

CD47, JC6 & City of New Richland Community Meeting | DRAFT Notes

Date: 04/20/2016 | **Time:** 6:00-8:30 p.m. | **Where:** New Richland City Hall

TIME	TOPIC
6:00 PM	Informal Discussions & Map Party
6:30	Welcome and Introductions <i>Jessica Nelson, Le Sueur River Watershed Network</i> <i>Kelly Hunt, Waseca County Planning and Zoning</i> <i>Mark Bernard, Agro-Economics, Inc.</i>
6:45	February Community Meeting Overview & Purpose
7:00	Initial Flood Mitigation Comments, Ideas & Concerns
7:45	Locally Identified Opportunities – <i>Small Group Discussions</i>
8:15	Decide on Next Steps – <i>Large Group Discussion</i>
8:30	Adjourn

Meeting Mission: This is a summary of what was discussed in February, what has happened since and decide on where we need to go next

Meeting Objectives:

- Explain the role of current partners coordinating and facilitating meetings
- Address some of the questions asked in the February meeting
- Provide another opportunity for community members to join the conversation during initial information gathering and concern identification
- Determine next steps to continue the conversation and evaluate options for flood mitigation

Questions:

- What are concerns or options not addressed tonight?
- What should be next steps?
- What is the best way to send updates to community members?
- When is the best month, day of the week, and time to host meetings in the future

Meeting Synopsis

Over 25 people from the New Richland area and 8 Le Sueur River Watershed Network members and County staff, met at the New Richland City Hall on April 20 to continue the conversation from February about impacts of flooding to local residents. Before the formal meeting began, there was an opportunity for participants to pour over maps scattered around the room. These maps detailed historical imagery beginning in 1940's to present, along with maps of existing physical characteristics such as soil type, elevation and flow paths. The formal meeting kicked off with a re-introduction to citizen group by speakers Jessica Nelson, Le Sueur River Watershed Network, and Kelly Hunt, Waseca County Water Resources Specialist. Hunt described what she has learned about infrastructure concerns within city limits, including infiltration and inflow (I/I) impacting sewage backups. Mark Bernard, Agro-economics, Inc., share his observations on precipitation patterns and flooding within the area, and motivation for progress toward mitigating flooding impacts. Russ Guse, County Ditch Inspector, explained his job to survey, plan and maintain best management of area ditches. Both CD57 and JC6 ditch systems are listed to undergo Redetermination of Benefits in 2017. Nelson summarized themes discovered during February small group discussions. Then, asked April meeting participants to break out into small groups to comment on the validity of those themes using maps illustrating areas of concerns, and identify if there was anything missing. Groups reported on their table conversations to the larger group and participants identified what next steps they would like to take to get a handle on the technical information for flooding. Several participants stepped forward at the end of the meeting to serve on an advisory committee. Over the summer, local staff and community members will focus on working with upstreamers and determine current capacity and conditions of the drainage systems.

Voices from the Watershed

Le Sueur River Watershed Network

- Citizen Advisory Committee developed 7 Recommendations that were ratified by the larger Network
 - We are not an agency, citizen-led; we act as a link for communities to agencies
 - Ratified our mission statement in June 2014 at CD57 meeting
 - Steering Committee members are a diverse group (Jessie Shaffer and Mark Bosacker introduced the Network)
- Le Sueur River Watershed Network activities are motivated by our concern for a maintaining productive lands and guided by their 7 Recommendations for cleaner water and river health
 - Heavy flow is destabilizing our watershed
 - Water quality and quantity are things we need to consider

Waseca County

- Kelly Hunt, Waseca County Water Resources Specialist, explained her motivation to work with the community to find a common solution to water concerns
- Working with City and local staff to identify existing conditions of City infrastructure

- Investigating sewage system problems and back-ups and learned that there are cross connections, cracks, and a leaky manhole were identified while televising 7.7 miles of the system
- County seeking funding opportunities to mitigate flooding (Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), bonding, Clean Water Funds (CWF), etc.)
 - County staff that has contributed to-date include Hunt, Mark Leiferman (Planning & Zoning Administrator, Nancy Lageson (County Emergency Management Director), and Jonathan Graves (GIS Specialist)
- City has a goal to update 20% of I/I systems per year
 - New Richland Eagle Star sent out a public service announcement urging residents to not connect sump pumps and tiles drains to wastewater

