MEETING SUMMARY

SUBJECT: STORMWATER COMMISSION MEETING

MEETING DATE: Monday – November 7, 2016 at 5:00 pm

ATTENDANCE LIST:

☐ Carole Teator, Commission Chair, term expires 6/30/17
☒ Mike Dryden, Commission Member, term expires 6/30/17
☒ Stacie Johnson, Commission Member, term expires 6/30/18
☒ Mike Butterfield, Commission Member, term expires 6/30/18
☒ Justin Gerhfs, Commission Member, term expires 6/30/19
☒ Sandy Pumphrey, Project Engineer, City Staff
☒ Cara Matteson, Storm Water Coordinator, City Staff
☒ Tammy Schnell, Administrative Assistant II, City Staff
☒ Bill Micheel, Assistant Director, Community Development, City Staff
☒ Justin Koller, Sewer Operations Manager, City Staff
☒ Martin Smith, Friends of Cedar Lake Organization Member

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Commission Member Mike Dryden

2. Approval of the Minutes
   - Mike Dryden made a motion to approve the minutes from the 9/12/16 meeting. The motion was approved by Stacie Johnson; seconded by Mike Butterfield. All were in favor to approve the minutes.

3. Introductions
   Justin Koller, Sewer Operations Manager with the City, introduced himself.

4. Public Input
   There was no public input.

5. City Goals Presentation and Discussion
   Speaker: Bill Micheel, Assistant Director, Community Development
   - EnvisionCR is the City’s comprehensive plan and it was adopted in January 2015 and looks out to 2035.
   - Bill briefly discussed the six elements of the Plan, which are StrengthenCR, GrowCR, ConnectCR, GreenCR, InvestCR, ProtectCR. These elements were adopted as the City Council Goals.
   - Bill recommended the Commission focus on four of the elements – GreenCR, InvestCR, GrowCR and StrengthenCR, and he gave an overview of each of these elements.
   - GreenCR addresses most directly what the Commission is here to do, which references managing water quality and quantity going into the system.
   - The Comprehensive Plan takes a broad view of the City and looks at land use, economic development and a wide range of things, but the sub-area plan digs a little deeper. Current sub-area plans include Mt. Vernon Rd Corridor Action Plan, the NW Neighborhood, and will be starting the College District Plan.
   - Some things these sub-plans look at are land use, amenities that the area or neighborhood might like to see, what type of development they need, and also what service needs they may have. Bill suggested Community Development staff come to the Stormwater Commission as they develop these plans, and get the Commission’s take on what current stormwater management issues exist in the project plan area, get suggestions, and find out what issues the potential growth area might create.
• Initiative 21 under GreenCR suggests a Green Streets Policy. Even though a Green Streets Policy may not be implemented immediately, the Commission should start thinking about what best practices should be included in that now. This may drive the priority of the initiative. The Complete Streets policy primarily accommodates all modes of transportation; Green Streets focuses on a different element of road design, primarily stormwater, and some aesthetics. Discussion was held on how Green Streets can be incorporated into the Complete Streets Policy.

• He sees some benefit for stormwater management in Initiative 28, which is converting select areas of park turf grass to native prairie or woodland planting to create wildlife habitat and reduce long-term maintenance costs.

• Initiative 32, the Greenway Parks Plan, is another opportunity to build in some best practices for stormwater management. These are concept plans at this point, and when it gets closer, they will take the concept plans and start to create specific drawings for each of these. Bill suggests talking to the Parks Department to find out where this is in the planning process, and ask them to keep the Commission in mind when they start to move forward with them and have some regular check-ins with them to ensure whatever objectives or suggestions the Commission has, are worked into these plans.

• Bill will email The Highway 100 Corridor Management Plan to Sandy, which contemplates phasing of development, and also some regional stormwater management at a very high level.

Bill will email the presentation, as well as the Council goals to Sandy, and Sandy will forward them to the Commission.

6. 2016 Flood Presentation

Speaker – Sandy Pumphrey, Project Engineer, with input from Mike Butterfield & Justin Koller

• Sandy shared a presentation that showed various graphs, maps and photos of the flooded areas.

• The 2016 flood crested at 22 feet; the second highest flood on record behind the 2008 flood, which crested at 31.1 feet.

• A number of community professionals were recruited, and they, along with numerous City staff were dispatched to various locations in shifts in teams of two watching over the system 24/7 for a period of three days/night.

• Most people were compliant in the volunteer evacuation area. The drone footage allowed the public to see exactly what was going on from the safety of their homes.

• HESCO barriers were placed with no official quality control checks, which were put together as quickly and as well as they could, so they built in some redundancy by placing barriers down the middle of 8th Ave SE, which divided downtown from NewBo. If there was a breach on either side, the barriers placed down the middle of the 8th Ave would protect the other side. The same was done in Time Check, using the railroad, which was already in place.

