



MIDDLE-SNAKE-TAMARAC RIVERS WATERSHED DISTRICT

Portions of Marshall, Kittson, Polk, Pennington and Roseau Counties

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A public meeting regarding the Middle River Subwatershed / Newfolden study was held at 6:30 PM December 8, 2016 at the Newfolden Community Center in Newfolden, MN. In attendance:

David Thompson (Middle River), Nathan Bukowski (Middle River), Dave and Deann Bennett (Newfolden), Josh Johnston (Marshall County), Kenneth Borowicz (Marshall County Commissioner), Ben Kleinwachter (MSTRWD), Andy Bjongaurd (Newfolden), Norman Lindemoen (Newfolden), Glenn Meekma (Newfolden), David Myhrer (Middle River), Sharon Bring (Strandquist / Marshall County Commissioner), Gary Kiesow (Marshall County Commissioner), Merlyn Lindemoen (Newfolden), Darin Jacobson (Newfolden), Ruth Anne Franke (MNDNR), Leroy Vonasek (Warren / Marshall County Commissioner), L. Chapman (Newfolden), John Keyra (Newfolden), Kellie Donarski (Newfolden), Shane Chapman (Newfolden), Derick Converse (Newfolden), John Wingard (MNDOT), Ray Gust (MNDOT), Brad Blawat (MSTRWD), Dave Bakke (MSTRWD), Nate Dalager (HDR), Dillon Nelson (HDR), Tammy Hansen (City of Newfolden), Lori Warne (Newfolden Mayor), Brent Silvis (MSTRWD).

Brent Silvis provided an introduction, including the histories of flooding and this study. He also mentioned that he had received a lot of recent feedback supporting some action to keep Newfolden out of the floodplain from people who were not able to attend.

Nate Dalager spoke, explaining that, from this meeting, MSTRWD and HDR were hoping for feedback and a path forward with this project. Nate provided a slideshow, outlining the feasibility study, including the alternatives developed. He also mentioned that, based on a newly determined elevation of the railroad, the latest release of flood maps was likely inaccurate and the elevation of a one hundred-year flood would likely be higher. Due to this, the release of the final maps may be delayed. He then asked for questions or discussion.

Dave Bennett asked how ditching had changed in the region and whether it has made flooding worse. Dave also asked if MSTRWD has given any priority to any area of the watershed for retention.

Nate replied that ditching and drainage have improved. However, there is more precipitation now. Brent asked for clarification regarding the question about prioritization for retention.

Dave Bennett asked what would happen to the elevation certificate that he paid for, since the projected height of the one hundred-year flood had changed. Nate replied that HDR had performed the work contracted to assess eligibility for the certificate, but the elevation used was obtained by the DNR. Since this elevation seems to have changed, the status of the certificates is unknown.

Dave Myhrer remarked on impoundments in his area (near Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge, in Red Lake Watershed District) which are not operated properly for flood control, have problems

BEN KLEINWACHTER	JOHN W NELSON	DAVID BAKKE	JIM JUBIE	ROBERT KOVAR	BRADLEY BLAWAT	ROGER MISCHER
STRANDQUIST	OSLO	NEWFOLDEN	WARREN	EAST GRAND FORKS	VIKING	WARREN
PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER	ASST SEC/TREAS	MANAGER	MANAGER
MARSHALL COUNTY	MARSHALL COUNTY	MARSHALL COUNTY	MARSHALL COUNTY	POLK COUNTY	MARSHALL COUNTY	MARSHALL COUNTY

with sedimentation and attract unwanted birds. Brent responded that impoundments constructed by the MSTRWD were not operated in this fashion and water is retained in them until downstream flows subside, then released.

Mark Carlson asked if the precipitation trends continued (gradually increasing precipitation), would the proposed alternatives be effective? Would they still work in 20 years?

Nate replied that the alternatives would likely no longer meet their intended purpose.

John Wingard noted that the Highway 59 bridge in Newfolden would soon be replaced, and MNDOT would need to know the anticipated hydrology due to the selected alternative so that they could properly design the bridge.

Nate provided a list of potential funding partners for the project.

Devere Chapman noted that some of the culverts under the railroad are collapsing and, with crude traveling over the tracks, which poses a safety hazard.

David Thompson suggested that the area under the railroad should be opened up and the water should be allowed to flow more freely. Brent pointed out that this presents some liability for the District, due to increased discharge downstream.

Nathan Bukowski questioned why, if an upstream impoundment was used, upstream communities would be expected to tolerate additional flooding due to water backing up behind the impoundment. Brent explained that impoundments contain water, they do not act like a dam. Nate acknowledged that there may need to be a better assessment of upstream benefits.

Josh Johnston explained, in response to a comment by an attendee, that, although Newfolden has not historically been identified as being in the floodplain, it was never mapped. Previous maps showed mapped floodplains around the town, but the area where the town is located was blank. He suggested Newfolden may have never been assessed due to funding constraints. Josh gave more information about some of the ramifications of floodplain designation. Homes within the plain would need to carry flood insurance, their values would drop, and the value of new additions would be capped at 50% of the home's value.

Brent Silvis asked if anybody would be opposed to an impoundment if it could be built without taking land from unwilling landowners and with very little local money. Nobody indicated that they were.

Brent emphasized that MSTRWD would like continued input from the community and would like to identify several landowners to participate in the Project Team. He hoped to have a Project Team meeting in February.



Brent Silvis
Administrator
MSTRWD