Mark Bernard

- Mark Bernard is a certified agronomist with Agroecconomics, Inc.
 - Experienced in interpreting physical characteristics of fields and weather patterns in order to support local farmers make decisions
 - Volunteer in the state climatologist rain gauge network and is going to provide rainfall and snowmelt data they collected
 - Flooding in 2010 wrecked many homes and valuables
 - Discussed how water storage on 3/5 acre keeps water off the neighbors and that the relationship between storage and flow in the system needs to be demonstrated

Russ Guse

Identify and Evaluate Options

Flooding Impact Trends

- Residents feel it is the same amount of water, with higher intensity events
- City of New Richland is acting like a reservoir
 - Ball fields flood out any time there is a heavy rain
 - Historically, water doesn't go over the ditch near the funeral home
 - 2015 water went over the ditch with a 2 yr 6" rain event
 - Care Center is built on a slope

Question: What is the water table in the watershed?

Cleaning out CD47 & JC6 Ditch Systems

- Areas that might need cleaning include Park & Trappers Lane
- Water hits bigger culverts, cement slabs and other rock-lined areas which may make it harder to clean out – culverts are choke points throughout the city
- Flood debris is a concern (railroad ties, sticks, trees, silt from tile, shallower, seeing more grass grow)

- Hauling away debris this summer from the crevices and corners in town
- West corner of town has been cleaned

Question: What is the current schedule for cleaning ditches → After flooding? Every 10 years?

Question: When was the last time CD47 and JC6 were cleaned out? 60's and 70's?

Next Steps to Trigger Work within the Ditch Systems

- Redetermination of Benefits of both systems scheduled for 2017
 - Only assesses 20% of value
- Ditch improvement requires a 10K bond to rearrange the size of the ditch
 - 26% of acres signed up to trigger an improvement project
 - Every landowner along ditch is notified and assessed for fair value
 - City could be petitioner for progress towards having work done in the watershed

Question: What percent is the City comprised of and how much are landowners upstream?

Known Opportunities

- Gun Club → Open to donating land for storage
- Restrict water coming into town from both ditch systems
 - Current culverts are widening ditch
 - We need to meter the water
 - Can't dig out any deeper
- Look at in-field management options
 - Soil health and cover crops will help slow the flow

Question: How much water could be stored on the New Richland Sportsmen Club's land, and how could

Question: How can we maximize storage and meter the water before town?

Opportunities to Explore

- Space out water storage throughout the watershed, instead of one large project
- Buying property that is flooded frequently
 - Exempted will seriously consider being abandoned
 - Farmers would have to take land out of production; challenge to get high productive land recently tiled into CRP
- Short term relief through programs such as FEMA FIRM Program, flood insurance, etc.
- Build dikes around the Care Center to keep water away
- Berm widths of culverts same as ditch width

Question: How do we compensate landowners? (ex. DNR buys land)

Question: Where is there flooding upstream?

Engaging Stakeholders

- There needs to be 8-10 local leaders pushing to promote action (i.e. elected officials, farmers, City residents, local staff)
 - Go talk to City Council and voice concerns
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- Need to engage more upstreamers farming land within the watershed since they are connected to the ditch and part of the solution
 - Set-up a potluck style meeting for everyone within the watershed to participate and build a sense of community
- There will need to be compromise by everyone

Complete an Evaluation of CD47 and JC6 Watershed

- Feasibility study to understand volume conveyed by the ditch systems and where chokepoints are
 - Currently known to be 3 “bridges” constraining flows
 - Determine available options and their costs
 - Identify opportunities for storage
 - Estimate to cost a few thousand dollars
- Waseca County Planning & Zoning stepped forward to assist in funding a feasibility study to be completed
 - Could use the ditch to provide additional funds
 - New Richland Area Foundation may be able to assist
 - City could hold a fundraiser to help pay for costs of a study

Question: Where do we get funding to perform a feasibility study?

Question: What local entity will spearhead the project to maintain progress?

Question: What are the costs for completing a feasibility study?

Question: How can local staff time and resources reduce costs?

Next Steps

- Educational meetings**
 - Need to understand the system
 - Learn about some engineering options (combine local knowledge + technical expertise)
 - Look at other models with comparable drainage areas (e.g., CD57)
 - Look into what it takes to petition for ditches (takes ~2 years)
- One-on-one meetings with landowners
- Initiate meeting with local advisory committee that steps forward
- Identify options for water storage
 - Evaluate best sites to slow flow
- Talk to railroad authority, MnDOT, etc