

Silver Creek / Sleepy Hollow Creek Watershed Action Planning

Meeting Notes

Thursday, February 10, 2011 • 2:30 – 4:30 PM

Crystal Lake Municipal Complex, P105/106 Training Room
100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL

1. Welcome & Introductions

Liz Maxwell, Planner with the City of Crystal Lake, welcomed participants. Introductions of participants (see attendance list). Lynn Rotunno, Watershed Coordinator, gave a brief overview of the planning process and meeting agenda.

2. Project Updates

Dawn Thompson of CMAP gave an update on the watershed resource inventory efforts. Holly Hudson of CMAP gave an update on watershed assessment activities that included information on a study of dissolved oxygen levels in watershed lakes. She mentioned that the assessment will include an evaluation of stream bank and shoreline conditions.

3. Review & Discuss Groundwater Management Objectives

Holly reviewed revisions to the management objectives for groundwater quality and quantity protection goals. Participants discussed snow removal procedures and potential impacts to streams. Concerns were expressed about salt use impacts on aquatic ecosystems and aquifers and the importance of minimizing salt use. There was discussion about reclaimed water use, gray water use, and the need for an updated state plumbing code to provide standards. The related plan management objective will be revised to address comments. Ongoing outreach should include new contacts with businesses, developers, private landowners, homeowner associations, and schools. Holly asked for any additional comments to be submitted to the Watershed Coordinator.

4. Ordinances, Codes, Planning Activities, and Our Watersheds

Holly presented information on challenges and opportunities to protect urbanizing watersheds. Information was presented on the relationship between impervious cover, stormwater runoff, and stream health. She also introduced information about the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) Code & Ordinance Worksheet that will be utilized to review local code and ordinances to assess successes and opportunities for protecting water resources. The results of this review will be presented and discussed at the March meeting. Participants provided comments related to the ordinance review process. Discussion included the importance of considering all relevant ordinances within a jurisdiction. For example, even if a stormwater ordinance supports protections for water resources, other ordinances and codes such as subdivision or landscaping ordinances can present barriers to implementing those beneficial provisions. Dennis Dreher mentioned an ordinance checklist was recently developed to review ordinances in the Hickory Creek Watershed that evaluates stormwater provisions as well as subdivision ordinances, landscaping ordinances, and zoning codes. This checklist can be provided to further support ordinance review. Other comment to expand consideration of the relationship between land cover and stream health beyond those associated with urban development to include impacts associated with other land covers such as agriculture.

5. Open Space and Green Infrastructure Planning and Our Watersheds

Dawn presented an overview of open space, green infrastructure planning, the relevance of green infrastructure to watershed planning, examples in the region, and some of the benefits including improved water quality and flood mitigation. She gave an overview of a Green Practices for Local Government Survey conducted by CMAP in 2008. The survey identified green practices of most interest to local governments, park districts, and other jurisdictions to better target technical assistance and educational programs. Dawn reviewed some of the results of that survey conducted within the watersheds.

Elizabeth Maxwell provided information on the recently developed Crystal Lake Green Infrastructure Plan. Crystal Lake's Green Infrastructure Vision identifies a variety of green resource areas and provides logical links among these to establish a green infrastructure system. Information included an overview of the planning process, grant funding resources to support plan development, engagement with stakeholders, identifying green resources, and future objectives that include active recreation and habitat connections. The Crystal Lake Green

Infrastructure Vision will be a stand alone report and elements will be integrated into the city comprehensive plan.

There was an open discussion to consider open space, natural area, and green infrastructure planning opportunities in the watersheds. Comments included questions about redevelopment opportunities. There was also a question about amending ordinances to support conservation design and how to address concerns from public safety agencies regarding emergency access to narrower streets associated with conservation developments. A suggestion was provided to refer to standards in the model ordinance language of the NIPC [Conservation Design Resource Manual](#) that has been endorsed by national engineering, home building, and transportation associations and institutes. Discussion included local examples of conservation design such as the Sanctuary at Bull Valley and others. Also, the importance of addressing natural area management early in the conservation development planning process and the importance of developing conservation development standards.

Dawn and Holly lead a discussion to consider a framework for developing priorities for open space and green infrastructure planning opportunities. Suggestions to included Nunda Township Open Space Plan information, McHenry County Natural Area Inventory sites, Illinois Natural Area Inventory sites, and threatened and endangered species sites as high priorities. Also, consider corridor connections (linking areas together). Public, county-wide conservation efforts include macro sites (larger parcels). Private conservancy work includes efforts to protect isolated, smaller, and fragmented sites. Land preservation can depend on opportunities that arise to work with local land owners. Other discussion included considerations for conservation easements, conservation development, purchasing land for preservation, restoration opportunities, and preservation of agricultural land. Also working to integrate natural area preservation / green infrastructure priorities within transportation planning initiatives. We will continue discussion to identify open space, natural area, and green infrastructure priorities for the watersheds next month.

6. **Wastewater/Stormwater Management Planning and Our Watersheds**

Dawn gave a brief overview of stormwater and wastewater management planning concepts.

Ken Krueger, Pre-Treatment Environmental Coordinator with the City of Crystal Lake, gave a presentation on wastewater/stormwater management planning for the city. Presentation included information on pretreatment program stormwater management practices / policies/objectives, information on Wastewater Treatment Plant #3 that discharges to the Sleepy Hollow Creek, review of the NPDES discharge permit requirements, pollutant removal information, and some results from recent water quality monitoring. Crystal Lake is a certified community under the McHenry County Stormwater Management Ordinance and implements its own stormwater ordinance. Additional information about storwater/wastewater management in the city can be found in the city code at www.crystallake.org.

7. **Next Meeting**

Thursday, March 17, 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. at the Village of Oakwood Hills, 3020 North Park Dr., Oakwood Hills. Topics will include results of local ordinance and code reviews and the draft introduction chapters for the watershed plans. For more information, visit <http://foxriverecosystem.org/planning.htm>.