

**MINUTES**  
**WINNETKA VILLAGE COUNCIL STUDY SESSION**

**May 10, 2016**

(Approved: June 7, 2016)

A record of a legally convened meeting of the Council of the Village of Winnetka, which was held in the Village Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday, May 10, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

- 1) Call to Order. President Pro Tem Krucks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present: Trustees Andrew Cripe, William Krucks, Penny Lanphier, Scott Myers, Christopher Rintz and Kristin Ziv. Absent: President Gene Greable. Also in attendance: Village Manager Robert Bahan, Assistant to the Village Manager Megan Pierce, Public Works Director Steve Saunders, Assistant Public Works Director Jim Bernahl and approximately 40 persons in the audience.

President Pro Tem Krucks explained tonight's meeting is a Study Session which is an informal meeting of the Village Council. No action can or will be taken tonight.

- 2) Stormwater Alternatives Evaluation – Council Update.

Director Saunders stated the purpose of tonight's meeting is not to discuss the details but rather the outcomes of the public engagement process. Mr. Saunders covered the scope of the study as well as the three parts of the public participation phase—awareness, exploration and vision. He continued that having completed three significant phases of public participation, Strand outlined a Concept Stormwater Vision that meets the Village's stated flood-control objectives. Strand's cost estimate for the four-phase Vision is \$57.7 million. Mr. Saunders stated that with the motto of leaving "no stone unturned," there are parts of the Vision that need refinement, further discussion with stakeholders and landholders, and more definition before decisions can be made. He reiterated the Village's goal is to build as much consensus as possible around the Vision. He then addressed the current status of stormwater alternatives and summarized some of the key issues.

Mr. Saunders noted further engagement with the Winnetka Park District and community is necessary to assess the use of Crow Island Woods as a recreated wetland for the Skokie River.

Winnetka Park District Executive Director Bob Smith extended his support for this issue and reiterated the need for the process to be publically vetted. Mr. Smith commented that there are more meetings in which the public can continue to be involved.

Mr. Saunders stated discussions with the Cook County Forest Preserve District will continue. These discussions will address their land use policy and the Village maintaining native tree species among other items. Currently, the Forest Preserve District's land use policy prohibits its land to be used for stormwater management with the exception of the Skokie Lagoons which were built for stormwater management in the 1930s.

New Trier High School is willing to be a partner and consider the use of Duke Childs Field if they can effectively swap land and not lose athletic field space. District 36 and the Park District have been very cooperative recognizing this is not only a Village issue, but a community-wide one. Discussion points have included the possibility of relocating stormwater under the existing field site as well as relocating the fields to the current landfill site. Filtration for the water needs to be addressed and the Winnetka Park District Golf Course was suggested as a potential site with natural filtration. Mr. Saunders reported the

field area between Skokie and Washburn Schools is being explored, as is a large scale conveyance storm sewer in the area of Sunset Road.

President Pro Tem Krucks commended Director Saunders on his report and thanked both the Park District and School Board for their cooperation.

The Council then directed questions to Mr. Saunders concerning the proposed alternatives.

Mark Shubak from Strand Associates noted he is pleased with the feedback he has received from the Cook County Forest Preserve District. He continued that a plan involving Crow Island Woods would need to include treating the water that is redirected there to improve the habitat and water quality on the property.

Trustee Rintz asked if the '100 year storm' engineering standard could be further probed and perhaps a different standard with associated risks and costs entertained.

Mr. Shubak replied that Strand can explore the tradeoffs from that standard to assist the Council in making a decision.

President Pro Tem Krucks called on members of the public in attendance to come forward and address the Council.

Jeff Franzen, 290 Euclid Avenue. Mr. Franzen stated his opposition to using the Crow Island Woods as an above ground wetland and requested a matrix of solutions be created.

Richard Kates, Winnetka. Mr. Kates noted the importance of community members verbalizing their concerns and then allowing experts to craft a solution.

Peter Mone, 1035 Sunset Road. Mr. Mone expressed his desire for Crow Island Woods to remain a forest.

Bill Fiedler, 111 Sunset Road. Mr. Fiedler expressed his passion for Crow Island Woods and noted his belief that a matrix of alternatives will be helpful for public information.

