

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Monday – November 9, 2020 – 6:30 P.M.
Five Points Banquet Room
360 N. Wilmore, Washington, IL

Mayor Manier called the regular Committee of the Whole meeting of November 9, 2020 to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present (remotely): Aldermen Adams, Blundy, Brownfield, Butler, Cobb, Dingleline, Stevens and Yoder
City Administrator Forsythe, Police Chief McCoy, City Attorney Keith Braskich, and
City Clerk Brod

Also Present: Deputy Police Chief Jeff Stevens, Finance Director Baxter, P & D Director Oliphant, City
Engineer Carr, Public Works Director Schone and City Treasurer Dingleline

Absent: None

MINUTES

1. *Aldermen wishing to be heard:* None at this time
2. *Citizens wishing to be heard:* City Clerk Brod read a letter provided by Steve Daggs regarding solutions to flooding and flash flooding along the creek (Tributary 2) that runs through Washington Estates Subdivision. It is attached to these minutes.
3. *Approval of Minutes:* Alderman Brownfield moved and Alderman Cobb seconded to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

4. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

- A. *Chamber of Commerce Update* – Chamber representative, Wendy Wagner provided that members of the Committee were given a WCOC Snapshot, highlighting current Chamber information. She shared that the Chamber has been in contact with about 200 businesses, keeping members engaged. The total number of members is 255 and total Washington based members is 227. Tres Rojas is hosting a business after hours including plenty of space to socially distance and asked for masks to be worn indoors. New joining members are: Order to Eat, Oasis VR on Spring Creek Road, Kimberly Hanely with Remax/Traders and Mad Dog Cleaning Services. Mayor Manier and Ms. Wagner shared that the Taste of Washington went well. It included raffle baskets and drawings. The Brickhouse won the award for best appetizer and dessert, Mariachi's won the award for best drink and Cummins Restaurant won the award for best entre with their tenderloin. Alderman Stevens asked if any business have received money during the last few months. Ms. Wagner shared that some have been awarded but have not yet received the deposit. Ms. Wagner shared that she spoke to Representative Darren Lahood about it and received the news that it is in a holding pattern. WCOC is trying to help discover new grant ideas to help local businesses. Mayor Manier shared that he knows three business who have received a Payroll Protection Loan about two or three months ago. Mayor Manier noted the statement by the Governor that business who do not abide by the state mandate will have to repay the Business Interruption Grant. Mayor Manier shared that they are moving forward with the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast but it will be virtual this year. Ms. Wagner shared that they are working on the details and they will be shared soon.
- B. *Construction Standards* – City Engineer Dennis Carr shared a document containing the new adjustments, marked in red. He explained that adjusting a few of the construction measurements slightly, will give workers a little more leeway when executing a construction project. He addressed the thickness of concrete on ADA compliant ramps and asphalt. Some of the adjustments involve including rock or aggregate under paved surfaces to keep the clay or soil under the sidewalks from washing away. He shared an adjustment of some items from asphalt to concrete and clarified that asphalt prices change drastically and it is an inferior

