



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Next Generation Plan Steering Committee

DRAFT Meeting Notes

4:30 p.m ~ Monday December 16, 2013
Golden Valley City Hall

Attendees: Committee Chair Linda Loomis; Commission Chair Ginny Black; Commissioner Michael Welch; Alternate Commissioners Pat Crough and Lisa Goddard; TAC member Jeff Oliver; Engineer Karen Chandler; Administrator Laura Jester

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Loomis at 4:40 p.m.

2. Approve Meeting Notes from November 18, 2013 Plan Steering Committee Meetings

There were no suggested changes to the notes from the November 18, 2013 meeting. Consensus to accept the notes as presented.

3. Next Steps for CIP Selection Criteria

The group reviewed the list of CIP selection criteria (including "gatekeeper questions") that resulted from discussions with the TAC and at the 11/18/13 Plan Steering Committee Meeting. Administrator Jester asked if a numeric or quantifiable ranking/rating system should be developed for use in conjunction with these criteria. The group discussed this idea; Mr. Oliver commented that not that many CIP projects are "lined up" so choosing which ones to select shouldn't be that difficult. The group also agreed that the four "gatekeeper" questions would automatically help give a sense of priority for each proposed project. Additionally, within the text of the Plan, it could state that "the more criteria met by the proposed project, the higher priority the project should be given."

There was some discussion about how projects that address water quality and flooding issues would be given highest priority. These two criteria are included in the four gatekeeper questions, so they do not need to be specifically called out.

There was consensus that no quantifiable or formal weighting system is needed for use with the CIP selection criteria; that the gatekeeper questions and the other ten criteria would be used in discussions during the CIP project selection process. The group approved revisions to criteria #8 to remove the italicized text and replace with the following text "Proposed CIP projects that address water quality and flooding concerns would be of higher priority."

There was also discussion about the Commission's primary focus of water quality and that with improving water clarity in lakes, aquatic plants usually increase. This could be an issue with some lake users as some people associate more plants with poorer water quality. There was consensus that the Commission's focus should be on improving water quality to meet State water quality

standards and that this is a higher priority than aquatic plant management and recreation. It was noted this priority should be stated in the Plan's Executive Summary and policies, and should be included in the Commission's outreach to the public. Additionally, the policies dealing with water quality should include a note about expected changes to aquatic plants with improvements in water quality.

4. Discussion of Groundwater Policies

Engineer Chandler distributed a "Groundwater Notes" document drafted by Greg Williams (Barr). The document summarizes the MDNR's draft Groundwater Management Strategic Plan, the possible impact of the strategic plan on BCWMC policies, and possible additional policies for the Plan Steering Committee to consider. Engineer Chandler reported that Williams had reviewed these strategies and considered some draft groundwater management strategies from another organization as well.

Draft policy #72 discussion: Engineer Chandler noted this policy may help to "fill in some gaps" and Commissioner Welch noted that, in general, the Commission's role with groundwater "open-ended" (not prescribed). There was discussion about the need for collaboration with other entities and possibly groundwater data collection. There was consensus that groundwater issues and management are still developing at various governmental levels and that the Commission may be able to help fill some roles. There was also recognition that active groundwater management is a new role for the Commission and will require Commission funding or grants.

There was consensus that policy #72, as written, allows the Commission to take the lead on a groundwater action plan or facilitates the discussion and forward action. With the addition of text to the third sub-bullet to also assess groundwater impacts of groundwater use, there was consensus to accept policy #72.

Commission Chair Black also noted that much background information (education) will be needed with the Commission when discussing draft groundwater policies.

Draft policy #71 discussion: Discussion centered around dewatering activities – both long term (or permanent) and temporary (typically for construction activities). One comment: there is a big gap with respect to dewatering regulation. However, it was noted that the new MS4 permit addresses construction-related dewatering for projects greater than one acre. There was discussion about the possibility for the Commission to review dewatering proposals that extend over a longer time frame. There was also acknowledgment that groundwater management is an evolving issue at the State with much attention right now and that it's not clear if dewatering is an issue. There was consensus to add a term like "consider" or "may" to policy #71 to leave the option open for the Commission to address in the future.