• Numerous earthen berms were constructed. Most of these will be removed, but a lot of the material (blue clay) will be stored and reused when the permanent berms are constructed.

• Justin explained the difficulties with the storm sewer that runs straight up Penn Avenue, with ground seepage occurring around the wells. They weren’t able to isolate the area at all, so the entire intersection was “HESCO’d” in, right up to the yellow house.

• There were four areas they weren’t able to do a traditional plug. Instead, they had to block the storm sewer from coming up in key locations with concrete. The day the water went low enough, contractors went in and removed the concrete, except in one location, which had to be blasted out.

• The response from the public was incredible. They weren’t able to get a final count on how many volunteers there were.

• One thing learned from a stormwater perspective is gates need to be installed right at the river, which will be addressed in the permanent flood control system plan.

• To have such a high level of water in the fall is exceptionally unusual. The next highest September level of the river was only 12 or 13 feet, and that goes way back.

7. Stormwater Ordinance – Discussion of Prioritized Changes

Speaker – Sandy Pumphrey

• The results of the priorities, with 1 being most important and 5 being least, are:

  1: Water Quality – Release Rate
  2: Water Quality – Credits for Infiltration against Detention Requirements
  3: Environmentally Sensitive Areas (incl. slopes)
4: Elimination of Detention for Small Sites
5: Transfer of Detention Facilities

- It would be helpful to cross reference the priorities with the City Council goals. Sandy will do this and email the information to the Commission, so it can be discussed at the January meeting.

8. Reports:
- City Staff Reports
  1) Topsoil Rule
     a. The public hearing and the first reading of the ordinance will occur at the November 15th City Council Meeting.
     b. Even though it’s call the Topsoil Rule, it’s actually amendments to Chapter 71 and Chapter 72.
     c. This will go into effect January 1, 2017.
     d. There will be grandfathering in clause, if there’s been substantial grading and excavating done. It will be on a case by case basis.
  2) Middle Cedar WMA
     a. A job description draft is almost final for a watershed coordinator. The plan is to have a coordinator hired by January or February.
  3) IDALS Grant
     a. Design continues to move ahead for the three bio swales for the current grant we’re under.
     b. The permeable pavement and the alley near Coe College are under construction right now.
     c. The RFP for the next round has come out. The thought is to twin with the 6th St SW reconstruction, from 15th Ave to 33rd Ave.
     d. We were already planning on doing this project with BMP’s anyway, and then this grant opportunity came along. However, the timing isn’t quite right and we don’t think we’d get the green infrastructure in the ground in time for the IDALS grant deadline.
     e. Instead we will do some green infrastructure adjacent to the project, and still do all of the BMP stuff over the next couple years. A potential bio swale area and a potential permeable pavement area adjacent to 6th St. has been identified.
  4) Cost Share Program
     a. We haven’t received any additional applications, but we have paid out one more.
     b. $7,655 is allocated for the cost share; of that, $4,524 has been reimbursed, which was for two rain gardens and one soil quality restoration.
     c. We’re actively still trying to get more people interested in the program. Whenever Sandy receives phone calls on the revised stormwater utility fee, he gives them information on the cost share program.
  5) Stormwater Management Master Plan
     a. Both the Stormwater and Sanitary Master Plans were adopted by City Council last week.
     b. They will be added to the City website.
- Commissioner Reports
  1) Stacie asked about the presentation at the Downtown Library, “Sustainable City Talks, What the Science Say”. She’s concerned that things like this are occurring that pertain to water quality and stormwater, but the Commission isn’t finding out of them ahead of time. Eric Holthaus, Sustainability Coordinator with the City, who coordinated these talks, will be contacted and discussed with him about reaching out to the Stormwater Commission.
  2) Stacie advised there’s an Iowa Stormwater Summit December 6 and 7 in Marion at Squaw Creek Park. Stacie gave an overview of the agenda for the 6th. On the 7th is an all-day certification program for SWPP designers.

9. Agenda Items for Next Meeting
- Begin talking about the stormwater ordinance.
10. Next Meeting Date
   - Stormwater Commission meeting scheduled for Monday, **January 9, 2017**, at 5:00 p.m. City Services Center (Public Works) - 2nd Floor – Greene Square Conference Room, 500 15th Avenue SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404 - Ph. (319) 286-5802

11. Commission Member Mike Dryden adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Tammy Schnell, AAll, Cedar Rapids Public Works*

This summary documents our understanding of items discussed. Please contact our office within five working days with any omissions or discrepancies.

cc: Stormwater Commission Meeting Distribution List
    City Councilperson Scott Overland