product compared to concrete. He explained that it would be more consistent to use concrete in some areas and there are more companies who work with concrete which will allow for competitive bidding. Mr. Carr went on to share that some adjustments are needed to pavement widths to possibly help avoid cracking of larger sections. Alderman Brownfield clarified that these adjustments are being shared to see if we want to move forward with using some of the materials. Mr. Carr agreed and explained that the changes are also to make language/callouts consistent and will also specify certain construction techniques and methods that will help contractors to not cut corners. Mr. Carr explained that IDOT now requires a wider curb from 4' to 6'. Alderman Brownfield asked if we need a brick street standard due to the brick streets in the City. Mr. Carr would like to address that when Holland is completed and use it as an example. Alderman Brownfield would like to eventually review a standard for repairing a brick street since patching with asphalt or concrete is not the best way to address a repair. Mr. Carr agreed. Mayor Manier agreed, due to how a patch can change the waterflow on a brick street. Mr. Carr stated that he is ready to move forward if the Committee feels the need to move forward. Alderman Butler asked for clarification on the lateral sewers under the street and explained that the policy language needs to be cleaned up due to the possibility of hitting field tile on older streets. Alderman Brownfield said the current policy states that once the main is tapped into, it is then turned over to the homeowner. Mr. Brownfield also shared that this will make homeowners expectations clear. Mayor Manier would like to examine what the existing standard is to see how our older sections might be affected by this. Mr. Forsythe reminded all that there is a coverage for homeowners if a break happens in an older section. Mr. Forsythe explained the difficulties in creating a single policy for an area that has different ages of pipe. Alderman Butler and Mr. Forsythe discussed which policies, if any, cover pipes that run under the streets or if they are the responsibility of the homeowners. Alderman Dingleline shared that the Franklin Street Project determined that the City was responsible from the curb to the manhole and homeowner responsible from their house to the curb and included a mandatory clean out but the language was never written that would make this a policy. It was noted that this issue also happened on Bondurant. Mr. Forsyth suggested more evaluation that could reduce exposure to both the resident and the City. Alderman Stevens stated that this was talked about last year and Mr. Forsythe was supposed to come back with options at which Mr. Forsythe reminded the committee that the City had lost their engineer at the time. Alderman Dingleline agreed that making this language clear, will avoid issues or anger from homeowners because they will know what to expect. Alderman Brownfield shared that this will also help staff when communicating to residents. Mr. Forsythe suggested that Mr. Carr move forward with the suggestions and bring a final form for Council to review however, there will be further discussion and options for property owner's maintenance.

- C. Flood Mitigation Grant BRIC – Jon Oliphant, shared that in response to the request to seek stormwater utility funding, the City is exploring FEMA's grant program, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities which is funded on a 75/25 basis. The pre-application was submitted to IEMA, however, he noted that the pre-application does not commit us to using the grant. Mr. Oliphant provided maps and estimates for the very localized flooding with some documentation going back to the 1980s. Mr. Oliphant shared that the project is estimated at about 1.857 million dollars, which includes the granting of up to forty easements on the tributary. It is the staff's hope that most or all residents would grant the easements without any financial obligation to help reduce the project costs but the current estimate includes the easement costs. When this was discussed at the Public Works meeting, they discussed that residents need to help with the local share of costs. Letters were given to all the homeowners explaining the costs and to gain feedback regarding the creation of an SSA which would result in \$9,375.00 to be paid by the homeowners. Only three letters were returned back to the City, showing no one in favor of this project. Mayor Manier shared that he had four residents reach out to him and that they are not interested and do not have any issues with the flooding. He went on to explain that improvements have made that have helped, but feels that the issues affect Fayette more than Elgin. Alderman Stevens asked about the map and the flooding shown south of RT24 and if the homes to the south are affected. Alderman Stevens also asked about; the basin that is designed to satisfy the 100-year flood plain and why it hasn't been there to begin with, if we could do one step at a time, and if IDOT's redo of the culvert under RT24 would slow water flow. It was noted that there is a basin that runs behind Kingsbury that the owner dug back out. Mr. Oliphant shared that anytime there is a new development, there is a requirement for on-sight detention and the basin on the Bearce property addresses the water from upstream. This basin was evaluated in 2015. Dennis Carr clarified that this a 100-year storm plain, not a 100-year flood plain and that basins are designed to slow the release of water in the area. He went on to explain that there would be enough storage in a basin to catch the water to slow a flash flooding affect but not stop the water from flowing. Alderman Stevens shared that she has changed her mind about the City being involved in private property and now feels the City should help pay for it. Mr. Forsythe explained that part of the challenge is that Washington Estates was developed in the county and later annexed into the City. When the subdivision was developed, we had no control over developed water flow.