Christy Morris, Winnetka. Ms. Morris noted her children attend Crow Island School and utilize the Woods as an outdoor learning area.

Debbie Ross, 929 Tower Road. Ms. Ross remarked that Crow Island Woods is not being taken away, it is being improved. She also stated it is defeatist to build homes in flood plains and expect them not to flood.

A resident on Euclid Avenue expressed his displeasure with Village leadership. He continued that he found the proposed solutions to be flawed and believes residents were not appropriately informed that Crow Island Woods is being considered as a possible stormwater site.

Trustee Myers responded to this comment detailing the many mediums used to notify and engage residents about the stormwater management study process, and he reminded residents of their responsibility to stay informed.

A resident on Apple Tree Road thanked Village staff and Council members for their work on this important issue. He discouraged engaging the Lakota group at a cost of \$72,000 to study Crow Island Woods when there is a number of the population that is opposed to the use of this land.

Harold Nations, 181 Apple Tree Road. Mr. Nations asked if there are other beneficiaries of Winnetka's stormwater management that may wish to be a party to the planning process. He

also requested Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle be engaged in the discussion with the Forest Preserve District.

Steve Lesnik, 1122 Sunset Road. Mr. Lesnik remarked on the cost of an event that may occur once in a hundred years versus the number of people who use Crow Island Woods daily. He noted many golf courses accept stormwater for their municipalities and serve as a natural filtration system. He continued that Winnetka may be obliged to maintain the Woods in perpetuity if bargaining with the Cook County Forest Preserve District and may need to consider how much the Village is willing to bargain.

Kim Hack, 1099 Sunset Road. Ms. Hack noted that due to its narrowness, digging box culverts for a conveyance system would be very difficult on Sunset Road.

President Pro Tem Krucks asked Director Saunders to clarify why the 100 year storm has been established as the engineering standard for this project.

Director Saunders explained he can't speak to the impetus of 100 years as the engineering standard but continued there is a 1% chance of this type of storm occurring. He equated the probability of these storm occurrences to that of rolling *Yahtzee* in the dice game. *Yahtzee* has a probability score of 1/512. He continued that Winnetka has had three storms of 100 year scale since 2008.

Mark Shubak of Strand Associates added that many more homes flood from storms of smaller scale.

Chris Crone, 1205 Sunset Road. Mr. Crone noted creative landscaping and tree planting has helped mitigate stormwaters as have requiring newly constructed homes to have a tank built underneath in other cities.

Gwen Trindel, Winnetka. Ms. Trindel discouraged the use of the landfill as a replacement area for Duke Childs Field.

Bill Savino, 1098 Mount Pleasant. Mr. Savino noted the Forest Preserve is formed to preserve the forest.

Trustee Cripe clarified that Council members are learning about this process at the same time as members of the public are. He reassured that Crow Island Woods will be thoughtfully addressed.

Trustee Myers reaffirmed Trustee Cripe's comments and reinforced the transparency of the process.

President Pro Tem Krucks thanked members of the public for speaking and asked Council members for their thoughts on the proposed next steps.

The Council agreed that Strand should continue to engage with the Cook County Forest Preserve District, and that they should prepare a scope for further analysis with New Trier High School concerning Duke Childs Field stopping short of preparing a proposal. With respect to Crow Island Woods, the Council decided against asking Strand to prepare a scope and proposal for further analysis or consideration at this time, and also not to prepare a scope and proposal to perform additional detail engineering concerning stormwater conveyance along Sunset Road. The Council supported Strand's further engagement with School District 36 as well as tasked them with the development of a matrix of conceptual options including estimated costs and flood reduction performance.

President Pro Tem Krucks explained the June 7<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting will either address One Winnetka or stormwater but not both due to the significance of both items.

Village Manager Robert Bahan directed Director Saunders and Strand to proceed with preparations to present at the June 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- 3) Public Comment: None.
- 4) Closed Session. None
- 5) Adjournment. Trustee Cripe, seconded by Trustee Lanphier, moved to adjourn the meeting. By voice vote, the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

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Deputy Clerk