

Middle River Subwatershed Project Team Meeting Minutes
11:00 AM Monday, September 19th, 2016
Newfolden Community Center
Newfolden, Minnesota

A public meeting related to flooding in the town of Newfolden, flood reduction in the Middle River and a flood reduction feasibility study performed by HDR Engineering was held at the Newfolden Community Center at 11am on September 19, 2016.

Attendees:

Nate Dalager	HDR
Dillon Nelson	HDR
Tammy Hansen	City of Newfolden Administrator
Laurie Fairchild	USFWS
David Bakke	MSTRWD and landowner
Sharon Bring	Marshall County Commissioner and landowner
Ken Borowicz	Marshall County Commissioner
Craig Jarnot	USACE
Ruth Anne Franke	DNR
Danny Thorstad	Marshall County SWCD
David Larson	New Maine Twp Supervisor and landowner
Matt Fischer	BWSR
Danny Omdahl	MSTRWD
Brent Silvis	MSTRWD

Brent introduced Nate, who explained that Phase 1 of the Feasibility Study was near completion. This would be the final step unless it was decided to proceed beyond Phase 1. Nate also disclosed that his firm had done some engineering work related to the new floodplain designation of Newfolden, on behalf of Newfolden, and funded by a grant from the Northwest Minnesota Foundation.

Sharon stated that she had spoken to some landowners, David Myhrer and David Larson, who were not in favor of impoundments because landowners generally do not want to sell land.

Nate advised that the proposals in the study were only discussion points. However, to store water, there must be an impoundment. There are multiple benefits of impoundments including flood reduction and natural resource enhancement.

Dillon presented a PowerPoint giving some history of flooding in the area and a profile of the watershed. He explained that the Red River Watershed Management Board, whom the MSTRWD is a member of, has a goal of a 20% reduction of peak flow during flooding conditions on the Red River. Dustin showed a map identifying significant points in the watershed, related to flooding and streamflow. He asked for input from attendees regarding items to add to the map.

Danny O. pointed out that there was a Middle River dike in Alma Twp which was prone to breakout.

Sharron said that she feels CRP worsens the problem, that it contributes additional subsurface water.

Dave B. didn't feel that the landowners on the east end of the watershed should be concerned about landowners on the west end. He doesn't believe that spring flooding in the west is caused by water from the east. Many areas in the west used to be swamps.

Sharron stated that the erosion problem is getting worse.

Dillon showed a picture of an area west of Argyle, on 440th Ave NW, where there is sloughing. Danny O. commented that this was the worst stretch, but the township was responsible for maintaining the roadside.

David B. said he didn't believe Newfolden should have a floodplain designation.

Dillon showed a modeled image of water being retained by the railroad bed. Nate explained that this was a safety concern. If the railroad bed failed there would be a flash flood.

Dave L. said that spoils on ditches JD21 and CD 23 have dammed his land, and cuts need made in the spoil.

Laurie didn't understand the comparisons shown between the DNR 100-year model and HDR's 100-year model. Nate and Dillon explained that this was because longer cross sections were used by HDR.

Dave B. asked why the culverts under the tracks couldn't be removed and a bridge put in. Nate explained that this would cause additional flooding downstream.

Brent asked if the CP Railway could be held accountable to landowners upstream of the tracks. Nate said it was possible.

Laurie stated that she was having trouble understanding how the MSTRWD goal of peak flow reduction was related to the Newfolden problem.

Dillon showed some of the solution alternatives for the flooding problem, along with their benefits and drawbacks.

Nate stated that the railroad bed may now be higher than shown in LIDAR. This would change the modeled results and the area included in floodplain. This could be justification for delaying the release of the floodplain maps.

Ruth Anne asked if we could get better data. Nate said that it was possible.

Matt pointed out that, if the railroad bed is higher, more homes would be in the floodplain.

Nate said that some of the levee proposals would need approval from FEMA and some of the proposed impoundments west of town would require diversion.

Craig asked what the criteria were for selecting impound sites. Dillon referred to some of the qualifying categories of the ranking matrix. Nate said that some of the sites had previously been identified by MSTRWD.

Craig said that the project needed a Purpose and Need Statement. The project should have only one purpose.

Nate said that his firm would finish their report. He proposed that the next step would be to review the report with the group, along with the railroad, landowners and more representation from the townships.

Ruth Anne said that impoundments bring a lot of problems, such as cattails, management expenses and disagreements on control of the impoundments.

Tammy asked about the cost of the various proposals. Brent stated that some proposals may also be available for more funding than others.

Nate said that more parties should be brought to the discussion, including the railroad, MNDOT and FEMA.

Dave L. questioned whether culverts could be put under County Road 8.

Laurie said a goal should be added to the plan, such as the removal of Newfolden from the floodplain.

Brent suggested as a next step that the report be completed, we bring in new partners and get landowners involved.

Dave L. said that landowners should be present. Harvest can complicate timing for landowners.

No schedule was set for the next meeting. Consultation with HDR Engineering concerning their progress will dictate the next meeting's timing.



Brent Silvis
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Administrator
MSTRWD