Also, standards have changed due to environmental changes. Mayor Manier noted that the affected area of Washington Estates sits very low and that some rainfall has brought water over the bridge on Gillman but no water in the detention basin. Alderman Stevens shared that there is also a flooding issue that occurred in Trails Edge. Mr. Forsythe explained that Storm Water Management has been brought to Council asking for funding mechanism but Council hasn't provided any direction except that they don't want to raise taxes. With Council and homeowners not willing to pay for the improvements to stormwater, the City doesn't have a way to create a stormwater program. Mr. Forsythe wants to evaluate the stormwater needs for the whole City but we have no funding to do so. Alderman Brownfield explained that the homeowners are willing to help maintain the area but the need is to slow the water down. Alderman Stevens stated the answer appears to be the basin for the 100-year storm to slow the water down instead of a "multi-million dollar something" that also affects the box culvert. Dennis Carr clarified that the City can start wherever Council would like them to start and that a detention pond at this location would only help one block of homes and wonders what about the other blocks and why is this one more important than the others. Alderman Stevens stated it is due to this being brought forth by a resident. Mr. Carr stated that he provided a map of about fifty residents that have come forth and that map is attached to the provided agenda packet. Mr. Forsythe restated the Mayor's comment that if we do a project in one neighborhood, it will affect neighborhoods both up and down stream and this is a fundamental global problem. Mayor Manier shared that the standards were fine twenty years ago but now we are receiving rainfalls greater than we have in the past and that it was built correctly at the time. Mr. Forsythe asked Mr. Carr about doing a City-wide study and the cost of such study. Mr. Carr shared that it could be half to three-quarters of a million dollars to do a study, City-wide. He shared that the City could break it into smaller areas to spread out over time or scale back on the amount of detail requested to also help spread out costs. Alderman Stevens stated that her opinion is to start with the basin then decide which other parts of town to address. Mr. Forsythe clarified that it is Alderman Steven's direction to build a basin on private property, upstream. Alderman Stevens replied that according to Mr. Dagg's letter, this is the suggestion provided by IDOT many years ago. Alderman Stevens stated that this is a place to start, given the information discussed and when the next resident writes a letter for the same issue we can do another study to see where the water rushed from and possibly build another detention basin. Alderman Brownfield and Alderman Stevens clarified that the private property belongs to Bearce and Mayor clarified that there is already a basin behind the old Walmart and that the City offered to put in a lake in that area to help retain the water from filling Washington Estates. Alderman Brownfield asked where will we get the money to create the basin. Alderman Stevens stated that we have stormwater management budgeted and that it is for the staff to decide. Alderman Stevens stated that in her opinion, the detention basin is the place to start. Dennis Carr clarified that the detention basin used to slow the water from reaching Gillman will not slow down the water from the detention basin on Eagle or Flossmor or Gillman. Alderman Butler stated that we may not have enough information explaining that putting in a detention basin at \$400,000 would have any affect at all and when reviewing the map, each of the red areas could be about \$400,000 each and could create new problem areas if completed one at a time. He went on to state that more research is needed before making a decision. Alderman Butler shared that spending \$400,000 wouldn't be the right thing to do at this point. Mayor Manier stated that the City staff needs a direction. Mr. Forsythe agreed that without a stormwater plan, City staff cannot prioritize, but the plan is going to cost a lot of money and only have paper when done, but it will allow us to answer questions by residents when issues arise. Ray shared that City staff is trying to mitigate the cost to the City by finding funding from a grant. Mr. Forsythe stated that it's frustrating not receiving direction for a plan and whether Council is looking for a comprehensive plan or simply respond to individual, project by project, based on complaints. Alderman Adams shared that it appears that there are a lot of red dots but they are a small percentage of the community and feels that taxing everyone city-wide is not the solution. This puts the City in a bad spot because we want to help residents but don't have the money to pay out of pocket. Alderman Adams shared that we are here to help as a City, but we can't do it alone and that residents should have to participate in their improvements to the point that it is reasonable. Alderman Adams stated that we shouldn't operate based on who calls first. He went on to share that he feels that a study needs to be started. Mr. Forsythe shared that homeowners are asking for help, so Council asked staff to look into funding. He went on to share that staff is trying to help find answers based on Council's recommendation to not do work on private property. Alderman Adams shared that we shouldn't jump into something with such little time because it can be a blue print for future projects. He supports grant opportunities but stated if residents aren't willing to participate in some way, the City shouldn't flip the whole bill. Mayor Manier clarified that the 25% that is the resident's responsibility is also applied to homeowners on the same street that have never had a water issue and could this potentially put neighbors against neighbors because not all residents want this. Alderman Butler agreed that we shouldn't move forward if the residents aren't on board and thinks that the money might be better spent looking further into it doing a study. Alderman Adams agreed. Alderman

Yoder agreed with not just fixing holes which in the end may cost even more money, instead we should have a plan.

