

# elm creek

## Watershed Management Commission

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### Regular Meeting Minutes October 9, 2024

**I. CALL TO ORDER.** A meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, October 9, 2024, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Vice Chair Catherine Cesnik.

Present: Bill Walraven, Champlin; Tom Anderson, Corcoran; ~~Doug Baines, Dayton~~; Terry Sharp, Medina; and Catherine Cesnik, Plymouth. Not represented: Dayton, Maple Grove and Rogers.

Also present: Derek Asche, Maple Grove; Erik Megow and Diane Spector, Stantec; Rebecca Carlson, Resilience Resources; Kevin Ellis, Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE); Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Darrel Corazalla, Charles Latia, and Pat Odinge, Maple Grove residents; and Judie Anderson, JASS.

**II. AGENDA.** Motion by Sharp, second by Walraven to approve the agenda as presented. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**III.** Motion by Sharp, second by Walraven to approve the **Minutes of the September 11, 2024, meeting and public hearing.** *Motion carried unanimously.*

**IV.** Motion by Sharp, second by T. Anderson to approve the **October Treasurer's Report and Claims\*** totaling \$35,622.61. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**V. OPEN FORUM.**

**A. High Water in Maple Grove.** Corazalla, Latia, and Odinge were present to discuss opportunities for remediation of high water on their properties potentially caused by development downstream. In the past, they and the City of Maple Grove have asked permission of the church to come onto their property to view the problem and to possibly identify remedial action to resolve this issue. The church has denied them access.

**B.** Asche presented an overview of the **South Fork Rush Creek Stream Restoration project.** The feasibility study to begin this project was completed in December 2021. As of this date, the project is substantially completed, with two more years of vegetative maintenance contemplated. The project is located in northwest Maple Grove and extends just over one mile from 101st Avenue to the confluence with the North Fork Rush Creek

Major issues addressed by the project included altered hydrology and habitat, excess sediment and phosphorus, low dissolved oxygen which resulted in an impairment listing, wasting of stream banks, and invasive species including buckthorn, garlic mustard and reed canary grass.

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RULE D - STORMWATER MANAGEMENT  
RULE E - EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL  
RULE F - FLOODPLAIN ALTERATION

RULE G - WETLAND ALTERATION  
RULE H - BRIDGE AND CULVERT CROSSINGS  
RULE I - BUFFERS

\*indicates enclosure

CHAMPLIN - CORCORAN - DAYTON - MAPLE GROVE - MEDINA - PLYMOUTH - ROGERS

Improvements undertaken to address these issues included erosion repair/stabilization, toe wood, floodplain reconnected, enhanced pollinator habitat, riffles, bridge/trail access, and invasive species management. Pictures of each of these improvements were included in the presentation. Stantec was the design engineer, Sunram Construction was the contractor. Funding partners included the City of Maple Grove (\$1,373,347); the Elm Creek Commission (\$861,660); a Board of Water and Soil Resources' WBIF Grant (\$314,153); and a DNR Conservation Partners grant (\$39,620). Estimated project cost was \$2,500,000.

## VI. PROJECT REVIEWS.

**A. 2024-016 Sundance 11th Addition, Dayton.\*** The site is located within the Sundance Greens development north of Rush Creek Parkway and west of Fernbrook Lane North and west/south of east/west portion of where 113th Avenue North tees into 11th Avenue North. The applicant is proposing an extension of 12th Avenue North to the west from its existing temporary cul-du-sac west of Niagara Lane to a terminus loop, construction of a stormwater pond and construction of ten homes on the end loop of 12th Avenue North in the existing development. Stormwater requirements were permitted previously, so only erosion control was considered for this review, but the project was reviewed for consistency with prior permitted conditions. A complete application was received May 14, 2024. The initial 60-day decision period per MN Statute 15.99 expired July 13, 2024. This review is after-the-fact; the applicant did meet all the requirements. This project was granted administrative approval by Staff.

