

Eastern Lake County News



Madison working on plans to end flooding woes

by MARIAN
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MADISON VILLAGE – Comments from a resident opened the door for an extended overview of the flooding problems in the village.

Resident and village business owner, Kathy Lynn, expressed her concerns regarding flooding. She believed the village had received estimates for studies on the problems in 2009, but nothing had been done.

“Are we just waiting to get an estimate?” she said.

Administrator Alyson Moritz said she believed the engineer was soon to present two estimates for studies; one for the whole village and one for just south of the railroad tracks.

“At that point it would be up to council to determine how to fund the project and if they want to go forward with the project,” Moritz said.

It was pointed out the village, in 2009, had only sought out companies with the qualifications to create a plan and no estimates had been given.

“This was a serious topic of discussion this morning,” said Councilman John Hamercheck of the Utilities Committee meeting.

“I just want to make sure that this doesn’t go out the window again,” Lynn said. “There are problems and it’s not just at my house. It’s our business; it’s several places around this village and it

needs to be taken care of.”

Another Madison Village resident spoke in agreement with Lynn, noting she had problems during the Feb. 28 flood that she had not had before.

Hamercheck proceeded with his report from the Utilities Committee meeting. He said one topic of discussion was providing service to the new middle school. That would be a problem because the OEPA had reservations about the village’s ability to provide service when it had so much inflow and infiltration (I and D), which is storm water that enters the sanitary sewer system and then overtaxes the wastewater treatment plant. (The issues are more fully covered in the story, “Council raises water and sewer rates” by Melissa Shank.)

Moritz confirmed that after a lengthy meeting with the OEPA May 10, there was some hope that the OEPA might allow the village to provide the services after all.

Hamercheck then addressed the discussion concerning the village’s Comprehensive Storm Water Management Plan.

“We began taking steps by speaking with our fiscal officer to find out if we had funding actually available to our sanitary sewer fund, in addition to our general fund,” he said, adding legal counsel was also consulted to ensure proper procedures were followed.

Committee member, Councilman Mark Vest,

noted some issues that needed to be addressed were leaks in sanitary sewer manhole covers and the below ground “chimneys” that permitted storm water to enter the sanitary sewer system. Fixing the cover seals and lining the chimneys would help.

“We agree we need to get serious and address the issues. We’re not sure where the money is coming from; we talked about some options and how to do that,” said Councilman Donald Bartlett, another committee member. “We’re still looking for input from our financial officer.”

He said it was the committee’s intent to share the scope of the problems and what direction they planned to take, but more information was necessary before they proceeded.

Dan Gerson, assistant engineer, reiterated how cracks in the brick-lined chimneys and broken seals around the covers allowed a lot of storm water infiltration. As of yet, they do not know all of the ones that are leaking, but that is a priority.

He said the reason storm water should not enter the sanitary sewer system is because they do not want to treat storm water (because it adds cost) and the additional waters overwhelm the treatment plant.

Another proposal is to use flow monitors to measure water coming in manholes, but the decision needs to be made on whether to rent or

buy them.

At the present time, the village does have about \$50,000 available to use for these projects, including a study.

Hamercheck said the treatment plant has what is called “activated sludge” which is part of the treatment process. When too much storm water comes into the sanitary system, it washes that out and adds to plant costs because it is “extremely expensive to replace.”

Engineer Dave McCallops further explained storm water lacks the bacteria sewage contains which helps with the treatment process. When the storm water content is high, then sewage that has only been partially treated can end up being discharged from the plant.

During a recent meeting with OEPA, village officials stressed that they were working on a plan to deal not only with the sanitary sewer system, but also storm water which is causing flooding for various reasons.

“The best thing to do, from the village perspective, is to attack the inflow and infiltration, and get it out of the system before the OEPA decides they are going to force us to get it out of the system,” McCallops said.

There will be more meetings in the future to continue to make progress with a plan to take appropriate action to remedy the problems.

(Melissa Shank contributed to this story.)