- D. *Tax Levy Options:* City Administrator, Forsythe and Finance Director, Baxter presented options for the tax levy. The levy pays for Police Pensions, social security, and IMRF as well as other items. Ms. Baxter provided three options, a copy of her memo showing the three options in detail is attached to these minutes. She notes that on page two of the memo it shows an outline of important points including what percentage of property taxes makes up of all the revenue sources and 2021 is estimated to be about 6.8%, the largest share is committed to our retirement and pension costs which is over 75% of our levy, our liability insurance premium, the audit, civil defense and fire and ambulance. Similar to prior years, there is a chart showing the percentages for different taxing bodies. The City's portion for the entire property tax bill for 2019 is 5.4%. This shows that the City's portion is a small amount of the resident's bill. The chart shows that the school districts make up more than 76% of property taxes. Other taxing bodies include the township, library and Park District. Our EAV estimate \$350,215,416 which we will adjust down to \$348,600,000 using a no increase EAV. Last year's levy was \$1,647,921 and our levy tax rate was just over \$.47. *Option One* shows no increase even though we are predicting the Police Pension, IMRF and social security to increase some of this due to the increase in the amount of staffing. We do not need to show increases in our liability insurance, audit and civil defense this year. Last year we separated out the fire and ambulance to show how much is being paid by property taxes verses other general revenue sources. Due to the increase in the pension, audit and IMRF, there was a need to decrease the fire and ambulance funding in order to keep the levy the same. *Option Two* shows only a slight increase due to trying not to decrease the funding for fire and ambulance. This provides an increase to the current levy of 4.94%. *Option Three* taking the historical information for the levy and analyzing the percentage of the fire and ambulance contract that we have paid for from the levy. In 2009 we were paying 60% from the general fund levy. Through the years, we have paid for less, resulting in our current percentage of payment from the general levy of 36% in 2019. If we don't keep this percentage of the levy intact, we will continue to erode it. The 2020 *Option One* would go down to 19.8%, *Option Two* would be 28.8%, and *Option Three* maintains the total percentage of levy. The estimated cost based on estimated rate from residents paying \$1,000-\$10,000 is shown in the report. Ms. Baxter reminded that this is just the city's portion of the bill and we have no control over what other entities do. Tax information from 1981-2019 are provided in the packet. By State Statute, there are several levies that we could implement that we choose not to do. Mr. Forsythe shared that the property tax levy is our most stable revenue source. Staff is recommending to maintain an increase in a small increment so that a large increase is not needed in the future. Alderman Cobb asked if the Police Pension portion of the levy is only for employees of the Police Department and Ms. Baxter clarified that it is only those who are currently in the Police Pension Fund not all police employees. Mr. Cobb asked for clarification on the IMRF and Ms. Baxter stated it is for anyone else who works over 1000 hours per year, including Public Works, City Hall employees, some part-time employees. Mr. Cobb asked about a change in 2005 when we included Medicare and SSI. Ms. Baxter shared that we separated IMRF from the others after 2005. Mr. Cobb asked if the amount on the Fire Department shows the anticipated increase in the contract that is currently in negotiations. Mr. Cobb asked how Ms. Baxter came up with the Fire Department number. Mr. Forsythe shared that they had estimated an increase that staff was comfortable, however, the Fire Department's request is higher than shown. Mr. Forsythe asked for the Alderman's opinions. Seven of the eight Alderman provided the following: Alderman Dingleline stated a preference for Option Two; Alderman Brownfield stated a preference for Option Two but could consider Option Three with more information; Alderman Butler sees an issue with Option One stating that the increase in fire protection may be subject to tax caps and we are currently funding the majority of the Fire Department budget and sees a problem if we fund the fire and ambulance from the general fund in the future therefore, the best option is Option Two. Alderman Adams - shared that this is a horrible year to raise taxes but seeing the expenses that we have he could feel comfortable supporting Option Two; Alderman Blundy agreed with Mr. Adams that this is not a good time however, we need to fund correctly and Option Two seems like a step in the right direction; Alderman Yoder stated a preference for Option Two; Alderman Cobb stated that he would prefer Option One due to the pandemic but understands the need to fund the fire and ambulance which our residents pay much less than other municipalities. Also, if we choose not to fund the Fire Department, the City will be required to fund their IMRF which will be higher. He also recognized that by State Statute we are required to pay the pension funds and the increases in Option Two are only to allow for this, therefore he could support Option Two.
- E. *Gillman Sump Collection:* Public Works Director, Kevin Schone provided that this year's budget allows for the installation of a Sump Collection system for the 100 and 300 blocks of Gillman where water runs onto the street from the sump systems of residents and creates a hazard when it freezes. Staff put together pricing

