Appendix D. Summary of Comments made during public meeting outlining the findings and recommendations if the DO Study Report for Salt Creek.

Meeting 1. 7.30 PM Oak Brook Village Hall. 03.18.2009. Number of attendees 44

Comments: (*Italicized are hosts answers*)

Public Comments
Two solutions were proposed, the second was not clear.

1. *Bridging or ramping*
2. *Partial Breach - water not over the top of the dam unless auxiliary pumping*

Will there be a concrete apron installed with the breaching option?

There would be a natural scour pool. There would not be an apron installed, perhaps there would be buttressing of the dam.

Scour pool is a bad term; it implies sediment in my backyard.

Erosion cannot increase under the regulations.

What was the cost of dredging when completed previously?

$500,000-600,000 in 1995 dollars

Can aeration be created any other way?

Bridging, riffles and artificial aeration

Can riffles be used upstream of the dam?

No, a change in elevation is needed; it can't be done in a flooded area

What would the bridging option look like?

The crest would go down, ramp created on the downstream side.

Would there be water flowing over the dam?

Yes, but part of the dam would have to be removed to achieve the DO standard, the fall would be smaller than at present

What would it look like upstream in the bridging option?

Look at diagram – pink shows where the water level would be if the crest was decreased by one foot. The aqua shows two feet. The yellow shows three feet. The channel will narrow with the bridging option.

Committee member is disappointed with the context, the colors are bad, the slides are different, the committee met four times and they had not seen this graphic. Gates were put in at the dam to make it a flood control structure. When the gates are open the upstream channel recedes to 35 feet wide, can't see it from Spring Road. Vegetation will impede the flow of water when flooding.

Under no circumstances will any part of this project make flooding worse. Trees slowing down flow more than offset by increased storage? Bath tub example. The reservoir will be empty so additional capacity is created.

If the sediment decomposing take DO wont dredging help?

Sediment is constantly being added and even a fine layer will trigger oxygen consumption. No re-aeration in pool.

Treatment plants add sediment at storm time.

Treatment plants have constant flows. If we do activity and do not meet the DO goal, IEPA will come back and say do more, this is not an attempt to draw attention away from POTWs

There was a request for three dimensional models.

That would be cost prohibitive and would not add to the understanding of the problems or potential solutions.

How does the mill race continue to flow if the dam is taken down three feet? If the dewatering gates are open the raceway is dry.

There are a number of ways to accomplish this, how it will be accomplished exactly hasn't been decided. Needs to be discussed with mill operators. It can, and should be, engineered to continue to flow.

Are there any threatened or endangered species at the site? If there are no threatened and endangered species, it's not that critical of a problem.

No, there have not been any threatened or endangered species identified on site because the habitat and water chemistry are so degraded that they can not support threatened or endangered species. The habitat will not support even common species.

A microphone should be on hand.

There will be one at the March 31st meeting.

Concerned because the character of the mill area will be changed, lose the beauty of the area – artists, photographers, families come. There are 20,000 visitors a year.

This is the only place where we have a historic dam that dates back to the 1830s.

> *The Clean Water Act does not allow for exemptions, we are looking for a balance between the history and water quality improvements.*

How can the historic integrity of the site be maintained if water does not flow over the dam?

Where is EPA? What can we do? Who do we contact beyond this meeting?

> *IEPA's solution is to go to treatment plants, but that costs money and won't meet the stated environmental goals. We would still have impairment on the waterway even under optimal plant upgrades. We have two options, dam modification and aeration. We discarded aeration because it doesn't solve the habitat problems and it is expensive. Aeration scenarios were examined, four different options that resulted in the following 1) very expensive equipment 2) costly maintenance 3) no one to maintain and operate 4) where to locate the equipment. If ever treatment plant puts out drinking water quality effluent, the problem is not solved.*

What about the two bridges above the dam?

> *It was clarified that the question was referring to additional dams shown above Graue Mill. Oak Meadows is owned by the Forest Preserve District and will be addressed – likely removed. The Old Oak Brook Dam is not causing a major problem. We have taken the worst problem on the waterway and made it a priority project. Then we will monitor to see if the problem is solved.*

Are we going to destroy Graue Mill so we can take of one mile of Salt Creek?

All indicators show that area at Graue Mill is one of the largest water quality problems on Salt Creek.

I live downstream, what will happen to the water? There's quite a bit of flooding now.

> *The dam creates no storage so both options will cause no increase in flooding. The DuPage County Ordinance does not allow for an increase in flooding.*

Do dewatering gates exist at the dam?

> *Yes.*

Can we open the bridge and see if it improves DO?

It was noted that the question refers to the dewatering gates, not a bridge. The Forest Preserve District operates the gates and has said that they are insufficient to dewater the impoundment. They clog with woody debris. The Forest Preserve District does not want to routinely clean the gates. The dewatering gates have approximately half the capacity of what is being proposed. Option should be examined more closely and had come up at the DRSCW working committee on DO

Both options for altering Graue Mill dam will not preserve the historical aspect. The aesethics will be destroyed. Wedding parties are there every weekend. Painters paint the waterfall. The water flowing over the dam is an aeration system. He's appalled that we have a government that is worried about marginal affects.