Draft policy #70 discussion: The group had no suggested changes to the draft policy but there was discussion about what MDNR appropriation permits are currently reviewed by the Commission. The group also wanted more information regarding whether the Commission receives appropriation permit applications for review/comment. There was also discussion on the fact that Hennepin County does not have a groundwater management plan. Commissioner Welch volunteered to contact County staff to discuss that situation.

Draft policy #74 discussion: The group noted that wellhead protection and well sealing are already State requirements with State certified contractors. There was consensus that there was very little or no Commission role in this issue and the policy should be deleted.

Draft policy #77 discussion: The group discussed the need for pond and other stormwater BMP construction to follow certain guidelines to protect groundwater from contamination. The group discussed using the same language as the NPDES construction permit but with a lower trigger. The group agreed that the policy should be rewritten to address: 1) whether stormwater infiltration practices are appropriate/allowed at a particular location; and 2) if allowed/appropriate, the design criteria/guidance that should be applied to stormwater infiltration practices. The policy should reference the NPDES Construction Stormwater Permit, the MIDS guidance, the MN Department of Health guidance.

Draft policy #79 discussion: The group acknowledged that Golden Valley, New Hope and Crystal do not use groundwater for drinking water and probably don't (and wouldn't) provide education on groundwater quality or quantity protection to residents. There was consensus the policy should be changed to "encourage" education rather than requiring education. Golden Valley staff indicated, however, that the city has several piezometers that are monitored for as part of their Inflow and Infiltration control efforts. The group thought that data may be valuable to the Commission or State agencies.

Additional policies considered (see "Groundwater Notes" handout)

The group discussed the first possible additional policy and agreed that a policy should be added that asks the cities to share groundwater data.

The group discussed the second possible additional policy and decided such a policy is not needed, as policy #72 would lead to such an action (if needed).

5. Discussion of Erosion and Sediment Control Policies

The group agreed draft policies #60 and #65 should be combined. These activities are already being performed by cities and they are not controversial.

Draft policy #61 discussion: There was discussion about the types of ordinances that would be reviewed by the Commission. It was noted that every city does zoning codes differently. Mr. Oliver noted that Golden Valley's stormwater management ordinances already mirror the Commission's requirements. Engineer Chandler indicated the Commission might be more concerned with zoning in floodplains and wondered if every city was appropriately following Commission rules, such as building elevations. The group also expressed concerns about reviewing the cities' comprehensive plans – what benchmarks would the Commission use to review the plans? Some also wondered what other watersheds are doing with regards to ordinance and comprehensive plan reviews. The group thought the policy could be re-worded to leave open the possibility of reviewing ordinance changes and/or comprehensive plans. Engineer Chandler will bring a reworded policy back to the Committee.

Draft policy #64 discussion: Engineer Chandler noted this policy is a significant shift in Commission activity and requires cities to perform erosion control inspections rather than the Commission. Cities are required by the State to perform these inspections and report permits issued and corrective actions to the State. The group recommended that the policy be revised to require annually reporting to the Commission – i.e., the cities could submit their annual MS4 reports regarding erosion control permits, inspections, and monitoring and possible problems in the watershed.

Draft policy #69 discussion: Engineer Chandler noted this draft policy is a result of an issue identified in the Gaps Analysis. There was discussion about whether or not this was an appropriate practice for the Commission, whether Commission funds should be spent on dredging sediment deltas and the exact definition of “sediment delta.” There was consensus that deltas formed as a result of sediment discharged from storm sewer pipes could possibly be addressed by the Commission. The policy should be reworded to indicate this activity “may” be funded by the Commission and/or the Commission may facilitate collaboration amongst responsible parties to dredge sediment deltas. It was also noted that this activity could be included in the Commission’s CIP.

6. Next Meeting and Adjourn

The next meeting of the Plan Steering Committee is scheduled for Monday January 27th at 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:30 p.m.