

Work Session 4 Minutes

3rd Generation Watershed Planning

Date: December 4, 2008
Location: East Bethel City Hall

In Attendance: Mark Walsh, City of Columbus
Kathy Paavola, City of East Bethel
Leon Mager, City of East Bethel
Marie Holm, Linwood Township
Jamie Schurbon, Anoka Conservation District

Work Session began at 6:00 pm

1. Review of work completed at last work session

- Under priority topic #1, water quality, the goal of 500 feet of shoreline restorations per year was revisited. It was decided that a goal of 3 shoreline restorations per year regardless of size is a more realistic goal.
- Under priority topic #2, septic system compliance, the wording of the first goal was revisited. The goal was to “locate non-compliant systems and provide residents with means to correct the problems including financial or technical assistance.” Members felt that the functioning of the system and its effect on water quality was the focus of this goal, and that changing the wording from “non-compliant” to “non-functioning” better reflected this focus. Further discussion about how to accomplish this goal occurred, but no decisions were made and this topic will be discussed in-depth at a later date.

2. Set vision and goals for remaining priority topics

The WMO Board continued work from the previous meeting setting visions, goals, policies, and actions for their priority topics, including:

PRIORITY TOPIC #4 – Aquatic Plants, Including Invasives

Vision:

- No new infestations of invasive plants in SRWMO lakes.
- Control of existing infestations.
- Aquatic native plants will be viewed as a beneficial part of lakes.

Goals:

- Educate homeowners about differentiating between problem plants and healthy native plants. Target audience not limited to lakeshore, but also includes wetlands and streams.
- Educate lakeshore homeowners on management of native and invasive plants.

- Keep invasive species at a level that minimally affects water recreation and lake ecology.
- Policies:
- MN DNR rules and permitting govern aquatic plant management in public waterbodies.
 - Invasive species should be managed in a manner that is protective of native plants, water quality, and ecological health.
 - The SRWMO supports lake improvement district efforts to manage invasive species.
- Actions:
- Educate lakeshore homeowners about the benefits of native aquatic plants, threat of invasive species, and ecologically-sound and legal lakeshore management.
 - Review proposed state rule changes, as they occur, and comment as appropriate.

PRIORITY TOPIC #5 – Funding

Vision:

- Funding will be adequate to support the priorities in this Plan.

Goals:

- Acquire grants to supplement funding of projects in this Plan.
- Ensure local officials understand the benefits of SRWMO projects and support them.

Policies:

- The SRWMO will seek out donations, grants, and in kind contributions of public and private organizations for plan implementation.

Actions:

- Apply for grants to assist funding projects.
- Annual communication to city councils about SRWMO accomplishments.

PRIORITY TOPIC #6 – Sewers

Vision:

- Cities will accomplish their goals of installing or updating municipal sewer in a way that is beneficial to water quality.

Goals:

- Cities will accomplish their goals toward installing or updating municipal sewer in a way that is beneficial to water quality.

Policies:

- The SRWMO supports municipal efforts to replace septic systems in shoreland areas with municipal sewer, community septic systems, or new or retrofitted individual septic systems. Neighborhoods of concern include Coon Lake Beach Community, the Interlachen neighborhood in the City of Ham Lake on the south shore of Coon Lake, and the neighborhoods immediately west of Martin Lake.

Actions:

- Write letters of support for projects that benefit water quality, as requested by the municipalities.
- Assist in educational efforts, as requested.

PRIORITY TOPIC #7 – Lakeshore Restorations

Vision:

- Intensive shoreline management that is harmful to the lake will not be commonplace on SRWMO lakes.
 - Runoff from most lakeshore properties will be filtered before entering the lake.
- Goals:
- Identify all properties on local lakes that would be good candidates for restorations.
 - 3 shoreland restorations annually.
- Policies (*italicized* are from current SRWMO Plan):
- *Buffer zones of natural vegetation should be maintained around waterbodies for wildlife and water quality.*
 - The SRWMO encourages shoreland restorations on public and private lakeshore properties.
- Actions:
- Maintain a cost share grant program to encourage shoreland restorations and other water quality improvement projects on private property, and promote it annually. Grants shall assist with design and installation of projects that will have public benefits.
 - Educate property owners about the benefits of lakeshore buffers.
 - Create a mailing list of properties that do not have a minimal lakeshore buffers. Contact these homeowners with educational materials and assistance available. Lakes included will be Coon, Fawn, Linwood, Martin, and Typo.

3. Begin review of proposed policies for each priority topic

Schurbon presented a list of possible policies for each priority topic. These included policies from the current SRWMO Plan, the URRWMO Plan, other nearby watershed plans, and some drafted uniquely for the SRWMO goals. Policies for water quality were discussed, resulting in the list below (vision and goals are also provided for background).