To us, and a number of other groups such issues are not small but essential. Environmental agencies will sue if the solutions do not have enough of an environmental effect.

Commentor has been on the Salt Creek Committee. She was the Vice Chair of the DuPage County Stormwater Commission. She was around for the flood of 1987. The DuPage County Stormwater Committee is the only one licensed by the Corps of Engineers to operate on their behalf. They would lose that if they allowed flooding to be exacerbated downstream. It's important for residents to negotiate out a good answer. IEPA answers to USEPA, they hold all the cards. We need to collaborate to come up with a reasonable solution.

In Person Comments
If water flow in raceway can be maintained project look like fair compromises

Presenter knows nothing of history and is biased

It is understands that area upstream is essentially dead (devoid of life)

Previous skepticism of project largely assuaged

Very interesting presentation

Maintaining flow in race way is key

Comment Box:

Fishable/swimmable?

It won't help to alleviate the sediment problems or remove the dams if the dumping of raw sewage continues in Fullersburg Woods from the Hinsdale Sanitary Sewers (Flagg Creek POTW).

Meeting 2. 7.30 PM Oak Brook Village Hall. 03.31.2009. Number of attendees 60

Comments:

Speaker from the Dullersburg Homeowners Association 550 homes, personal observations. Moved here with wife 58 years ago. His home was built in 1874, one of the only structures here that is that old including the dam, the York grocery store. He thinks this is heritage vs. fish. He doesn't know where the swimming concept came from. He is an environmentalist, but you have to draw the line somewhere. Oakbrook is the jewel of DuPage County. It has eight historical buildings. He doesn't know the distinction between a creek or a river. The creek is an essential part of the character of Oakbrook. The vegetation will grow up and encroach and the creek will disappear visually. Are we here to support the fish downstream? Solution is to reexamine dredging in phases and discovery. There is no doubt that we could get grants. If dredging doesn't meet the criteria perhaps breaching. He wants to start group. Has to be a compromise. Last report said Salt Creek meets the DO standard and he thought DO problem was from Addison Creek. Certainly wouldn't want this to wind up in litigation, but don't rule it out.

What body has ultimate authority? Who would do project

> *This is convoluted in Illinois. Property lines go out to the middle of Salt Creek in Elmhurst and would have to get property rights. IEPA is responsible for water quality. IDNR is responsible for fish and animals. In this case there is one property owner – the Forest Preserve District, project can not happen without their consent. What will happen is that the Workgroup will do the data collection, hire a design consultant through grants, hand over the project to DuPage County Stormwater because they have the resources and knowledge to implement the project.*

What is the authority of the Village of Oak Brook?

> *Answer by Village Trustee - the Village has no authority. If the residents say that don't want any change the Village can make a formal statement to the Forest Preserve District, the Workgroup, the IEPA.*

Wouldn't the work require a construction permit from the Village because it's within the Village limits?

> *Not aware of how permitting would function*

What agency is requiring the Forest Preserve District to do this?

> *IEPA is requiring water quality improvements. The best way to advance to those improvements is to reduce the size of the impoundment.*

Last meeting, it was indicated another dam upstream of Graue Mill would be removed or breached. Wouldn't it be prudent to do that first?

We are trying to get the biggest bang for our buck. We are discussing removing the dam at Oak Meadows with Forest Preserve District. Old Oak Brook dam is not that big of a DO problem because it has a small impoundment.

What about flooding, salt, parking lot runoff?

NPDES Phase II addresses stormwater. The program is in its 6th year. It changes how stormwater is treated. Silt fence, grassy swales, are Best Management Practices (BMPs), which are required to be implemented in communities to treat stormwater runoff. Stormwater is the second biggest problem in Salt Creek. The Workgroup has been very active in chloride education and is also looking at stormwater.

Russ Strand from Robin Hood Ranch: Report says Salt Creek is an effluent dominated stream, what does that mean?

Salt Creek is dominated, approximately 85%, by wastewater effluent at low flow conditions, (when it's not raining). This starts at the Eagen plant in Schaumburg and goes all the way to Elmhurst.

What is a combined sewer overflow (CSO)?

Every community has a sewer collection system. A CSO is storm and sanitary sewers in one system. Elmhurst and Oak Brook have separate sanitary sewers which go to the treatment plant. The storm sewer goes directly to the river. In a CSO, all flow goes to the plant and is fully treated for up to the 10 year storm event. For the 10 year storm event and above, the flow bypasses part of the treatment plant, after it is treated through gravity and separation. A 10 year event or greater is very diluted.

What is a sanitary sewer overflow (SSO)? Flagg Creek POTW example

An SSO should never happen, it's a violation of the Clean Water Act. It happens when the sanitary collection system is overwhelmed. It consists of very diluted material, but it is illegal.

He has picked up material in Fullersburg Woods. Syringes, etc.

This information was shared with the Forest Preserve District and Flagg Creek Sanitary District after the last meeting. It could be many things, such as a sewer blockage or collapse.

