger arrived after adjournment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Following a call to order, Ms. Fauci asked if there were any changes to the April 20, 2010 minutes. Ms. Turner moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. DeFauw, and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Fauci noted that she would ask that the Agenda be amended to strike the evening's Executive Session as there was no business that warranted it. Ms. Turner moved to accept the amended agenda, seconded by Mr. Newport and the motion passed unanimously.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Fauci noted that there were no guests at the meeting to welcome.

FOREST PRESERVE MONTHLY REPORTS AND GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Hannan began the report by noting that the report was, as usual, included in the Committee packets. He commented that April is the District's largest volunteer activity month. Activities this April included:

- Peter Olson's recent bird walks
- Visiting Asian students from NIU assisting with planting at Afton
- Various clean-up activities throughout the Preserves and Trails. Sycamore Lions Club, DeKalb Kiwanis, Genoa Scouts and others.

Ms. Turner commented that the Asian students had also worked with her high school students at St. Mary's as well. Mr. Hannan noted that the Kishwaukee Kiwanis had assisted with the Trail clean-up and with the Earth Day planting and activities at Afton as well.

He noted that there have been a large number of bird sightings at the wetland bank area and he has sent that data to the Army Corps. Of Engineers as evidence of diverse wildlife populations in wetland bank areas enhances the bank's value.

Mr. Hannan and Roloff will also be meeting soon with John Becker of the Army Corps. to discuss wetland bank expansion permitting process at the Afton Addition.

Ms. Fauci asked about an area she noticed just off the Afton entrance road that appeared to have new planting activity. Mr. Hannan replied that this is actually an old pond area that is being restored as a forested wetland as per Corp of Engineer wetland bank requirements. (see monthly natural resource report).

Mr. Hannan then reported that the starting point for the Kishwaukee Sunrise Rotary's 8K run at Potawatomi Woods had to be moved into the Kirkland Park due to flooding at Potawatomi Woods. About 100 runners turned out for the event despite the weather and the mayor of Kirkland approved a move of the starting point to Kirkland Park. Hines Lumber provided parking for the event. The Rotary says that this year should raise approximately \$4000.00 for Forest Preserve Miller –Ellwood cabin restoration project. The Sunrise Rotary has also recently won an International Rotary award for their many projects, donations and partnership with the Forest Preserve District .

FY2009 AUDIT REPORT

Mr. Hannan attended the recent Audit review and commented that the auditors were very impressed with the Preserves fiscal management.

Mr. Anderson asked for an explanation of what the \$1,500,000.00 “liability” is that is noted in the report. Mr. Newport responded that Real Estate tax revenues are often shown as a liability at the beginning of the fiscal year as they are not actually realized until later in the year. He noted that it shows as both a liability and an accrued asset over the course of the tax year.

Mr. Anderson agreed that it does appear to be re-added to the assets later in the report.

Mr. Hannan noted that grants are generally shown as a receivable. Ms. Fauci then asked where the narrative portion of the audit is. Mr., Hannan replied that it has been moved to follow the details rather than precede them as it had in some prior years.

Ms. Fauci asked where the total dollars available for land purchases would be shown. Mr. Hannan responded that under the Land Acquisition column, there is \$1,928,154.00 shown as available for purchases.

Following additional discussion of the levy detail, Mr., Hannan closed the audit discussion by noting that that there would be additional time for audit discussion at next month's meeting.

LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE

Mr., Hannan commented that there would be a vote at the next County Board meeting to approve the acquisition of the Hoppe property adjacent to Russell Woods. He commented that attached to that property acquisition is a future bike path component that the District is also involved in. With regard to that, Mr. Hannan and Ms. Fauci would be meeting soon with a local biking enthusiast to discuss possible grants that might be available for bike trail development. This property is where the Miller Ellwood cabin will be relocated.

Mr. Hannan has also had discussions recently with the mayor of Somonauk regarding a connecting trail from Somonauk to the Sannauk Preserve.

Mr. Anderson asked if the Hoppe resolution included both the 5 acre and the 55 acre tracts. Mr. Hannan replied they were tied together.

Mr. Hannan commented that they hope the cabin relocation could occur in June if the Hoppe motion passes. Mr. Anderson asked of the house on the property will be demolished. Mr. Hannan said they would first look to save and salvage as many materials from the property as possible before demolition and if not demolished, may offer to the Genoa Fire Department for a practice burn.

