

Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District
Project Team
Newfolden / Middle River Project Team Meeting #6 - Minutes
9:30 AM Monday, May 22nd, 2017
Newfolden Community Center
Newfolden, Minnesota

The Project Team of the Newfolden / Middle River Project met at 9:30 AM on May 22, 2017 in Newfolden. Present were: Landowners Glenn Meekma, David Lokstad, Kevin Pierce, Dave Myhrer, Jerad Liedberg, Eunice Liedberg, Rodney Liedberg, Derick Converse and Bruce Knutson. Ruth Anne Franke (MNDNR), Laurie Fairchild (USFWS), Josh Johnston (Marshall County), Leroy Vonasek (Marshall County Commissioner), Ray Gust (MNDOT), Craig Jarnot (USACE), Sharon Bring (Marshall County Commissioner), Tammy Hansen (City of Newfolden), Dillon Nelson (HDR), Nate Dalager (HDR), David Bakke (MSTRWD Manager), Ben Kleinwachter (MSTRWD Manager), Danny Omdahl (MSTRWD Staff) and Brent Silvis (MSTRWD Administrator).

Introductions were made. A presentation was given by Dillon, which can be viewed here: http://mstrwd.org/wp-content/uploads/Middle-River-PT6_nd.pdf

An update was given on the Purpose and Need Statement. A draft of this statement had been provided to Craig Jarnot, of the USACE. Craig's overall assessment of the statement was good, but he had provided some comments.

The issue of downstream impacts from a project was discussed. It was mentioned that MSTRWD and MNDNR both have policies that require that downstream impacts be considered. Dave M. pointed out that recent MSTRWD proposed works could have downstream impacts.

Project alternatives were discussed. Among these were changes to the drainage through the railway. Ben suggested that there be a better explanation of the modeled results. Dave L suggested again that a control structure at the railway may be part of the solution.

Nate pointed out that the modeling has been performed with LIDAR data and that, while the accuracy of LIDAR is good, ground surveying is more accurate.

The potential impoundment sites and meetings with owners of land at the sites were discussed. Dave M. said that he knew of graves on two of the sites. Site F has a graveyard and Site B has an unmarked grave. It was also pointed out that the potential capacities of the various sites need to be compared to the required capacity.

Rodney asked why Site C was still being considered when he had informed the District that he was not interested in that alternative. Jerad also commented that two of the ditches which would empty into that site enter Newfolden west of the railway. Dillon said there would still be a benefit from this site because of backwater effects. Danny

explained that the agencies require that a range of alternatives must be discussed as part of the project, even if some are found to be unfavorable.

Dave M. asked what the impacts of the project would be on Judicial Ditch 15.

A short discussion was held about the process that must be followed to initiate a project, such as meetings and hearings.

Nate explained the base flood elevation (BFE), floodway and floodway fringe, and how they are important to this project. A goal of a project would be a reduction in flooding to one-foot below the BFE. He asked if anyone thought that goal was unreasonable, and nobody did. Nate also noted that a comprehensive survey of Newfolden has not been done.

Bruce Knutson pointed out that the goal could be six-inch reduction, along with a policy by Newfolden that no building be permitted in the flood fringe.

Laurie asked if all alternatives could provide the one-foot reduction. Nate replied that they could not, and went over a slide which identified the alternatives that could (see slide 30 of the presentation).

Craig pointed out that, if the purpose of the project is to remove Newfolden from the flood plain, the one-foot reduction would not be necessary.

Dave M. asked a question about the total cost of impoundments, when land taxes and land values are considered. A discussion followed.

Dave L. asked about the well-sealing project. Brent responded that the county would have information about this. The Water and Land Office can receive grants to offset the total cost of well-sealing.

There was also a question asked, regarding whether there was sufficient drainage under the railway to accommodate the diversion ditch approximately one mile north of Newfolden which is proposed in one of the alternatives.

Laurie questioned whether the railroad could do the surveying or pay for the surveying.

It was noted that a meeting was to be held with the railroad and representatives of the Project Team on May 25. Danny asked if the city of Newfolden would be sending representatives. Tammy replied that due to prior commitments, that it would not. Nate suggested that the city prepare a letter to the railroad.

Ben questioned whether the team wanted the additional foot above BFE as part of the goal of the project, and whether this should be incorporated into the Purpose and Need Statement. It was suggested that a second statement be developed as an alternative to the original, for the team to consider.

It was also suggested that the next team meeting include a tour of some of the MSTRWD's existing temporary floodwater holding impoundments near Warren.

HDR stated that they would continue with the feasibility study, including the review of alternatives.

Adjourned.