**B. 2024-024 Dental Associates, Maple Grove.\*** This is a 2.5-acre site located at 9400 Upland Lane North, northeast of the CR30 and I-94 intersection. The proposed site is a new 2.5-acre development for a Dental Associates building and parking on a currently vacant parcel. The project includes mass grading, utilities, onsite volume control and offsite regional ponding. The project will disturb 2.9-acres and create 1.50-acres of new impervious surfaces. A finding of fact memo is included in the October meeting packet. Staff recommends approval of the project with two standard conditions -- escrow reconciliation and an O&M Plan for the underground filtration system approved by the City. Motion by Cesnik second by T. Anderson to approve this project with those conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

## VII. OLD BUSINESS.

## VIII. NEW BUSINESS.

## IX. FOURTH GENERATION PLAN.

The next step in working through the Fourth Generation Plan update is to establish priorities and initial goals and strategies.

**A. Staff-proposed Fourth Generation Plan priorities, goals and strategies.** To assist in setting Fourth Generation Plan priorities, goals and strategies, Staff reviewed those established in the Third Generation Plan and the success in achieving those goals.

**Priority 1.** Protect, maintain, and improve the water quality and ecological integrity of the water and natural resources within the watersheds and the downstream receiving waters.

Three goals were determined to meet this priority, and four strategies were identified to achieve those goals.

**Priority 2.** Reduce stormwater runoff rates and volumes to limit flood risk, protect conveyance systems, protect surficial groundwater, and reduce or mitigate impacts that have already occurred. Three goals were determined to meet this second priority, and five strategies were identified to achieve those goals.

**Priority 3.** Educate and engage all stakeholders in the watershed on surface water issues and opportunities. Two goals and four strategies were related to this priority.

**Priority 4.** Anticipate and proactively work to withstand adverse impacts from changing land use/cover and environmental and climate conditions. A single goal and four strategies were associated with the fourth priority.

The Commission discussed and accepted Staff’s recommended Fourth Generation priorities. The specific goals and strategies for each priority are outlined in Staff’s October 2, 2024, memo.\*

**B. Problems or issues identified during Plan development. (Priority issues are in bold.)**

Problem or Issue	Discussion
1. Numerous impairments on the primary streams and several lakes.	Meeting state water quality and biotic integrity standards will require significant and likely costly load reductions from both urban and rural sources as well as internal lake and stream actions.
<b>2. Land is transitioning from lightly-developed and agricultural to more densely developed at higher imperviousness.</b>	Land use change can create new pollutant loading and increase the volume and rate of stormwater runoff.
3. Erosion and sedimentation issues continue on Elm Creek and the other streams and conveyances in the watershed.	Stream instability can exacerbate other water quality issues in the streams and receiving waters.
<b>4. New impairments have been identified, including chloride on Elm Creek and South Fork Rush Creek.</b>	The new impairments raise the priority for education and outreach regarding chloride.
5. Need to increase the number and distribution of agricultural BMPs in the watershed.	Modeling completed for the WRAPS indicates agricultural land uses are a source of nutrient, sediment, and bacteria loading in lakes and streams in the watershed.
6. Need to develop an effective mechanism to achieve voluntary adoption of BMPs	Pursue options such as identifying key persons to model best practices, providing financial incentives, and partnering with other agencies such as Hennepin County and Extension.

\*indicates enclosure

Problem or Issue	Discussion
<b>7. Need to expand activities for education and outreach to increase knowledge about water resources issues, create behavioral change.</b>	Need to improve the visibility of the Commission, its responsibilities and achievements. Build a reputation as a leader in water quality.
<b>8. Need for a climate vulnerability assessment.</b>	State climate data shows an increase in intensity and depth of precipitation events.

[T. Anderson departed 1:03 p.m.]