Ms. Fauci thanked the Committee for their work on the Hoppe acquisition and asked if the next meeting could be held at The Natural Resources Education Center at Russell Woods so the Hoppe property could be viewed by the Committee as well. The group agreed that would be a good location for the next meeting.

Mr. Hannan closed the discussion by noting that he had recently acquired an additional wetland bank contract from the Army Corps of Engineers. Mr. Hannan replied that there are 19 acres remaining in the original bank and new acquisitions could add 15 to 18 additional acres.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Ms. Fauci noted to the Committee the details of an upcoming webinar on investing in County greenways and trails for anyone interested.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Fauci asked if any of the Committee members had any additional comments. Hearing none, she proceeded to the adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Anderson moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Turner and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Fauci, Chairperson
Forest Preserve District Committee
JF:kjr

DeKalb County Forest Preserve District May Staff Maintenance and Projects Report

General maintenance of buildings and grounds with seasonal mowing/trimming and fire wood cutting and splitting, shelter house and outhouse cleaning, garbage, litter pick up and disposal, road grading, trail maintenance, building and equipment maintenance, storm clean-ups, scheduling shelter rentals and collecting shelter and camping fees, and water safety testing. Shelters houses and the lodge at forest preserves are used every weekend by scouts, families and other groups. Other projects: The FP District Natural Resource Environmental Educators Peggy Doty and assistants are busy with Spring Field trips and events. Land acquisition and preservation work continues as the 5 acre Hoppe Farmstead will be acquired in June, and 55 acres of the farm in late 2010. This land is adjacent to Russell Woods and will be an important link in the future Genoa / Kingston Trail. The Farmstead will be cleaned up, old unsafe buildings removed and the 55 acres planted into prairie, trees and wetland habitat. The Miller – Ellwood cabin re-construction work is planned to begin in September at the new farmstead site. Spring cleanup, road grading and new road gravel at all preserves in progress. New entrance to the Natural Resource Center being worked on and 2 trail foot bridges at Afton completed by F.P. staff. As part of the Corp of Engineer wetland bank requirements, 4 acres of old pond areas and field tiles have been repaired and re-graded, and planted, this will now be part of the Afton wetland bank forested wetland requirement. At the Afton Addition 18 acres of new wetland bank is in the planning stages. Thanks Kishwaukee Sunrise Rotary for the 4th annual 8k run fundraiser and Eagle Scout projects at MacQueen and Sannauk.



Genoa / Kingston scouts volunteered to plant trees at Potawatomi Woods Forest Preserve



Conservation Matters

Natural Resource Information Reports



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The Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Act (Ill. Compiled Statutes, Ch. 70, Par 405/22.02a.) requires that any person who petitions any municipality or county agency in the DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District for variation, amendment, or other relief from that municipality's or county's zoning ordinance or who proposes to subdivide vacant or agriculture lands therein shall furnish a copy of such petition or proposal to the Soil and Water Conservation District. The Soil and Water Conservation District shall be given no more than 30 days from the time of the receipt of the petition or proposal to issue its written opinion concerning the petition or proposal and submit the same to the appropriate agency or municipality for further action.

How does this affect my community? If your community lies within the boundaries of DeKalb County you are in the DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District. If a developer or individual approaches your community with a project that requires a zoning change or a proposed development of agriculture land then the DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District needs to be notified before your unit of government votes on the proposal. The District Board is allowed up to 30 days to prepare a report and issue its opinion on the project. This report is to be used as a tool for units of government and developers to assure that they take into full consideration the limitations of the land that they wish to develop.

What is in a Natural Resource Report? The Soil and Water Conservation District will look at the soil limitations for the site in their natural state, also aquifers, watersheds, wetlands and floodplain are identified. A Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) tool is used to evaluate the viability of a site for agricultural uses. In the site assessment for example, if the proposed site is located

next to town with infrastructure and roads, then it is likely that the site would have a lower rating for protection from development. If a site is located farther from town then the rating will go up to discourage development that is not next to town. The land evaluation will look at the quality of soils that exist on the site, for most of the soils in DeKalb County they are considered to be prime farmland soils which are excellent for raising crops but require major reclamation to build on.

Many times developers do not fully evaluate how the site will affect the neighboring land with surface runoff and subsurface tile drainage. The report will identify concerns and make recommendations. Soil erosion on developing land is a major concern, sediment from construction sites can runoff and get into the water supply and cause harm to the environment. The importance of erosion control and highly erodible soils are identified in the report. MS4 communities are required by law to make sure that no sediment is leaving the construction site through the ILR40 permit that they have with the Illinois EPA. The DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District has a Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control on staff that can assist your community if erosion concerns exist.

