

**Millbourne Communities  
Flood Prevention Public Consultation  
Held May 14, 2013 at Leefield Community Hall**

Attendance: 60 (approximate)

City of Edmonton Presenters: Chris Ward, Manager, Drainage Services

Todd Wyman, Director, Drainage Planning

Councillor Kerry Diotte was unable to attend the meeting but had a representative in attendance.

**Presentation**

In his opening remarks, Chris Ward emphasized the seriousness with which the City of Edmonton and Drainage Services was taking the 2012 storms and chronic flood issues that occur in the Millbourne communities of Lee Ridge, Richfield, Tweddle Place and Michaels Park. He told the group that the City of Edmonton's Drainage Services team feels a great deal of empathy for those who have suffered through the area's floods and they understand the criticism and hard feelings directed towards the City as a result.

In an effort to explore ways in which the City and the local community can work more closely together to resolve flooding and damage relief concerns, and to improve consultation and communications, Mr. Ward announced the formation of a Millbourne Flood Prevention Task Force. A draft terms of reference provided at the meeting outlined the mandate of the Committee which is to provide input, advice and counsel to the City of Edmonton concerning effective and viable flood prevention and damage relief measures for Millbourne area residents.

The Community Leagues of North Millbourne and Leefield have endorsed the formation of the Task Force, which has eight members from the community, two from the City of Edmonton, and Councillor Kerry Diotte as ex officio. Mr. Ward emphasized the Task Force will enable more frequent and focused discussions and determine long term solutions. The Task Force will supplement town hall meetings with residents. Ward invited anyone interested in participating in the Task Force to speak with him after the meeting for more information. **A copy of the Terms of Reference is attached.**

Note: The following is a brief summary of the topics covered in the presentation made by Mr. Wyman. The full presentation is available at [www.edmonton.ca/floodprevention](http://www.edmonton.ca/floodprevention) (click on Public Consultations)

- The July 2012 storms were severe events that overwhelmed the system.
- The plan of action is find the main causes, review upgrades underway, develop additional viable solutions, obtain funding, and engage the community to implement solutions.
- He reviewed the \$50M in drainage improvement work already done or underway in Mill Woods.
- System upgrade options under consideration:
  - Expand the existing Tweddle Place dry pond along 91 St. This may require a new dry pond on 91 St. in Richfield.

- Remove the berm along 91 St to allow better overland flows to the expanded dry pond. Replace the berm with a noise barrier equal to or better than what exists now.
- An interim measure to provide flood relief this year would be to install culverts through the berm at key locations and upgrade the storm pond inlet structure.
- Build a new dry pond in the Malcolm-Tweddle-Edith Rogers open space. Build a new storm trunk sewer across Michaels Park from 66 St. to the new dry pond.
- Create better overland flow routes and localized hydraulic improvements in Richfield.
- Do new sanitary storage sewer upgrades including more in-line storage and sanitary manhole sealing in all four neighbourhoods.
- Benefits of the improvements include less pooling of surface water, reduced risk of sanitary backups and basement flooding, less property damage, and savings of time, money and inconvenience.
- Next steps:
  - Refine and prioritize upgrades based on impact/benefit and estimate costs.
  - Consult and work with stakeholders on identified land parcels needed for dry ponds.
  - Finalize expanded Flood Prevention Program and present to City Council for funding approval.
  - Continue consulting/informing communities on design and construction matters.

### **Comments and Feedback**

Following the presentations, neighbourhood residents split into three groups for a focused discussion and question and answer period on issues and proposed options that directly impact their neighbourhoods. Following is a summary of each discussion.

#### **Lee Ridge/Richfield**

Generally the group seemed to be open and interested in what was being planned for their areas. They were anxious about what could be done immediately, since summer is quickly approaching. They mentioned this several times and didn't trust that anything will be done before it storms again this year.

They were also focused on the fact that the funding approvals for the projects would not take place until budget deliberations in the fall. This added to the angst that nothing may happen in time for storm events this summer.

A few of the people focused on poor street drainage in front of their homes on Richfield Road and felt that this issue occurred as a direct result of the improper resurfacing of the streets. It was felt this issue had not occurred in the past. Drainage staff committed to pass this information along to City Transportation officials to see what can be done.

There were some questions related to the work that may take place on the 91 St. pond, the culverts in the berm, whether the pond worked or not during the 2012 event, and the soon-to-be-completed double barrel sewer. They were also interested in how the sewer upgrades planned for their area would work. A detailed explanation about these various upgrades was repeated. Most seemed satisfied the upgrades might help when completed.

Some residents were concerned that information regarding their property was not taken into account because they didn't see their "dot" on the map. It was explained the various ways that were used to develop the maps including using information that came from 311, surveys and flow monitors.

The discussion moved from the flooding and property damage issues from the storm, to questions and understanding related to the proposed upgrades, to construction issues when the work is undertaken, to dealing with insurance claims. It was noted that insurance, along with other damage issues, would be discussed by the Task Force.