with varying degrees of project completion provided in each bid. We had only budgeted \$20,000 this fiscal year and the cost came in higher than expected however, there are funds available in the storm water budget to make up the overage. Alderman Dingleline noted that the Walker estimate includes a full restoration. Mayor Manier asked if the City has worked with Walker as a contractor before and Mr. Schone confirmed that we have. Alderman Stevens restated the project overview for clarification, specifically calling out that this involves private residences with private sump lines dumping into the street. Mr. Schone shared that the homeowners are abiding by City Policy by keeping their systems a specified distance behind the curb but due to the hill and curve, their sump water is going onto the street. Mr. Schone feels that putting a sump collection just in those two locations would catch the water and prevent potential accidents. Alderman Stevens asked if more houses up the street need this solution also and that she supports this solution. Mr. Schone shared that he had the contractors give the cost for the 100-200 block for fiscal year 21-22 consideration but these two safety issues needed to be addressed this year. Alderman Stevens asks if this means that we will be doing double the work. Mr. Schone explained that they can connect into their already completed work when they are ready to do the next phase. Alderman Stevens stated that we have other homes in the City with this issue and wonders why are we choosing these houses over others and reads a portion of the letter provided by Mr. Dabb's concerning the flooding mitigation grant project. Alderman Stevens stated that she is struggling why it okay for the City to pay for one project and not the other. Alderman Dingleline explains that the flooding only happens during torrential rains that don't occur very often while these sumps pump water into the road every day. Mr. Forsythe provided that the homeowners affected by the sump issue are in compliance with City Ordinances and the other solution for this would be to change the Ordinance which would, in turn, affect 75-100% of the City homeowners. Mayor Manier shared that putting a sump collection for every house on the street would cause all the houses to drain into the creek that was discussed during the Flood Mitigation Grant discussion, causing more water to flow into the creek. Alderman Adams asked for clarification on the bid from Walker including the future bid and if breaking it between the two fiscal years is the best financially, he supports this project due to the safety issues taking place. Alderman Cobb asked for clarification on the GA Rich bid if it includes the connection to sump line or will the homeowner be responsible for it. Mr. Schone stated that it does include the connection to the three specified addresses. Alderman Cobb agrees with Alderman Adams that if we can find the funds to complete the whole block, we should. Alderman Cobb went on to share that the 200 block may need further review because the sumps might be in the back of the yard. Mr. Schone feels that we may not have the budget to complete that section this year due to overages in another stormwater on Hilldale. By waiting for the fiscal year 21-22, we will also have the time to contact the other residents and locate their sump drainage locations. Kevin explains that the middle section of the block has to drain toward the creek because of the grade.