PRIORITY TOPIC #1 – Water Quality

Vision:

- Monitor, maintain or improve water quality, depending upon water body.
- No further deterioration of water quality.

Goals:

1. Work toward 20% phosphorus reduction within the SRWMO to help meet the multi-agency 20% reduction goal for the entire Sunrise River watershed.
2. Implement the Martin and Typo Lakes TMDL to work towards the goals set for those lakes.
3. Manage rough fish populations that are affecting water quality.
4. Citizen monitoring of all recreational lakes in order to get residents involved and ensure continuous low cost data collection.
5. Partner with lake associations and lakeshore residents.

Policies: (suggestions from ACD, *italicized* are from current SRWMO Plan):

- *The member municipalities shall maintain or improve overall water quality in all Group I waters and wetlands within the watershed.*
- *The member municipalities shall maintain the general water quality of Group II water and wetlands to ensure their viability for wildlife habitat, aesthetic values and natural water treatment.*

- The SRWMO will use modeling to understand the magnitude of phosphorus reductions needed in order to reach their 20% reduction goal and to track progress toward that goal. Utilization of the SWAT (Soil and Water Assessment Tool)* model being done by the St. Croix Watershed Research Station as part of the US Army Corps of Engineers Sunrise River Study (ongoing in 2008-2010) is preferable. SWAT is a public domain river basin scale model that quantifies the impact of land management practices in large, complex watersheds. Secondly, TMDL models or loading calculations done for the outlet(s) of the SRWMO may be used.
- The SRWMO will estimate pollutant load reductions from each water quality improvement project they complete to track progress toward their 20% phosphorus reduction goal. Such calculations will only be necessary for projects affecting waterways that drain to Group 1 waters, as these are the focus of the 20% reduction goal.
- The SRWMO will monitor Group I waters to detect water quality changes.
- The SRWMO will utilize volunteers, lake associations, and civic groups in its water quality monitoring efforts.
- Water quality data shall be submitted annually to the MPCA's STORET database to ensure consistency and comparability of data.
- The SRWMO will conduct TMDL studies of impaired waters when such projects are a partnership with other agencies and substantial outside funding is secured.
- The SRWMO seeks to control rough fish that affect water quality.
- Planned Unit Developments (PUD's) and conservation development designs are encouraged for parcels containing or adjacent to waterbodies, high quality wetlands, and natural communities.
- Each member municipality will adopt, implement, and enforce ordinances that meet or exceed the standards in this Plan. These include:
 - Erosion and sediment control ordinance.
 - Shoreland ordinance
 - Septic system ordinance
 - Stormwater ordinance
 - Wetland ordinance
- *Development projects and stormwater management plans should incorporate techniques that maximize infiltration of precipitation.*
- Treatment of storm water to NURP (National Urban Runoff Program) guidelines is required prior to storm water discharge to a lake, stream, or wetland and prior to discharge from the site as part of development. The NURP guidelines for the design of storm water treatment basins are detailed in the "standards" portion of this plan. (from URRWMO Plan)
- Erosion from construction projects shall be managed through the MPCA NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) rules, especially the MPCA construction stormwater permit for projects >1 acre.

- The SRWMO requires sweeping of streets with curb and gutter once annually in all areas, and twice annually in priority areas. Priority areas shall be areas that drain directly to water bodies and/or natural wetlands without pretreatment of storm water runoff. Roadside ditches in rural areas will constitute treatment. (from URRWMO Plan)
- The SRWMO will require that member communities inspect storm water treatment basins by 2012 and again at least 5 year intervals. Sump catch basins/manholes shall be inspected every year. Maintenance shall be conducted as necessary. Maintenance activities undertaken by member communities shall be included in the annual report to the SRWMO. (from URRWMO Plan)
- *Discharge of waters from dewatering projects should be through some form of treatment that removes solids and other pollutants, and in a manner that maximizes groundwater recharge without causing damage to public or private properties. (modified from current SRWMO Plan)*
- *The WMO will actively seek enforcement of applicable water quality standards through the appropriate governmental agencies when violations are suspected.*
- The SRWMO aims to work cooperatively with lake associations, the Coon Lake Improvement District, and other agencies that have goals consistent with SRWMO goals.
- The SRWMO will actively communicate with upstream and downstream agencies regarding water quality or quantity issues.

The SRWMO expressed that the development of minimum standards for local ordinances related to water quality (listed above) should be developed with the assistance of a technical advisory committee including staff from member municipalities.

4. Miscellaneous

- SRWMO Board member Kathy Paavola indicated she will likely soon be replaced, probably by East Bethel Mayor Greg Hunter.

Next work session will be Thursday, January 8th at 6:00pm

Work session ended at 8:00 pm

Minutes written by Jamie Schurbon, Anoka Conservation District