Lynnwood & Elmwood Communities Consultation on Flood Prevention
Held April 5, 2005 at Lynnwood Hall

Consultation Summary

Attendance: 85

Main presenter: Douwe Vanderwel, Senior Engineer & Flood Prevention Project Leader for Ward 1, Drainage Services, City of Edmonton

Presentation

Following introductions, Mr. Vanderwel reviewed the drainage engineering findings for the two communities and discussed options for reducing the risk of flooding in the future. He noted that the findings show better flood prevention requires action on the part of both the City and homeowners. System improvements for Lynnwood and Elmwood under consideration by Drainage Services include:

- Building two dry ponds in Elmwood and diverting surface stormwater to the ponds. The water would be held there until the underground system has the capacity to drain it away.
- Building new and upgraded sanitary sewer lines to increase capacity and relieve system pressure.
- Building new and upgraded storm sewer lines to increase capacity and relieve system pressure.
- Moving the connection of several catch basins from the sanitary sewer trunk to the storm sewer system.
- Re-grading selected streets to improve surface drainage and direct more water to Lynnwood Ravine. The Ravine's discharge outlet would be enlarged to increase the flow of water to the North Saskatchewan River.

The estimated cost of implementing these options is $4.9 million. In addition, Drainage Services would like to twin the Quesnell Storm Trunk to remove a bottleneck and increase capacity. This would cost $5.8 million. Homeowners were asked to improve their own on-site drainage as much as possible. Options include:

- Better lot grading to ensure surface water gets away from the house.
- Repairing and maintaining good eavestroughs and downspouts.
- Having downspout extensions that channel water at least six feet away from the house. If an extension is not possible, to drain onto a splash pad.
- Installing and/or maintaining a backwater prevention valve.
- Installing, if appropriate for the situation, a sump pump.

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Input from Residents

People at the meeting had many questions and comments about the presented options. Several people mentioned that their back lanes were higher than their lots, causing water to spill from lanes onto properties. It was suggested that these lanes be curbed or re-graded to allow water to channel to lanes and down to catch basins.

Severe pooling of water in the field west of Hillcrest School and in triangular parks in some Lynnwood back alleys lead two residents to suggest the locations of the proposed dry ponds be reconsidered or catch basins be added to drain this water away. One person suggested Drainage Services consider underground retention tanks to contain excess water. There was a general desire for more information about the finished look and recreation use of dry ponds.

Some residents were concerned that diverting more surface water to the Lynnwood Ravine would cause environmental damage or increase the flood risk to adjacent homes. It was noted that the ravine was full during the July 2004 storms and more water volume in a similar situation may cause its banks to overflow.

A few people wanted to know when the options would be implemented and how it would tie in with local road construction work. One person suggested concrete plans could not be developed without completing engineering studies of surrounding neighbourhoods that impact Lynnwood and Elmwood, such as Lymburn, Aldergrove and Thorncliffe.

There was some confusion about the intent of moving the connection of several catch basins from the sanitary sewer trunk to the storm sewer system. One person asked about the size and condition of the Quesnell Trunk. Another person suggested that sewer lines be cleaned prior to summer rains to remove road silt and garbage, as this would increase the effective capacity of pipes.

One person questioned Drainage Services statistics regarding the number of homes that were flooded. He shared that according to insurance companies about 90% of people were flooded in his neighbourhood.

<u>Homeowner Options</u>

Several questions were asked about the installation of backwater valves and the City's subsidy program. There was a concern that people without backwater valves would get water overflow from homes that had a valve in place. To reduce this risk, it was suggested the subsidy be made available to all homeowners. One person advocated for a City program that would provide incentives to homeowners to disconnect downspouts from the sanitary sewer system.

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Meeting participants supported a proposed flood prevention education program for homeowners.

Next Steps

Input from communities and other stakeholders regarding system options will be incorporated into a more detailed implementation plan. This plan will be discussed with communities before being presented to City Council in the fall. Mr. Vanderwel noted a number of funding options were being considered, including federal and provincial support. Implementation plan timing will depend on funding and the capacity to do the work. Community residents will be notified of the next consultation. Additional comments or questions may be forwarded to Mr. Vanderwel at 496-5553 or douwe.vanderwel@edmonton.ca

Other Key Contacts

Call 496-5539 to be added to the flood prevention program mailing list or to receive future updates and notices by e-mail. Call the 24-hour drainage hotline at 496-1717 if there is a drainage or sewer problem on your property or on your street.

More information about drainage services and the flood prevention program is available at www.edmonton.ca/floodprevention