Drainage Service committed to follow up with a number of people who have specific concerns about their home and street and with a concern expressed that 311 messaging during storm events is frustrating and inefficient. A resident wanted the City to investigate the possibility of using pumping/mechanical system as an interim measure to address flooding in trapped low areas.

### Michaels Park

Before questions began, Drainage staff reviewed the flooding and ponding that had been observed in the neighbourhood and the proposed drainage upgrades specific to Michaels Park. It was noted that the south end of Michaels Park near 66 Street experienced quite a bit of flooding and the two proposed dry ponds would help reduce that flooding. North Michaels Park would be served by a large, in-line storage tunnel set a minimum of 2.5 meters below ground, which would help keep water out of basements.

Like other neighbourhoods, Michaels Park residents were concerned with the speed of improvements. They feared another flood would occur before the improvements could be put into place. Staff reiterated that the City is eager to put in temporary solutions to bridge the gap between now and the completion of the permanent upgrades. Priority for work will be based on what solutions help the most homes the quickest, what manpower resources are available and what budget options are available.

In response to a question, it was noted the number of catch basins will be increased to ensure the upgraded system functions at its proper capacity. There were concerns that water coming from the Mill Woods Golf Course was contributing to flooding. A resident noted flooding occurs every year on 66 St. next to the golf course. Staff indicated that issue will be examined more closely in the future and appropriate measures taken with the advent of the southern expansion of the LRT.

There was a concern the dry ponds may not have enough capacity. It was explained they will be designed based on a maximum estimated volume of water in order not to overflow during major storm events.

The benefit of sealing manholes was questioned and whether it will cause odour issues. Drainage staff noted that sealing the holes reduces the amount of storm water entering the sanitary system which reduces the likelihood of sewage back-ups. Sealed manholes would vent odour through home roof vents, which may cause slight odours during major rain events but reduce flooding.

One resident called for storm water to be directed north, a more natural direction, to the Whitemud Freeway, and another wondered if the sanitary storage tank already near the area of the proposed dry ponds would be affected. Staff explained the sanitary tank and dry ponds are not connected.

### Tweddle Place

Tweddle Place residents had a number of questions and concerns similar to other neighbourhoods. There many questions about where the temporary culverts would be placed, how many there would be and how overland drainage for the street to the culverts would occur. However, there was universal support for the culverts to be inserted through the berm as soon as possible and any other measures that might avert more flooding this summer. Many indicated the City should have emergency cash on hand to do this work and other recommended improvements.

The proposed expansion of the dry pond along 91 St. generated considerable discussion. There were concerns it would not be big enough, collect and drain water fast enough, and have an adequate slope to work properly, as many said it did not do in 2012. Staff noted the pond will be expanded south along 91 St. to maximize the capacity. Some of this capacity will be affected by what residents want. For example, one resident advocated for a bike/walking path to remain after the berm is removed and replaced. Staff noted that this will affect the dimensions of the pond and determine how far south it needs to expand.

A few residents questioned how effective the proposed improvement options might be given they believed Millbourne had a chronic drainage issue that was created by how the neighbourhoods were developed in the first place. The problem they said was underground with the capacity of pipes, not above ground. 89 St. was noted as an example of topography being a chronic problem, where flows come from three different directions. Staff noted they could not go back and correct development issues but only move forward to find remedial solutions that were workable. Many residents wanted the money to be spent on proposed options to be invested in fixing underground issues.

There was some concern that sealing holes in manhole covers would cause more flooding, not less. Other concerns were expressed about cracked/failed catch basins and plugged pipes. They believed this contributed to flooding.

Like other neighbourhoods, residents expressed frustration that chronic flooding caused great difficulties with getting insurance, negatively affected property value and caused financial and emotional hardship. While they appreciated the City's assurances they are taking it seriously, residents wanted solutions now. One person said residents felt like third class citizens and wanted the City to do more to prevent flooding and compensate residents.

A number of residents had other ideas about reducing flood risk. This included:

- Take advantage of wetlands east of 17 St.
- Send water to the golf course and the lake at Jackie Parker Park

- Increase the outlet to the dry pond
- Increase the size of underground pipes
- Build to a 1 in 400 year standard since 1 in 100 happens frequently.
- Take a shorter route for water diversion, sending it north across the Whitemud Freeway to Mill Creek and the river.

### **Updates**

Updates to residents on improvement plans will be provided via direct mail or email for those who attended the meeting and others who are on the stakeholder list. It will also be communicated through the City of Edmonton's website at [www.edmonton.ca/floodprevention](http://www.edmonton.ca/floodprevention). Additional comments or questions may be forwarded to Todd Wyman at 495-1948 [todd.wyman@edmonton.ca](mailto:todd.wyman@edmonton.ca)