

CITY OF OLNEY  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
JULY 15, 2013

AGENDA #1 “CALL TO ORDER” The July 15, 2013 special meeting of the Olney City Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Olney City Hall located at 300 S. Whittle Avenue, Olney, Illinois, with Mayor Ray Vaughn presiding.

AGENDA #2 “ROLL CALL” The following Council members were present: John McLaughlin, Barb Thomas, Brad Brown, Bob Ferguson and Ray Vaughn. Also present were City Manager Larry Taylor, City Treasurer Chuck Sanders, City Engineer Charleston and City Clerk Belinda Henton.

AGENDA #3 “DISCUSSION: BOONE STREET DRAINAGE PROJECT” Mayor Vaughn explained the intent of this meeting was to bring the Council and residents up to speed as to the history, past remediation, proposed plan and deadlines for the proposed Boone Street drainage project.

City Engineer Charleston explained the history of the Boone Street drainage area. Discussion about the flooding issues started in 2002. The Corps of Engineers did a site visit in 2002. The City purchased the property at the corner of Walnut and Scott and demolished the apartment building at that location. Small culverts were removed on this property which were restricting the water flow. The City then went across the street on Walnut and cleaned out the ditch from Walnut to the railroad. An additional culvert was put under the railroad which doubled the water flow capacity. Next the City purchased the property at the corner of Morgan and Vine and demolished that house. That house had been built over the culvert and was causing restrictions. The concrete U channel was then built in this area to improve flow.

The Corps of Engineers submitted a report in 2005 based on their site visit. Mr. Charleston pointed out in the report the Corps of Engineers indicated that based upon preliminary hydraulic modeling, the removal of the apartment building and culvert under the structure on Walnut Street likely provided the greatest improvement to the overall flooding problems. Since this report was received, the City has studied their suggestions and made a plan for improvements. All the culverts on Silver, Morgan, Boone, Fair, and Walnut were sized and measured. The maximum water flow at the Walnut Street culvert was calculated. The maximum flow upstream could not exceed this calculation so the size of each culvert upstream increased in size, but not to exceed the Walnut Street capacity. This calculation actually doubled the size of each culvert and doubled the quantity of water flow without creating any problems at Walnut Street.

Mayor Vaughn questioned a map which was included in the Corps of Engineers study. This map indicates that the water that ends up in the Boone Street area actually comes from the

B & O Railroad between Elliott and East and flows north across Main Street and continues to the Boone Street area. Originally, Mayor Vaughn thought the Boone Street problems were caused by development east and north of town, but that water stays north of Summit Street and does not make it into the watershed until it reaches the railroad. This is the location where Boone Street and Summit meet.

Mr. Charleston pointed out the amount of water south of Elm is insignificant between Elliott and East because it falls to the south.

When the analysis was done to double the size of the culverts between Morgan and Boone, Mayor Vaughn questioned was that done as a solution to alleviate the flooding problem or the limit of the engineered capacity. Mr. Charleston indicated it was the limit of the hydraulic capacity of the Walnut Street culvert. Mayor Vaughn clarified if the capacity is doubled between Boone and Walnut, everything west of Walnut can still handle the volume without causing problems downstream. Mr. Charleston confirmed that fact and explained during a 100-year flood the City Park would probably flood, but water would be restricted at Route 130.

Mayor Vaughn asked when was the first time the residents of the Boone Street area experienced flooding. John Rohr indicated his family has lived in this area for 42 years, and the first flooding occurred in 1995 and again in 2002, 2008 and 2009.

Mayor Vaughn commented that there is nothing he has observed explaining why this area is flooding now and not 30 years ago. This is not an area of Olney that has experienced new development.

Mr. Rohr explained the homes were all there, but in 1995 the Richland County Housing Authority replaced the open ditch with a large culvert between Fair and their western property line.

Mayor Vaughn clarified that the 2005 Corps of Engineer's report specified certain things that should be done. The City has already completed several items suggested in the report.

At the Council's request, Mr. Charleston prepared a map showing the intended result from the water flow remediation outlined in the grant proposal.

Mr. Charleston's map was displayed and he explained it illustrated all of the homes with their first floor elevations. The map indicated the elevation of water for 100, 50, 25, 10 and 5 year storms with the proposed improvements. The audience was allowed to view the map as Mr. Charleston explained how the various storms would affect the different areas.