The information in the Natural Resource Reports are unbiased and will not cost your community a dime. The petitioner is responsible to pay for the fees associated with this report to the Soil and Water Conservation District, once the Soil and Water Conservation District Board has reviewed the report it is made available to the petitioner and the unit of government responsible for making decisions on the parcel in question.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

The DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District is one of 98 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD's) making a difference in your community. No matter how big or small, each of the 102 counties is represented equally. From educating homeowners on practical utilization of water, to helping rural landowners save soil and improve water quality; it takes everyone working together to protect our soil and water!



As urban and agricultural areas combine it is very important that developers and planners have a good understanding of the limitations and impacts that will result in development. The Natural Resource Information Report is a useful tool for Planners and Developers. The more information that is made available to decision makers increases the chances for a better development project in your community.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts Perform Many Different Tasks

- Illinois SWCD employees utilize such tools as GIS software, electronic survey instruments and old fashioned leg work to assist landowners with the planning, design and installation of conservation practices.
- Illinois SWCD employees are familiar with state, county and municipal zoning and permitting requirements and work with developers to help them comply with those requirements.
- Illinois SWCD employees assist educators in meeting conservation education requirements for students and to provide educational opportunities for adults who want to know how to care for their environmental resources.
- SWCD's meet with and advise municipal, county, state and federal governmental agencies and organizations on programs and polices to help protect our environment.

NOTE: Soil and Water Conservation Districts DO NOT have taxing authority and must rely on state source and local funding to employ staff and to administer programs.

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Rain Gardens: *Your personal contribution to cleaner water*

Homeowners in many parts of the country are catching on to rain gardens—landscaped areas planted to wild flowers and other native vegetation that soak up rain water, mainly from the roof of a house or other building. The rain garden fills with a few inches of water after a storm and the water slowly filters into the ground rather than running off to a storm drain. If a rain garden is built below a downspout in the front yard of a typical quarter-acre lot, the annual runoff from that lot will be reduced about 25 percent.

Why are rain gardens important? As cities and suburbs grow and replace forests and agricultural land, increased stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces become

a problem. Stormwater runoff from developed areas increases flooding; carries pollutants from streets, parking lots and even lawns into local streams and lakes; and leads to costly municipal improvements in stormwater treatment structures.

By reducing stormwater runoff, rain gardens can be a valuable part of changing these trends. While an individual rain garden may seem like a small thing, collectively they produce substantial neighborhood and community environmental benefits. Rain gardens work for us in several ways:

- Increase the amount of water that filters into the ground, which recharges



local and regional aquifers;

- Helping protect communities from flooding and drainage problems;
- Helping protect streams and lakes from pollutants carried by urban stormwater-lawn fertilizers and pesticides, oil and other fluids that leak from cars, and numerous harmful substances that wash off roofs and paved areas;
- Enhancing the beauty of yards and neighborhoods;
- Providing valuable habitat for birds, butterflies and many beneficial insects.

Contact our office to find out more about rain gardens.

Streambank Erosion: *a real problem*



Streambank erosion in any watershed is a complex and detailed process to understand because stream dynamics are constantly changing. As a stream meanders across its floodplain, soil is detached, moved and relocated. This detached sediment is being relocated continually as the stream cuts into its banks. As energy levels rise and fall it influences the location of where sediment is deposited in the stream. The faster the water is flowing the further it transports the displaced sediment.

An inventory of the Somonauk Creek that was completed in

2007 showed that lateral recession rates where from .03 feet per year to 1.5 feet per year. The inventory also determined that a total of 3,519 tons of sediment is eroded from the banks of Somonauk Creek in a year. The study also showed that literally everything that is eroded from the streambank falls into the stream and is immediately available for transport.

Almost every stream or river in DeKalb County is experiencing streambank erosion. The DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District recently assisted some landowners along the Kishwaukee River with cost share and technical assistance from the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Streambank Stabilization and Restoration Program (SSRP).

A practice that is commonly used are bendway weirs which are placed from the



bank out into the river to divert water away from the banks back toward the center of the river. Stone toe protection which is also constructed from Rip Rap Rock is used to protect the eroding banks in many situations. Within a couple of years nature will gradually heal the streambank if the force of the water is removed. Grass and native vegetation will begin to grow as the banks begin to stabilize.