**C. Resilience/Adaptation.\***

The twin issues of ongoing development/land use change and changing precipitation and other climate patterns have the potential to negatively impact water resources in the watershed. The Commission is concerned about new, increased volumes and rate of runoff generated by land use conversion; those impacts will be magnified as precipitation patterns continue to change and become more intense. As part of the Fourth Generation Plan the Commissioners have already identified their desire to think proactively about those impacts and how they could be mitigated or prevented entirely through projects, practices, and adaptive planning.

“Resilience and adaptation” are very broad topics that can quickly overwhelm the planning process. Staff’s October 2 memo presents some planning options for what to include in the Fourth Gen Plan, and what to include as a “plan to plan.” This watershed plan update can be used to specify what the cities should address in their Local Stormwater Management Plans as they develop their 2050 Comp Plans in accordance with Met Council requirements.

Resiliency planning in the watershed plan will likely include some H & H modeling and GIS exercises to help identify vulnerable and high-risk areas, ultimately helping to develop a framework of how cities can incorporate the data into their own local water plans and land use planning. This planning framework and analysis will ultimately help us identify opportunities in the developing cities that will benefit the waters and infrastructure in downstream, developed communities and help us plan projects and policies that have been successful elsewhere in the watershed, such as:

1. Stream restoration projects (*example: South Fork Rush Creek Restoration*)
2. Regional Ponding (*example: various areas in Maple Grove*)
3. Wetland Restoration and Banking (*example: Bottema wetland restoration in Corcoran*)
4. Preservation/Conservation Areas and Greenways (*example: Northwest Greenway in Plymouth*)
5. Assist agricultural producers to increase their organic carbon content and reduce erosion (*various examples through our outreach with Hennepin County*)

\*indicates enclosure

The Commission can incorporate some of the initiatives and practices outlined in Minnesota’s Climate Action Framework, such as:

1. Promote carbon sequestration and storage in forested lands, grasslands, and wetlands
2. Promote capture and re-use for irrigation
3. Retrofit or construct ‘smart’ regional ponds
4. Look for areas to reconnect and expand our existing floodplain
5. Look for opportunities for greenways or bike trails along existing waterways
6. Plan for ‘Stormwater Parks’ near existing waterways
7. Quantitate, promote, and fund land conservation and preservation
8. Explore other nature-based solutions to reduce reliance on gray infrastructure and increase our biotic habitats

Discussion centered around incentivizing ways to get developers to think about resilience and adaptation, especially on hard-to-develop properties. Next: flesh out risk analysis.

#### X. GRANT OPPORTUNITIES.

Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) grants are being used to offer **shoreline restoration workshops on Fish Lake**, and to provide participants with site assessments and a planting stipend. The goal is over two years to achieve installation of 20 new BMPs on Fish Lake. A second round of workshops and projects will be undertaken in 2025. This is also an opportunity to find larger restoration projects that could address significantly eroded sites contributing excess sediment and nutrients to the lake, and sites that would be good candidates for near-shore habitat enhancements. Metro Blooms and Hennepin County staff are providing technical assistance for the projects, and funding is being assembled from WBIF, other grants, county, homeowner, and potentially city sources. Some larger worthy projects may be good candidates for cost participation from the Commission’s Partnership Cost Share program.

Metro Blooms and County staff have made site consultations on nine sites on Fish Lake. Two sites are expected to be only some maintenance and infill planting. Five sites would benefit from adding or extending shoreline buffers and upland rain gardens and other plantings. The remaining two sites are potentially full shoreline restorations.

These sites have also been reviewed by Maple Grove staff. Before embarking on more formal design, the partnership requests that the Commission consider encumbering \$25,000 from the Partnership Cost Share program. When site design is complete, a better implementation cost can be estimated, and Staff will have a better idea of the potential funding gap. After design and project funding needs are completed, the City will submit a formal application. Meanwhile, acting to encumber those funds will reserve them for that use.

Motion by Cesnik, second by Sharp to encumber \$25,000 from the partnership cost share fund for these restorations. *Motion carried unanimously.*

## XI. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.

### A. Grace Barcelow's October Update.

1. **Released [media kit](#).** This media kit includes information to help residents and facilities reduce their reliance on chlorides for winter maintenance. Residents and property owners are encouraged to adopt best management practices in the winter season and attend MPCA Smart Salting trainings. In the kit there are two sets of articles and social media posts for TWO separate audiences (property management and residents).

