

BOONE – DUTCH CREEK WATERSHED PLANNING ♦ MEETING #3

Thursday, December 4, 2014 ♦ 1:00 – 3:00 PM

City of McHenry Municipal Center – Council Chambers, 333 S. Green St., McHenry, IL

Meeting Notes

1.0 Welcome & Attendee Introductions

Holly Hudson, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), welcomed and thanked everyone for coming. A round of self- introductions was made. (The attendee list is on the last page.) Holly thanked the City of McHenry for hosting and providing refreshments, then introduced Doug Martin, the City’s Director of Economic Planning. Doug welcomed everyone and highlighted some recent water-related accomplishments. In 2014, the City Board officially adopted a water conservation ordinance following NWP (Northwest Water Planning Alliance) and CMAP guidelines. In 2013, the South Wastewater Treatment Plant received the Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year award from the Fox Valley Operator’s Association based on innovations and upgrades made. HR Green was the design engineer. This year the South Plant has been nominated by Illinois EPA for the Plant of the Year, one of only five nominations statewide. The award announcement will be made in early 2015.

2.0 Agenda Changes

Holly noted that copies of today’s agenda were on the sign-in table. There were no changes to the agenda.

3.0 September Meeting: brief recap, questions, etc.

Holly noted that copies of the draft September 25th meeting notes were on the sign-in table and posted on the project page on the FREP website. Holly asked for any corrections, additions, comments be emailed to her, after which she’ll finalize the notes and have them reposted to the project webpage. She gave a brief overview of the September meeting, noting each topic covered. Per “Engaging Local Governments and Other Stakeholders,” Nancy Schietzelt asked about Nunda and McHenry Township involvement. Holly noted she had talked with the Nunda Township supervisor (Lee Jennings), and thus he was aware of this planning effort, but she recalled that he has another day job and therefore could not attend our daytime meetings. Nancy offered she would reach out again to the Nunda Twp. supervisor as well as the road commissioner. It was suggested we try to hold one of our Boone-Dutch planning meetings at the McHenry Twp. office to involve them. Someone noted that the McHenry Twp. supervisor was retiring. Holly noted that she hasn’t had time yet to develop a brochure that could be distributed to local governmental and district offices or a brief slide show to present at board or commission meetings. Nancy suggested that the McHenry Library would be a good place for a Boone-Dutch Creek Watershed Planning display, noting they are an environmentally minded library. Holly suggested they could be a key participant in post-plan development outreach and education activities. It was suggested that the draft Plan could be displayed there now, which could encourage the public to review and comment. Doug Martin said he could facilitate such.

4.0 Local Watershed Activities, News

Dennis Dreher noted IDOT's on-going Rt. 31 expansion study. There is an opportunity for engagement regarding water quality impacts and mitigation opportunities. Holly asked if the McHenry County DOT was involved in any aspects. Doug Martin stated they were at the intersection of Rt. 31 and Bull Valley Road. Nancy Schietzelt noted that the Silver and Sleepy Hollow Creeks Watershed Coalition was staying abreast of and commenting on the project. There are two projects for which the Coalition was hoping for mitigation money, but apparently IDOT has changed the way funding is dispersed, to which Randy Schietzelt commented that the project has to be completed before IDOT will disperse the mitigation funds. In other news, Nancy noted that yesterday the Illinois General Assembly passed a funding bill for the McHenry County Conservation District.

5.0 Problem Statement and Goals

Holly noted that the problem statement and two goals have been revised per comments heard from the group at the September meeting, and they are presented as such in the draft Boone-Dutch Creek Watershed Plan. She showed a slide and pointed out the added phrase "and protect high quality water resources" in the problem statement in response to Dennis Dreher's comments. In the first goal, Holly noted the added phrase "including wetlands" per Dennis' September meeting comments. In the last goal, the phrase "and attendant bank erosion" was added per Ders Anderson's comments.

6.0 Draft Plan / Watershed Resource Inventory

Holly pointed out that copies of the draft plan / watershed resource inventory were available on the sign-in table and noted that the document is also posted on the project page on the FREP website. The draft was submitted to Illinois EPA on December 1. Holly scrolled through the electronic version on-screen, pointing out items that will be added, moved, or embellished; asking questions needing participant input; and taking comments. Main discussion items are summarized below.

In the Land Use and Land Cover section, Dennis noted that the land use map has some interesting categories, notably Vacant/Under Construction and Agriculture, and wondered how they are represented in terms of pollutant loading. For example, you can see numerous Vacant/Under Construction parcels in the land use map throughout the Upper Boone Creek subwatershed. Land under construction would have much higher pollutant loads than "vacant" land that is covered by vegetation. Similarly in the Agriculture land use category, he wondered whether these parcels were primarily row crops or pasture or old fields and if they were in the same category for pollutant loading. He speculated that pollutant loading would be different off row crops than permanently vegetated lands. Holly said she'd get more details from Geosyntec about their pollutant load assignments and report at the next meeting. Doug noted there are areas that are currently in agriculture but are platted to be residential and asked whether there will be a future pollutant loading scenario done. Holly speculated that this may be beyond the scope of what we are able to have Geosyntec do during this planning process but would discuss it.