He'd like to see these things fixed before we talk about taking out the dam.

Agreed

Do you have any flexibility or judgment in this issue? The fact that you want to turn this into a swamp is offensive to me. Why are we returning this is the mosquitoes? You used models, the global warming model from 20 years ago are wrong. Models can say whatever you want them to say.

The Clean Water Act does not have exemptions. Our flexibility is how we can implement these things. We've thought about merging what was done at the Kent dam with breaching, that was a flexible approach.

On mosquitoes the situation is quite the reverse, mosquitoes love low DO and still water – the impoundment is more desirable than a moving river. Also in free flowing conditions more fish are available to consume mosquito larvae. Yes models can say what you want it to say. They have alos proven powerful tools for predicting events. On top of the model, we have three years of continuous DO monitoring. All other parameters were directly sampled – habitat, fish, macro invertebrates. Once again the goal is water quality not a certain action.

How much does the impoundment have to be reduced by to meet minimum DO standard?

Look at the display boards in the back of the room. This is the kind of flexibility we have – if we reduce the hydraulic head of the dam by 2.5 feet, the river will draw down by 3 feet, not sure what the area of the impoundment would be, but this would meet the DO standard.

Can residents participate in the committee?

Tom Richardson said that he is a resident of Oak Brook and a member of the committee, as wells Joe Rush from the Fullersburg Woods Association, Karen Bushy from Graue Mill, and another Oak Brook resident.

So far the Workgroup has confirmed that there is a water quality problem. We're not rushing to provide any solutions, there is much more time for community input.

Has there been any consideration of the change in property values? Where the bridge goes over the creek, the creek is 90 feet wide and will be reduced to 20-40 feet. The creek is hard to see. Vegetation and trees will further hide it.

The Forest Preserve District will be a major partner and they will have to look at the management plan. Will provide information on property values

Everyone keeps saying this is not a dam issue, it is a dam issue. The dam has been there since the 1850's. The perspective given is always from the south side of the creek looking away from the mill, the mill would sit without any water around it and would look very unnatural. This is human habitat and we need to look at the human side of the story. Partial removal will destroy what the dam is. The mill was a site on the underground railroad.

The dam was built to control water, to regulate flow. If you open up the dam, how will you control erosion down stream?

The dam was not built for flood control or erosion control. Flood levels and erosion cannot change under the current permitting system. The dam was built as a hydraulic battery.

It was said before that the dewatering gates were not enough, that 60 feet of the dam would have to be removed and that the dewatering gates are only 25-30 feet. We don't need an all or nothing approach. We should strategically place a bunch of rocks upstream ad open the gates from Monday through Thursday. Close the gates for the weekend.

This maybe done as a demonstration and to gather further data. In the long term, it is not feasible because the capacity is not there and the Forest Preserve District does not want to clean the dewatering gates frequently.

The Forest Preserve District works for the taxpayers.
What about the ducks, geese and the one heron?

The habitat will bring more birds. We currently have puddle ducks. There will be more herons because they are fishermen.

If the stream is effluent dominated, what are our native fish species?

16th and Spring Road is the location of the first native flow. Upstream of that it was stormwater. The Des Plaines has always had a constant flow. The fish migrated upstream.

Did you do BOD measurements with normal flow.

No.

26 villages are contributing (to the Workgroup), what is the total amount of the bill (for the Salt Creek DO study)?

$300,000 for all the studies on Salt Creek. .

Proposal to dredge and let the creek go down, open the flood gates and when the sludge dries out use front loaders to put it on Forest Preserve District land. Dredge down to clay. It will be cheaper. A million dollars will be used, there are lots of millionaires in this room, about half. We're not talking about that much money.

My understanding is that the mill would be shut down part of the time, and the wheel would only turn part of the time. When I come under the bridge in my costume it's like Brigadoon. Kids do change in their heads. It's a wonderful place for schools; they come to Robert Crowne and Graue Mill. Those who work there love it.

The wheel will turn under all scenarios.

Comment Box:

This is a public issue. Water quality affects everyone. Oak Brook residents' views of the creek as it is now are not a concern. It's not just fish – it's also habitat. All over the U.S. dam removal is occurring – in every case all aspects of the water are improving. Oak Brook Village has no legal authority over the removal or change in the dam.

I have been a life-long fisherman, and an avid Salt Creek fisherman for the past half-decade and what bothers me is how many local residents claim this dam removal issue is about "Heritage vs. Fish". I wholeheartedly disagree. I take pride in being able to catch big Pike and Walleyes from my own backyard rather than travel to some foreign or out of

state destination…It is about removing Salt Creek's nickname as "sewer ditch" and cleaning up our own backyards.

Remember, Salt Creek was once incredibly impaired and unusable a few decades ago with no fish …clean-up and restoration is still not over yet. The more we sit and wait on this dam at Graue Mill to continue crumbling and killing further aquatic life at its upstream and downstream sections, the more power it will take to make significant improvements to the creek's overall water quality and environmental sustainability.