

CITY OF VALDOSTA- STORMWATER COMMITTEE (SWC)

Meeting No. 4- Level of Service Discussion

February 23, 2010 5:30 PM

City Hall Annex – Multi-Purpose Room

List of Attendees

- Elliot Norwood- District 1
- Angela Wall- Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC)
- Dan Deaver- Engineer
- Elton Cowart- District 6
- Ginny Holton- Community
- Danny Parkinson- District 4
- Sonny Vickers- District 3 Councilman
- Von Shipman- City of Valdosta- Engineer
- Henry Hicks- City of Valdosta- Director of Utilities
- Emily Davenport- City of Valdosta- Stormwater Superintendent
- Jason Scarpate- City of Valdosta- Assistant Director of Utilities
- Kelly Bell- City of Valdosta- Environmental Technician
- Steve Sedgwick- CDM
- Patrick Victor- CDM
- José Maria Guzman- CDM
- Alan Sanderson- District 5
- Sandeep Gulati- CDM
- Connie Ledbetter- Community
- Sementha Mathews- City of Valdosta- Public Information Officer
- Danny Rountree- Contractor
- Matt Phelps for Jeff Lovell- At Large/Engineer
- Kevin Tolliver- City of Valdosta- Assistant City Engineer

Absent

- Can Denizman- VSU
- Rodney Flucas- District 2
- Henry Calhoun- Community
- Danny Sermons- Community

Summary

The fourth SWC meeting focused on the specific stormwater factors that are relevant in Valdosta, which can be summarized as follows:

1. Tail water condition of the Withlacoochee River, which is beyond City's control
2. Aging stormwater infrastructure in some areas
3. Significant erosion and sediment load from stream banks that requires immediate action
4. Older urban areas need retrofit to control stormwater

Based on such factors, CDM proposed a draft level of service to initiate the discussion among the committee members. The level of service focused on roadways and structures. Arterial roads are critical evacuation routes, and provide quick access for emergency vehicles; most of these roads are already owned and maintained by the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT), which has a level of service for 50 year/24 hour duration storm. Collector roads feed arterial roads, and need to be passable under frequent storms; for this reason, CDM proposes to consider a 10 year/24 hour duration storm, as the level of service benchmark for collector roads. Local roads are smaller in size, traffic count, and feed collector and arterial roads. For local roads it can be acceptable to flood under the 5 year/24 hour storm.

New homes and building structures within the City limits should be built above the 100 year flood elevation. Currently the only reference elevation criteria comes from the FEMA flood maps, but soon the City will have a network of streams with more information available.

The following were specific topics of discussion among the committee members:

- Operation and Maintenance of Stormwater Ponds: A committee member asked the group who was maintaining the existing stormwater ponds. Mrs. Davenport explained that currently there are about 305 stormwater ponds within the City, of which only 24 are maintained by the City. Assuming the annual average cost for a typical stormwater pond is about \$5,000, if the City were to take over all existing ponds, the total maintenance cost for the ponds alone would be over \$1.5 million, which is more than the entire budget for the City's stormwater operation and maintenance program. Mr. Victor explained that some communities have adopted the ponds only for a fraction of time, and once they are stable and in good condition, they can be turned over to the land owner; he also explained that the majority of the communities tend to enforce the maintenance by the home owner, through ordinance.
- Home Owner Association Responsibilities: The committee brought up the issue of most home owners not being aware of any responsibilities that they have in terms of operation and maintenance. Mr. Parkinson also mentioned that in many cases after the first or second owner of the property, new buyers end up owning a home for which they don't know there are deed restrictions and maintenance responsibilities.
- Education of Home Owners: Along the previous topics, the group agreed on the fact that educating home owners about their responsibilities is a key element in achieving a successful citywide management of stormwater. In some cases it might be necessary to enforce regulations through deed restrictions, liens of property, or other legal mechanisms.
- Collector Roads Level of Service: Mr. Shipman argued that many of the collector roads might be reclassified in the upcoming future. For this reason it might be more practical to set a close level of service between collector and arterial roads. CDM will do a cursory evaluation to determine

what is the impact of changing the collector road level of service from 10-year to 50-year and present the results to the SWC.

- Water Quality Criteria: Currently the State of Georgia requires 1.2 inches of treatment volume as the criteria to meet water quality standards. Since Valdosta is experiencing frequent intense storms, another element brought up by the committee for consideration might be a more strict criteria within the City limits. One possibility is to establish controls, by which new development must retain within the property enough stormwater volume to match the pre-development condition. The common criteria for such controls are the 25 year/24 hour flow rate, or the total 25yr/24 hr volume discharged. Both methods translate into a higher level of protection for downstream areas, and increased water quality benefits.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday March 23, 2010 at 5:30PM at the same location, where we will discuss the SWC recommendation to City Council. If you have any questions please contact Emily Davenport at 229-259-3592.