In the Open Space Reserve figure, participants pointed out omissions of private, HOA/subdivision open space (e.g., Legend Lakes, Sanctuary of Bull Valley, McAndrews Glen) and The Land Conservancy of McHenry County (TLC) easements. Doug noted that along Boone Creek in the vicinity of Bull Valley and Curran Roads, he believed there was a 400 foot easement on each side of the creek written into the annexation agreement – he’ll check. Holly acknowledged that she expected that the conservation easements currently shown in the figure from the National Conservation Easement Database, even though dated 2014, were not inclusive. It was recommended that local databases be checked; Holly will follow up with TLC and other local jurisdictions to get their latest GIS layers. Dennis noted that the mapping done for the McHenry County green infrastructure (G.I.) plan probably had the most up to date layers. Holly said she did receive the G.I. GIS files from Darrell Moore at McHenry Co. but had not had a chance to look at or incorporate them yet. She’ll get an updated open space map prepared for our next meeting. Holly posed a question about how best to display when a conservation easement was on public property. The group recommended showing the highest level of protection as the top layer.

At the Watershed Drainage System section, discussion focused again on IDOT’s Rt. 31 widening study. In the Southeast Direct Drainage subwatershed (study unit #9), Ralph Stark noted in the area of Rt. 31 and Ann Street, where the creek flows under Rt. 31, that locals were concerned about flooding. (Doug calls it Edgebrook Creek; Ralph has heard it referred to as County Club Creek.) Doug added that IDOT is looking at areas for detention here and elsewhere along the Rt. 31 corridor. He noted that IDOT wants direct access from Rt. 31 for the detention areas, and this is prime commercial space. Just behind these commercial areas are other lands more suitable for detention. The City of McHenry is having ongoing conversations with IDOT about this and some progress has been made. Several attendees further stated concern with the type of detention IDOT is proposing. Ralph noted they use the term “grass bottom” detention basins. Nancy stated IDOT needs to hear from us that their current basin concepts are not the best approach for water quality protection. There was discussion about getting local politicians involved which could help steer stormwater detention locations and types toward a more economically and environmentally sensitive outcome.

Regarding the Boone Creek 2002 stream conditions assessment, Dennis pointed out that the high degree of sediment accumulation and the low degree of substrate stability depicted in the headwaters sections of Boone Creek (Figures 23 and 24) are probably not due to surrounding land or streambank erosion but associated with natural background conditions (naturally organic soils) and previous hydromodification (Wold Lake is an artificial impoundment). Holly agreed this should be pointed out to the reader. Regarding streambank erosion, Holly confirmed with Dennis that he thought erosion would not have changed drastically since no new developments have been built. She stated she will try to do some field confirmation per IEPA’s direction but will be largely limited to visiting stream crossings. She asked that anyone with personal knowledge of any sections that may have changed from slight to moderate or high erosion, as well as sections that have been stabilized, let her know. CMAP will use aerial imagery to assess riparian condition. For Dutch Creek and other tributaries in the planning area, assessments of bank erosion, channelization, and riparian condition will be made. Channelization and riparian condition

can be done by aerial interpretation. The degree of erosion assessment will have to be done largely from road stream crossings. She asked that anyone with personal knowledge of moderate and high erosion areas let her know. The bank erosion assessment will be on second or third order and greater sections of the streams since first order streams typically do not have significant erosion nor are they likely to be at or visible from a road crossing.

Regarding surface water quality assessment and impairment status, Holly shared information received from Illinois EPA about the pH impairment in Boone Creek. It's based on continuously recorded pH data collected during the first of two, 7-day sonde deployments, from 6/27/2007 – 7/5/2007, when pH values >9.0 mg/L (the upper limit of the pH standard) in 99 of 389 readings (a 25.4% pH standard violation rate). During the second sonde deployment from 9/19/2007 – 9/26/2007, no pH violations occurred. Boone Creek was sampled again in 2012, but Illinois EPA staff has not yet seen ISWS' continuous sonde monitoring data. Holly showed a map with Illinois EPA's stream sampling sites, pointing out station DTZT-02 (Boone Creek at Bull Valley Road) where the monitoring was conducted. The group discussed possible reasons why the pH would be elevated at this location at that time. Dennis noted algal blooms would not be occurring at that station. Randy wondered if high populations of Asiatic clams could have an influence. Folks noted that sod farms are in the area – might fertilizers and pesticides have an influence on water chemistry? Could there be any impact from sod farm irrigation water withdrawals from the shallow aquifer or the creek itself? Attendees wondered if local knowledge of pH levels in Boone Creek could override the pH data used in IEPA's assessment. They again noted the locally-collected chloride data and suggested it be included in this section of the plan, as well as data collected on discharge rates of seeps and springs.

