

**CITY OF WEST DES MOINES
DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Training Room**

Monday, September 19, 2016

Attending:

Council Member John Michaelson
Council Member Jim Sandager
City Manager Tom Hadden
Finance Director Tim Stiles
City Engineer Duane Wittstock
Principal Engineer Ben McAlister

Development Services Director Lynne Twedt
Development Coordinator Linda Schemmel
Chief Building Inspector Rod VanGenderen
Planner Kara Tragesser
Deputy City Manager Jamie Letzring

The meeting of the Development and Planning City Council Subcommittee was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. Grand Lakes Stormwater

Principal Engineer McAlister pointed out on an area map the proposed 79 lot, Grand Lakes residential subdivision to be located between Scenic Valley Drive and Grand Avenue near Raccoon River Park. The City conducted a study of this area in 1989 and determined that significant facilities were required to protect the area from flooding from a local rain event. As opposed to the traditional detention, the subdivision contains a retention pond to provide that flood protection. Mr. McAlister continued to explain that the analysis determined that the flood control gate on the pond outlet is needed in order to keep the adjacent Raccoon River from backfilling the pond during a flood event on the river. The study also set the minimum opening elevations of the surrounding subdivisions two feet higher than the current FEMA 100-year flood elevation. The calculations provided for the current design of the pond indicate that under certain circumstances, the level of the pond may be higher than the FEMA 100 year flood elevation for the development.

Five different scenarios and impact on the pond elevation were presented and discussed:

(100 year FEMA flood elevation – 48.00, minimum regulatory freeboard – 49.00)

1. 100-year storm event with no flood event - 46.08 pond elevation
2. 100-year storm event during a 10-year flood event – 47.42 pond elevation
3. 10-year storm event during a 100-year flood event – 48.45 pond elevation
4. 100-year storm, outlet gate to river closed (with pumps) – 49.88 pond elevation
5. 100-year storm, outlet gate to river closed (without pumps) - 50.00 pond elevation (equal to minimum opening elevation)

The first scenario will run the 100-year storm assuming there is no river flood.

Second and third scenarios are probability based. Because it is unlikely that there would be major river flood and a major local storm at the exact same time, the Core of Engineers recommends analyzing a 100-year local storm with a 10-year flood and vice versa.

The fourth scenario is that if the gates are closed and the river is completely shut off, every drop of water would have to be pumped out.

The fifth case is the worst scenario when something fails, there would be no pumps or City staff.

It is important to note that the 100-year regulatory flood plain elevation is 48.0. The minimum opening elevations established with the surrounding plats are a minimum of 50.0. Scenarios one and two would have no issues. Starting with scenario three, the 100-year pond elevation is higher than the existing regulatory

flood elevation. From a regulatory perspective, the 100-year pond elevation could be as high as 49.0, but there would be additional water in existing yards and closer to the existing houses than before the proposed development. Staff is seeking input from the committee members to establish a maximum 100-year pond elevation for design purposes. The target elevation could be anywhere from 48.0 to a maximum of 49.0

Based on the technical information provided, 49.0 is staff's recommendation as it is the maximum regulatory elevation and was accommodated with the 1989 study. Mr. McAlister stated that he was not entirely sure that a pond elevation of 48 was technically feasible.

Council Member Mickelson asked if 50 was feasible. Mr. McAlister responded that the elevation needs to be lower as this would mean water would be in someone's home. City Engineer Wittstock added that there would be no factor of safety with 50.

Council Member Sandager noted that a 48 elevation would take pump installation and staff interaction, but that a 49 elevation would take little City interaction and that the neighbors would be impacted. He felt that this was a communication issue and that if this was an option, the neighbors should be notified that the elevations may cause more water buildup than in the past.

Council Member Sandager asked what the communication would be to those existing neighbors regarding an elevation change. Mr. McAlister stated it would be worded carefully stating that as part of the development review for the area, based on freeboard requirements of the lake, there had been a change in storm calculations.

City Engineer Wittstock provided that a foot of free board (elevation of 49) is needed to be in conformance with FEMA. Mr. McAlister expressed that it would be difficult to achieve a pond elevation of 48 with the current pond design as it would entail installing pumps and staffing them during a flood event.

Council Member Mickelson stated that he was under the impression that the construction of the pond made improvements, and that this is what was advertised to the existing homeowners that were having water concerns. City Manager Hadden inquired if existing houses would be in a better situation than their current situation. Mr. McAlister provided that new homes would not be in a worse situation as they could accommodate the difference in elevation. Based on the data provided, one or two of the existing houses would be critically impacted.

Chief Building Inspector Van Genderen stated that he realized that the actual land elevations have changed, but has the Raccoon River 100-year level changed? Mr. McAlister responded that the Raccoon River elevation has been the same since 1998.

Council Member Mickelson stated that he thought the pond would solve some of the water issues. Mr. McAlister stated that some issues are solved as the pond keeps the river back, but you still have to manage the local rainfall. Mr. Wittstock expressed that there can be localized flooding and this can happen quickly without much time to react.

