

**Millwoods Community Consultation on Flood Prevention
held November 14, 2005 at Holiday Inn: The Palace**

Consultation Summary

Attendance: 22

Main presenter: Paul Hoffart, Senior Engineer & Flood Prevention Project Leader
for Ward 6, Drainage Services, City of Edmonton

Presentation

The consultation began with introductions and an overview of 2005 flood prevention programs and educational activities. Mr. Hoffart then reviewed drainage engineering findings for the community and presented recommended system improvements. These were:

- Build two dry ponds along major roadways, one in the southwest corner of Satoo and the other in North Millbourne along 91 Street. Stormwater would be diverted to the ponds and held there until the underground system has the capacity to drain it away.
- Build two new stormwater flow pipes to direct water to the dry pond along 91 Street.
- Build a new stormwater relief trunk from Millwoods Road South to Knottwood Road South to relief system pressure.
- Build a new stormwater overflow trunk at 19 Avenue and 66 Street to manage excessive water in the system.
- Increase the size of a stormwater pipe located in the middle of Satoo to increase system capacity.
- Build a new stormwater pipe at 23 Avenue between 84 and 85 Streets to increase system capacity.
- Re-grade some streets to improve surface drainage and prevent pooling.
- Upgrade and increase the size of catch basins in a number of neighbourhoods to improve the stormwater flow rate off the streets and into the system.
- Build a super pipe (a pipe with temporary storage capacity) to relief sanitary system pressure. Excess sanitary water is held in the super pipe until the underground system has the capacity to drain it away.
- Convert an existing double barrel sewer pipe (carries both sanitary and stormwater with an interior wall separating the two) to a sanitary sewer pipe only. This would substantially increase system capacity.
- Build a new stormwater pipe along 23 Avenue west to 91 Street; north to 30 Avenue and then west along 30 Avenue (next to the double barrel) to increase capacity and reduce pressure on the system during heavy rainfalls, particularly in the neighbourhoods of Meyonohk, Ekota, Satoo and Menisa.
- Seal sanitary manhole covers to prevent rainwater from entering the sanitary system. *(already completed)*
- Subsidize the installation of backwater valves in all homes in low lying areas. *(already in place)*

The estimated cost of implementing system improvements is \$29.43 million, as expressed in 2005 dollars. The implementation plan calls for sewer upgrades and the dry ponds to be done in two to three years while the double barrel would be completed in three to six years. Implementation timing will depend on funding and the capacity to do the work.

Next Steps

Mr. Hoffart emphasized that moving ahead with the recommendations and an implementation plan is contingent on receiving City Council's approval of a funding package. This package will include recommended improvements for all 43 at risk neighbourhoods and is scheduled to be presented in April, 2006. In the meantime, design work is continuing. A portion of the funding for the package may come from a provincial infrastructure grant. The remainder would come from utility rates paid for by all users, not just residents in affected neighbourhoods.

Input from Residents

People at the meeting were in favour of the recommended improvements, including the dry ponds. In response to a question, Mr. Hoffart indicated the proposed dry pond in Satoo would be incorporated into the overall Anthony Henday interchange plan so one project would not infringe upon the other.

Mr. Hoffart noted that South Edmonton Common does not drain through the Millwoods residential sewer system. He also indicated that the dry pond opposite Mill Woods Town Centre was not designed to provide relief to Menisa but was working well.

One person questioned the benefit of increasing the size of pipes if the inlets (catch basins) are too small. Mr. Hoffart acknowledged this was a concern and therefore the improvement plan includes making many of the catch basins in the area larger.

Two residents suggested Drainage Services take some action to deal with trouble spots for pooling water – one is located in front of the strip mall at Lakewood Road West (85 St.) and 28 Avenue and the other is located at the intersection of 82 Street and 22 Avenue.

Another person asked what mistakes did previous system planners make that contributes to flooding. Mr. Hoffart related that plastic pipe was thought to be water-tight when it first came into use as sewer pipe. Also, the change from combined sewers to separate sewers was thought to eliminate stormwater from getting into the sanitary system. Later, both of these assumptions were proved to be false. Too much infiltration of stormwater into sanitary sewers can cause the sanitary system to back up.

There were a number of questions asked about the backwater value subsidy program and downspout connections. People were encouraged to take advantage of the subsidy program before the end of the year. The subsidy program will continue in 2006 if funds for this purpose are approved. The subsidy does not cover the costs of lot grading and condominium owners are not eligible. However, the program may be expanded in the future and include condominiums. Drainage Services' new Home Flood Prevention Check-up service – which operates from spring to fall - can help homeowners identify where their downspout connections go.

Mr. Hoffart confirmed that a homeowner's utility bill includes a portion for drainage. This is normally used to cover drainage operations, maintenance costs and extra projects. The flood prevention package of projects will likely require an additional fee to be charged.

Updates

Updates to residents on the improvement plans will be provided via information bulletins and Drainage Services' website at www.edmonton.ca/floodprevention. Additional comments or questions may be forwarded to Mr. Hoffart at 496-5537 or paul.hoffart@edmonton.ca