Based on pictures taken in 2002, that storm exceeded the 100 year storm levels.

Mr. Charleston explained the proposed changes would not prevent flooding under the right conditions.

Councilman Ferguson asked if the improvements would allow the water to get away faster. Mr. Charleston answered yes, but it will start backing up at Route 130. The idea was to maximize the Walnut Street culvert.

Based on the first floor elevations of the houses, Councilman Ferguson asked how many houses would have the first floor flooded during a 50 or 100-year storm. Mr. Charleston answered one house, but all basements would experience flooding.

Councilman Ferguson noted in the past there has been consideration for a storm water detention pond behind the hospital. He questioned how much water is coming from that area that contributes to the problem. Mr. Charleston explained the water from the hospital empties on the north side of the church on the east side of Silver Street and then comes to the corner of Morgan and Pine. There was consideration for a detention pond on the north side of the church. This water is not the major cause of flooding, but would help.

Jamie Coleman asked if there is any particular spot that restricts water flow more than another. Mr. Charleston commented all of the culverts restrict during heavy rains. Mr. Coleman commented that the Fair Street culvert is cracked.

Mayor Vaughn commented as indicated on the map, recurring flooding is going to happen every time there is a 4" rain within a short period of time. Mr. Charleston replied there will definitely be flooding with a 50 and 100-year storm. Mr. Charleston explained a 100-year storm is actually a 1% chance of occurring, a 50-year storm has a 2% chance of occurring.

Mr. Charleston explained the proposed plan includes replacing the existing culvert at Boone with twice the size, the same would be done at Fair, a 7' diameter culvert will be added to the Richland County Housing Authority culvert, the ditch will be cleaned from the Richland County Housing property west to Walnut, and additional concrete channel will be built from Boone Street west because there are two homes close to the channel that need erosion protection.

Mr. Taylor reported the construction estimate in March 2013 for this project was \$435,745. The grant is for \$290,000. These estimates do not include construction engineering. Mr. Charleston explained this estimate has been increased because there are water and sewer lines running through the Boone Street culvert. To provide continuous service to the residents during construction, a temporary pumping station will have to be installed. The same thing will also have to be done on Fair Street. Service lines for all of these residences will have to be re-tapped. Considering this additional work, Mr. Charleston estimated the total project cost at \$500,000.

If this proposed plan is not carried out, Councilman Ferguson asked how long before something will have to be done with the Fair and Boone Street culverts. Mr. Charleston explained the Fair Street culvert is in the worst condition and will probably need attention first.

Councilman Brown questioned the cost of replacing the Fair Street culvert. Mr. Charleston estimated \$50,000-100,000 for each culvert.

Jamie Coleman brought a video of the 2002 flood and suggested that everyone watch it to see the volume of water that went through their neighborhood. Mayor Vaughn explained the problem is not caused by just the amount of rain that is received, but the length of time in which it is received.

Mayor Vaughn reiterated if all of these improvements are completed, the residents are still going to get flooded. According to the Corps of Engineers' numbers, during a 10-year storm, the flooding will be reduced by only 4". The 100, 50, and 25 year floods will not be affected by improvements.

Mayor Vaughn pointed out that the Corps of Engineers' report suggested cleaning out the sediment in the Boone Street culvert. Because the watershed is small and highly developed, a detention basin was deemed cost prohibitive due to the lack of a suitable location. A program of decreasing connected impervious areas, adding green space, disconnecting gutters and storm sewers from the flow within the upper watershed may be an alternative worth considering. Mayor Vaughn commented that the Corps of Engineers' numbers and Mr. Charleston's numbers all point to the same thing, the City is just putting a bandaid on the problem.

To prevent flooding in this area would cost millions. Mr. Charleston explained unless the Illinois Department of Transportation increases the culvert under Route 130, the City can only work back from the City Park to help the flooding situation. There are many considerations when doing so. The City Park is a natural detention area.

Rita Zeisset suggested buying the houses in the Boone Street area so no one will get hurt. She owns the house at 709 N. Morgan and cannot rent or sell the house. She needs to get the money out of her house on Morgan Street. She said there were days the plumbing could not be used when it rained.