Holly confirmed with Illinois EPA that no sampling has been done on Dutch Creek and noted there is no established Illinois EPA monitoring site. If there is enough local interest and as resources allow, Illinois EPA would consider adding a station on Dutch Creek. Holly pointed out the cluster of sampling stations on a tributary to Dutch Creek (IEPA dubbed the tributary Morton Creek). Kelley Kepes stated that had been Morton Chemical, then Rohm Hass, then Modine, and now Dow Chemical. The facility will be closing in 2015 and thereby become an empty industrial space. Holly noted this could be identified as a brownfield restoration site in the Boone-Dutch plan, and grants are available for such remediation.

Regarding the Nonpoint Source Pollutant Load Modeling, Randy asked if the extensive riparian wetlands along the upper Boone Creek main stem were taken into account for reducing pollutants in the stream. CMAP will have to check with Geosyntec about how those parcels were categorized in the STEPL model and how STEPL treats this land use type. Calibration with actual in-stream water chemistry and flow volume would require a level of modeling that is beyond the scope of this project. [Also see comments above under the Land Use and Land Cover discussion.]

During the Comprehensive Plans discussion, Kelley pointed out that there is an updated comprehensive plan for Ringwood; she will send it to Holly either in electronic or hard copy format. Doug asked whether the City of McHenry's three subarea plans should be included in the review. Dennis stated that McHenry's Riverwalk plan was worth referencing. Joanna

Colletti asked if McHenry County's 2030 and Green Infrastructure plans would be included. Attendees also noted Nunda Township's Open Space Plan and McHenry County Conservation District's site development plan and long range plan. Holly will discuss all with the planners on our project team. Nancy reiterated that McHenry County should adopt the Boone-Dutch Creek Plan and thereby reference it in its stormwater ordinance.

Holly requested that additional comments and questions be emailed to her by year's end.

7.0 Next Steps in Plan Development

Holly reiterated the items to be completed in the watershed resource inventory; mentioned the categories of watershed protection measures that will be developed over the next several months, pointing out the due dates for on-the-ground BMP (May 31) and information and education projects (June 30); and noted the topics to be covered regarding monitoring success. The group discussed setting pollutant load reductions to that of the identified on-the-ground BMPs.

8.0 "Why Stormwater Matters" presentation

Holly rather quickly ran through a presentation on why stormwater matters in relation to protecting our watersheds, with a focus on the degree and impact of impervious cover and how current zoning handicaps reducing imperviousness. There was good discussion regarding whether to allow water to infiltrate when there is a concern with chlorides from deicing operations getting into shallow aquifers. Doug was concerned with large campuses and their maintenance practices. Dennis pointed out that McHenry County has been a leader in alternative deicing products and application methods. Training has been offered. This should be noted in the outreach and education part of the Boone-Dutch Creek plan. With permeable paving, anecdotally a lot less deicing is needed. It was suggested that more data is needed from USGS about how to balance the desire for water infiltration versus the desire to keep chlorides out of our groundwater. Additionally on the topic of roads, challenges were noted with certain township road supervisors believing certain myths, such as tree branches are bad for pavement or shade from trees deteriorates pavement. Regarding zoning, Dennis noted that compact/contiguous development lessens the impervious cover problem and suggested looking at the McHenry County 2030 Plan, Water Resources chapter.

9.0 Next Meetings

Holly stated that we'll meet every other month beginning in February 2015. The group suggested keeping it a set day and time; thus, we'll plan on 1:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of February, April, June, October, and December; August will be a later Thursday in the month after school is back in session. Holly asked for hosts. Kelley will check if the Ringwood Village Hall is available on February 12. CMAP will check with McHenry Twp. if they could host in April (or at another time).

10.0 Announcements

Holly reiterated the announcements printed on the agenda. Nancy noted the speaker at the next Green Drinks McHenry County on Weds., January 7, 2015, will be the director of EarthShare Illinois, Thomas Jacks.

11.0 Adjournment

The meeting ended at approximately 3:05 p.m.

ATTACHMENT

ATTENDEES

Boone-Dutch Creek Watershed Planning Meeting #3

Date: December 4, 2014

Hosted by: City of McHenry

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>
Joanna Colletti	McHenry Co. Planning & Development Dept.
Chalen Daigle	McHenry Co. Council of Governments
Dennis Dreher	Boone Creek Watershed Alliance
Holly Hudson	Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Kelley Keppes	Village of Ringwood
Douglas Martin	City of McHenry
Nicky Obenauf	Davey Resource Group
Nancy Schietzelt	Environmental Defenders of McHenry Co.
Randy Schietzelt	The Land Conservancy of McHenry Co.
Paul Siegfried	Baxter and Woodman (representing Village of Bull Valley)
Ralph Stark	HR Green (representing Village of Johnsburg)

-- DRAFT -- prepared by H. Hudson, CMAP, 12/9/2014, rev. 2/6/2015