From a City perspective, Council Member Sandager commented that the City has allowed this development to occur knowing there would be affected homeowners. He inquired as to what had changed from an engineering perspective. Mr. McAlister expressed that the developer's engineer has provided a more detailed analysis.

Council Member Sandager stated that rather than the homeowner, it seems that the developer should be responsible to bear this difference since it is the developer trying to make the area into developable lots. Mr. McAlister stated that the City does have the flexibility to modify the design and specifics as it is still conceptual. The pond elevation could be lowered to a certain extent by enlarging the pond to increase capacity. Staff was interested in having a target established so that appropriate comments can be provided in reviewing the pond design.

Deputy City Manager Jamie Letzring stated that this is a difficult issue to resolve since a 49 elevation has not been typical for other projects. We know that a further investment by the City would mean more safety measures in place; however, it is difficult to jump from little City involvement to a tremendous amount of investment in infrastructure.

Council Member Mickelson stated that he thought the existing homeowners should be better off or at least equal after this development. Since something has changed after this understanding, the existing homeowner should not be burdened. Options and responsibility needs to be identified.

City Engineer Wittstock asked if the 48 elevation could be established as the pond elevation target and then the developer could determine the impacts to the pond design. This would not make the situation worse than what it is today and would not impact existing homeowners.

Principal Engineer McAlister stated that the message to developers would be that the target elevation is 48 or below.

Direction: Council Members agreed with having the developer determine the impacts of a 48 elevation.

2. Temporary Snow Removal Facilities

Director Twedt provided that for several years now snow removal contractors for large office and commercial establishments have been staging equipment and materials on various properties to allow for efficient and timely removal of snow and ice during winter months. This storage is not permitted under current City Code. This issue could be addressed through the temporary use permit process, but because there have been no problems or complaints with this staging, Staff feels that a temporary use permit would take additional time and have an extra impact on the snow removal companies. Staff would prefer a code amendment to identify performance standards and guidelines which would give enforcement on the operations. If Council Members were in agreement, Staff would draft a code amendment with recommended performance standards.

Direction: Council Members expressed support for a City Code amendment to allow equipment and materials to be stored on property during winter months.

3. Upcoming Projects – A map was provided with a brief description of each provided by the case planner.

- a. Mills Crossing Final Plat (5901 Mills Civic Parkway): Subdivide property into 7 lots for current and future commercial development (FP-003184-2016) – Planner Tragesser stated that each building will have its own lot with shared parking and cross access agreements.
- b. Mills Crossing Lot 6 (5901 Mills Civic Parkway, Building 6000) Construction of a 5,028 sq. ft. office building (OSP-003192-2016) – Planner Tragesser stated that an overlay district site plan for an office building at the northeast corner of Mills Civic Parkway and South 60th Street has been submitted for review.
- c. Holiday Park Deep Well Pump House (1701 Railroad, Building 400) Construction of a 338 square feet pump house (MaM-003213-2016) – West Des Moines Water Works will be constructing a pump house east of the Holiday Park baseball fields. The pump house will be a single story building, constructed in conjunction with the installation of a deep well. Director Twedt stated that the installation of the well would be a 24-hour operation with some noise, but once construction was completed, the operation of the pump house would have considerably less noise. It is staff's understanding that an agreement was made with residents in the area affected by the installation noise to have a reduction in their water bill.

- d. Edgewater – 9225 Cascade Avenue, 36 unit building addition with under building parking (MaM-003163-2016). The proposed exterior materials and colors are to match the existing building and architectural elements.

4. Minor Modifications

- a. The Flats Apartments (3000 University Ave, formerly known as Warren House Apartments and Warren Terrace): Construction of a 1,995 sq. ft. clubhouse, addition of parking, conversion of two studio units, maintenance rooms, and showers to a 1,314 sq. ft. fitness facility, and update to the building exteriors. (MML2-003173-2016)
- b. Jordan Creek Park Community Gardens (310 50th Street): Implementation of 72 additional garden plots, future 390 sq. ft. shelter and future additional 28 garden plots (MML2-003207-2016)
- c. Tiger Field Irrigation (3650 Woodland Ave): Installation of irrigation system and meters (MML2-003208-2016)

5. Other Matters

Global Aviation Sculpture – Planner Tragesser noted that Global Aviation, 7760 Cascade Avenue, had received approval to install a tail section as a sculpture. As approved, the tail section was to be located close to the building; a change has been requested to install it between the parking lot and the right-of-way line. Ms. Tragesser stated that she has heard third hand that a blue light was to be installed at the top of the tail section to replicate that of an airplane. With the blue light drawing attention to the sculpture element, staff questioned if this might then be considered a sign and would not meet sign standards.

Council Member Sandager stated that if it was not considered signage, he would support the addition of the light.

Council Member Mickelson asked if the light would be of concern to neighbors or future neighbors. Director Twedt replied that currently this was not an issue as the surrounding area is not developed.

Direction: Council Members expressed support for the installation of the aircraft tail section sculpture with the blue light at this time, with the caveat that if it becomes a distraction, it would need to be disabled.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 a.m. The next regularly scheduled Development and Planning City Council Subcommittee is October 3, 2016.

Lynne Twedt, Development Services Director

Kim Taylor, Administrative Secretary