Mayor Vaughn questioned the deadline for the grant. Mr. Taylor replied the project has to be under contract by the end of September. To be under contract the project has to be bid and all the other formalities completed. The Council needs to make a decision whether to pursue the project or not by the next Council meeting on July 22.

Russell Hammond told the Council he cannot sell his house. Mayor Vaughn understood, but he wanted to be told how this problem is the City's fault. Mr. Hammond's area was developed in the 1930's through the 1960's with few changes since. Mayor Vaughn commented

if God decides to drop 5", but was interrupted by Mrs. Zeisset. She would not allow Mayor Vaughn to continue so he told her the meeting could be ended right now. Mrs. Zeisset said that would be fine. Mayor Vaughn tried to explain his thought process on this matter. He would be very sympathetic if the City had created this problem. He does not believe the City created this problem, at least not in the last 30 years. The City has done a number of things to alleviate the problem. The Council has to make a decision about this project because there is a deadline, and that was the reason for this special meeting. He wanted to make sure everybody had the same information, heard the same discussion and had the opportunity to speak. At the next meeting, the Council will make a decision whether they are going to go forward with this project.

Councilman Ferguson would like to see what the cost for street and culvert repair will be over the next 5-20 years if this project is not approved. He believed some of this work will be needed no matter what. He did not know why the City would not want to accept the grant and proceed with the project to help pay for these repairs and also provide some other benefits.

Councilman Ferguson also wanted to know the impact of a storm water detention area on Silver Street. Mr. Charleston did not believe it would have much effect.

Councilwoman Thomas thought it would help to clean the ditch west of Boone Street. Mr. Charleston said it would help some, but nothing significant.

John Rohr thought it would be likely the Boone and Fair culverts will need to be replaced and since the grant funds are available, they should be utilized.

Councilwoman Thomas questioned the size of the culvert planned for the Richland County Housing Authority property. Mr. Charleston explained the plan includes an additional 7' diameter culvert will be installed. The current culvert is not restricting flow, but the Fair Street culvert is smaller in diameter and restricts the flow. If the Fair Street culvert and the Boone Street culverts are increased, the existing culvert at the Richland County Housing Authority would not handle the flow.

Mayor Vaughn questioned the life expectancy of the Boone and Fair Street culverts. If the culverts are due to be replaced, this is the most opportune time to discuss that possibility.

Councilman Brown questioned if City crews could install the culverts. Both Mr. Taylor and Mr. Charleston answered no.

John Rohr noted there is erosion on the north side of the U channel. Mr. Taylor replied the City has the concrete cloth available, but it has not been completed pending action by the Council for the rest of the project and whether the concrete cloth is appropriate in this location.

Mr. Charleston indicated that he wanted to watch Mr. Coleman's video of the 2002 flood.

Glenn Coan questioned the placement of the additional 7' culvert behind the Richland County Housing Authority. Mr. Charleston indicated the proposed 7' culvert would be placed south of the existing culvert, but would stay on the Richland County Housing Authority's property.

John Rohr hoped everyone takes in consideration the residents have been around a long time dealing with the situation.

Since there is a good chance that this area is going to flood again even after work is completed, Councilwoman Thomas asked what the residents will do then. Mr. Hammond suggested a detention pond.

Kathy Coleman noted that sewage flows out of the manholes during heavy rains. She pointed out this is the City's responsibility to maintain the sewers so sewage does not leak into other waterways. This situation happened again recently. Mr. Taylor reported that the Sewer Department has done some cleaning out, but they are not sure what is causing the problem other than it may be too much infiltration.

John Rohr questioned placing a storm water detention area on the property where the Silver Street School was located. Mr. Charleston commented there is not enough area at that location. As stated earlier in the meeting, the Corps of Engineers indicated a detention area was not feasible due to the lack of a suitable location.

Mayor Vaughn announced the Boone Street drainage project will be on the Council agenda for July 22, 2013. Additional information will be available that the Council will share concerning the time frame and cost for culvert replacement. Mayor Vaughn told the audience he appreciated everyone attending the meeting. He understood this was a volatile issue and a long-standing issue, but a decision will be made one way or another next Monday night.

AGENDA #4 "ADJOURN" Councilman Brown moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Ferguson. A unanimous voice vote was received. The meeting of the City Council adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Belinda C. Henton  
City Clerk