- F. F250 Truck Consideration: Public Works Director, Kevin Schone explained that the state has the contract for the F250 truck being protested, therefore we do not have the means to secure a truck through the State Bid. The past few trucks have been purchased from Uftring's because they usually give us a better deal than the state on the trade in. Mr. Schone explained that although the City under estimated the budget for the truck, they have identified funds in the MERF account that can be used to make up the difference. Alderman Cobb noted that the Velde quote contained an additional \$900 for an extra package and wondered if we asked them to take that off to reduce the quote. Alderman Cobb shared that it looks like the Velde bid was for an F350 instead of F250. Mr. Schone shared that he will check to see if the wrong package was quoted and will bring his findings back to Council next week.
- G. Waiting Period for Gaming Licenses: Deputy Chief Jeff Stevens provides that when the original timing was established for bars to acquire a gaming license, we felt this helped the establishment become part of the character of the City. Deputy Chief Stevens shared that the two year waiting time did what it was designed to do, keeping out mini-casinos and similar businesses. Police Chief McCoy shared that the Council and Public Safety Committee had many discussions concerning the waiting time and that it was an unanimous decision to keep the wait time to two years. Alderman Adams agreed with Chief McCoy. Mayor Manier shared that an establishment had reached out to the City and asked to purchase a vacant restaurant and bar that would allow gaming as a revenue source. Alderman Cobb clarified that there are other requirements needed to acquire a gaming license, one being that a percentage of food sales provides revenue as well. Chief McCoy explains that the purpose of this Ordinance was to provide that there is more than just liquor and gaming in an establishment. Mr. Forsythe shared that this location has a full commercial kitchen for which they would provide food. Alderman Adams shared that two-year plan helps a business to know if they are acclimated to the town and are going to succeed. Deputy Chief Stevens clarified that this applies to new licenses and business who purchase and existing business, can essentially assume the existing license as well. Alderman Dingleline asked if someone can reopen an older business that once had gaming, allowing

them to occupy an establishment that could have become a potential eyesore. This issue has been presented because an establishment, with an existing gaming license closed at the start of the COVID shut-down and was abandoned and a new owner would like to reopen it. Chief McCoy stated the need to make sure that the business plan was the same or similar. Alderman Dingleline shared that the current wait time could deter someone who would fix up an existing place and get it operational again. Mr. Forsythe acknowledged that these are unusual circumstances, which is why this is being considered. Alderman Brownfield would like to be able to review the business plan. Alderman Adams agrees that this is unusual and maybe one year could be considered in a case where an already existing business is opening another location in a closed but recently existing business. Mr. Forsythe asked for legal advice to see how we might proceed. City Attorney Keith Braskich stated if this is via ordinance, then it has to change via ordinance. Chief McCoy reminds the committee that Council has denied others. Mayor Manier wants to review Wine Time to see if they were affected due to something similar. Alderman Adams says if it's the same business model in the same business place it might be a little easier to accept. Alderman Cobb suggested we leave it at two years but include language that might allow a business who has had a license in the past year, to reduce their wait time to one year. Deputy Stevens explains that the intent of the original license was to limit casinos and gaming cafes. Mr. Forsythe stated that he will look into this further.

5. *Other Business:* Alderman Stevens asked if the City has received any money. Mr. Forsythe shared that The Cares Act funds have been received. Alderman Stevens asked if the Faire Coffee renovations were going well. Mr. Oliphant shared that they are currently working on renovations and have not opened yet. Alderman Stevens asked if we have all the easements for the private side of Lawndale. Mr. Forsythe stated that the paperwork has been distributed, now we are waiting on responses.
6. *Adjournment:* At 8:58 p.m. Alderman Cobb moved and Alderman Yoder seconded to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk

From: Steve Daggs
Sent: Sunday, November 8, 2020 5:38 PM
To: Valeri Brod
Cc: Ray Forsythe
Subject: Public Comment for November 9, 2020, Committee of the Whole Council Meeting

Subject: Ray Forsythe Letter 11/3/20

First of all, I would like to thank the Mayor, Council, City Administrator and staff for their work on solutions to flooding and flash flooding along the creek (Tributary 2) that runs through our subdivision. Your efforts are sincerely appreciated.