2. **Hosted Fish Lake and Eagle Lake workshops.** At the Elm Creek workshop we had 13 attendees. At the Shingle Creek workshop we had 12 attendees. Metro Blooms staff and I have completed 15 consultations and are working toward designing plans for properties this winter, notably deciding what properties may require more funding as opportunities for larger/more impactful water quality projects have been identified.

3. Continued work on **Southgate Apartment complex project**. We obtained a second budget proposal from Metro Blooms to complete project designs and installations over the next year and we are working towards finalizing these plans.

4. Continued editing outreach materials for the **BCWMC Parker's Lake Chloride Management project**.

5. **Rachel Dunlap**, the Green Corps member that will be supporting WMWA work joined us on September 23. Rachel is pivoting from a diverse background in the arts, humanities, and community organizing. She has most recently worked as an illustrator to support conservation efforts and environmental literacy, leading to collaborations with Yellowstone National Park, the Audubon Society, the National Parks Conservation Association, and the Beaver Institute. She hopes to glean new insights into possible paths in the fields of conservation, restoration, biomimicry, and ecology during her service year.

#### **What work will be happening before the November WMWA meeting?**

6. Continue outreach to involve middle school classrooms in **Adopt-a-Drain K12 program** starting January 2025. We have used all Hennepin County funding for adding classrooms to this program for 2024 and will be pivoting our approach to getting classrooms signed up to join the program when more funding is available in January. Richfield Middle School was recently signed up.

7. Continue conversations with Metro Blooms, watershed, and Maple Grove staff to begin developing designs for conservation practices to be installed on properties in the Fish Lake and Eagle Lake watersheds.

8. Begin outreach for BCWMC project.

9. Restart outreach for the **chloride reduction campaign targeting faith-based facilities** in WMWA territory. If any partners have contacts or recommendations for facilities to conduct outreach to, please send them my way!

10. Continue work to complete designs for the Southgate Apartment project in Bloomington.

11. Write **November news article**. This will be a larger news article published in local newspapers, similar to the [column](#) published this spring.

B. **Watershed PREP**. Joanna Sorenson, the WMWA Educator, has scheduled 14 classroom visits so far.

C. **West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA)** will meet via Zoom at 8:30 a.m., November 12, 2024.

## XII. COMMUNICATIONS.

A. **Staff Report.\*** The Staff report provides updates on the development projects currently under review by Staff. The projects listed in the table on page 9 of these minutes are discussed in the October 2, 2024, report.

### B. Hennepin County Staff Report.\*

1. **Welcome Ranch, Dayton.** Landowners/operators worked with NRCS staff to submit a 2025 EQIP application. Landowners are interested in designing a gutter system over the winter to be installed in early spring. Hennepin County will continue to work with landowners through the contracting process to install gutters, heavy use area protections and grazing management best management practices in early 2025.

2. **Stotts 1A/1B/TOHWW.** Hennepin County staff met with landowner to discuss pending projects. Staff are currently working with an engineer to review plans and obtain sign off for finalized waterway repairs. Landowner will begin construction on waterway repairs and complete the five grassed waterways on-site after harvest of the current crop onsite.

Landowner approved plans for WASCOD and waterway on the western edge of the property. He expressed interest in constructing these practices in summer 2025, leaving time over the winter to finalize the mobilization and implementation plan.

3. **City of Corcoran.** County staff developed a plan to replant 27 acres of fallow farmland with a native mesic tallgrass prairie seed mix. Staff are currently finalizing and approving the plans with feedback from the city on what aspects of maintenance could be performed by the public works department, and which would require an ecological services contractor. Using RUSLE2, staff were able to determine that this project would reduce 2.78 tons of sediment and 4.48 pounds of phosphorus of runoff annually in the South Fork Rush Creek subwatershed. Staff will finalize and approve plans and move into the contracting phase at the direction of the City.