The proposed project begs for a town hall style meeting so landowners can hear more detail on this project, ask questions and provide feedback in public forum. This may be a bit challenging with the corona virus pandemic and the restrictions imposed, but I think a setting could be established that would be safe for all.

Based on what I know about this project at this time, it appears that most of the work that would be done is NOT on property owned by the residents along the creek. The flooding has not been caused through any action by the residents along the creek, but is the result of storm-water run-off from all the growth in development in the area that drains into the creek. Therefore, the bulk of the cost of the project should be paid by others.

Here are my comments on the project on an item by item basis:

1) Detention basin - In 1999-2000, IDOT undertook a project to mitigate flooding along the creek by construction of an upstream detention basin. They had a combination of grant money and IDOT funds to fund this project that had a cost of about \$170,000, to the best of my recollection. They had done the hydraulic studies and all the engineering and were ready to schedule the project.

There may have been some issues relating to the property acquisition from John Bearce and I do not recall any details relating to that. The final approval of the project came down to the City of Washington taking ownership of the land for the detention basin and the basin itself plus the maintenance and other costs of ownership, including liability insurance that would initially have been about \$5,000 per year. As I recall, the City did not want to take on that financial obligation and associated costs and the project died. This may have been a solution to today's flooding at a much lower cost.

If the flooding is due to problems with upstream uncontrolled storm water run-off and inadequate detention basins, then the City of Washington should pay the cost of the project and/or force violating landowners to correct deficiencies and comply with the ordinances and code relating to storm water run-off.

2) Tributary channel improvements - The creek is a natural waterway that handles run-off from a large area and several detention ponds. In the past, residents along the creek pooled their money and hired someone to re-grade the creek to help mitigate flooding. Note that this was before IDOT re-worked the box culvert under US Business 24. I don't think this effort was all that effective and ultimately the creek made its own way through the subdivision.

I don't see any evidence of adjoining landowner's doing anything that contributes to the flooding along the creek. What I do see is landowners along the creek being burdened with removal of large objects that come down the creek from the land west of the subdivision. Currently, there is a railroad tie in the creek behind my house which will take some effort to remove and dispose of. Maybe the City of Washington could help out in some way?

As for the easements required for whatever work the project requires, it should be known that where the sewer lines run along the creek, there are existing utility easements with a broad description. The easement on my lot covers the back 25 feet. Since Illinois-American Water Company is the grantee/beneficiary of that easement, their permission may be needed for any work to be done within the boundaries of that easement.

Other landowners without these easements may be reluctant to grant the easements needed for the project either with or without compensation. We all had to grant Ameren sizeable easements at the front of our properties for their underground installation. Easements are not without their implications.

3) Replacement of the culvert under US Business 24 - Sometime in the late 1990s, IDOT did a major reconstruction of the box culvert under US Business 24 to improve the water flow and mitigate the flooding caused by water backing up on the north side of the highway. This was an extensive project supported by hydraulic studies and engineering. After this project was completed, flooding and water backups at the highway were sharply reduced. The problem seemed to be solved. But the growth in development in the area may be producing run-off beyond what that culvert can handle.

IDOT reports that a reconstruction of US Business 24 through Washington is in the current multi-year plan. Those projects generally are started within six (6) years, but could be longer. To undertake any project now would likely take three years to start and could be fully replaced by the IDOT long term plan. To do anything now would seem to be a waste of funds. Further, if the existing culvert is the problem, then IDOT should pay for it, not the property owners.

4) Flood map revisions - More information is needed about this aspect of the project and its impact on our property.

Finally, I would note that at least one nearby neighbor did not receive the letter. Ours was placed under our door mat and some delivered in that manner may have blown away during very windy conditions at that time.

Again, thank you for addressing this issue. I am looking forward to learning more about this and other possible solutions to the flooding and flash flooding in our neighborhood.

I have been a resident of Washington since 1976, having lived on Fayette Avenue all that time and at _____ since 1988, except for about twenty months that we lived in Peoria while rebuilding our house after the tornado.

Steve Daggs

Washington, Illinois 61571

Mobile: 800-888-8210