4. **Christian Settling Basin.** Conditions on site are currently dry enough, and ideal for construction. Hennepin County staff met with the contractor to discuss mobilization and implementation and to stake out the site for construction. Contractor is aiming for installation to occur in mid-October before a hard freeze occurs.

5. **Van Asten Cover Crop and Manure Bunker.** Hennepin County staff performed a site visit with NRCS staff. Landowner is currently finalizing plans for the farm which will include several best management practices that will be funded through the Hennepin County Cost Share program and potentially EQIP. Staff determined that barn gutters would be helpful to prevent erosion around the barn area. Positioning for the manure bunker is close to being finalized in order to provide the best opportunities for usage and management.

Hennepin County staff also inspected the warm season cover crop that was planted in the year. Staff noted excellent diversity of crops and that there are several active benefits including weed suppression and breaking up of compacted soils previously observed on site. Landowner will be planting pasture in 2025.

6. The **Project Funding Table** has been updated to reflect activity that occurred last month.

7. The last three pages of the report describe other **County programming**.

**XIII. OTHER BUSINESS.**

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Judie A. Anderson  
Recording Secretary

JAA:tim

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Project No.	Project Name		Project No.	Project Name
2014-015	Rogers Drive Extension.		2023-023	NORSQ, Maple Grove.
2016-005	Ravinia Wetland Bank Plan, Corcoran.		2023-025	Rogers Mixed Use Improvement.
2017-050W	E Mayers Wetland/floodplain viola, Corc		2023-029	Dayton Field 4th Addition.
2018-046	Graco, Rogers.		2023-030	Woodland Hill of Corcoran.
2020-009	Stetler Barn, Medina.		2024-002	The Meadows Park, Plymouth.
2020-017	Meadow View Townhomes, Medina.		2024-003	Rogers Apartments.
2020-033	Weston Woods, Medina.		2024-004	Dayton River Road Turn Lane.
			2024-005	Rush Hollow North, Maple Grove.
2021-029	Tri-Care Grocery / Retail, Maple Grove.		2024-006	Sunram Construction, Corcoran.
2021-034	BAPS Hindu Temple, Medina.		2024-007	Eagle Brook Church, Plymouth.
			2024-009	Heritage Christian Academy, Maple Grove.
2022-006	Hamel Townhomes, Medina.		2024-010	Corcoran Storage II.
2022-011	Arrowhead Drive Turn Lane Expn, Medina.		2024-011	Jaeger-Jordan Ditch Stabilization, Dayton.
2022-017	City Center Drive, Corcoran.		2024-012	Dayton Interchange.
2022-018	Big Woods, Rogers.		2024-013	Red Barn Pet Retreat, Corcoran.
2022-022	Cook Lake Highlands, Corcoran.		2024-014	Schmidt Woods Park, Plymouth.
2022-040	Kariniemi Meadows, Corcoran.		2024-015	Hennessy Grove, Maple Grove.
2022-043	Meander Park and Boardwalk, Medina.		2024-017	Pioneer Trail Industrial Park, Corcoran.
			2024-018	Kwik Trip 1187, Dayton.
2023-001	Chankahda Trail Recon Phase 2, Plymouth.		2024-019	Silver Buckle, Plymouth.
2023-009	Magnifi Financial, Maple Grove.		2024-020	Woodland Hills, Corcoran.
2023-015	So Fork Rush Creek Evanswood, M Grove		2024-021	Heather Meadows, Third Addn, Corcoran.
2023-020	Dunkirk Square, Maple Grove		2024-022	Hope Meadows Townhomes,. Corcoran.
2023-022	Shores of Sylvan Lake, Rogers.		2024-023	Upward Acres, Corcoran.

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**CHAMPLIN - CORCORAN - DAYTON - MAPLE GROVE - MEDINA - PLYMOUTH - ROGERS**