

October - 2012

Status report on stormwater issues for Kensington Road area

Over the course of the last three years the City of Avondale Estates has invested considerable time and resources in seeking a cost-effective, long-term solution to existing stormwater runoff issues in the Kensington Road area.

Brief History

In 2004 the government of DeKalb County unilaterally withdrew from a long-standing intergovernmental Service Delivery Strategy Agreement to provide upkeep and maintenance to stormwater systems within the boundaries of incorporated cities in DeKalb County. This was done without reducing county taxes to property owners in the affected cities or providing stormwater funding to the cities. Prior to this withdrawal stormwater issues were the responsibility of the county and not the City.

As a result of this action by DeKalb County the City of Avondale Estates established a new annual stormwater fee and stormwater enterprise fund to provide funds for stormwater issues within the city. Maintaining, updating and replacing stormwater systems is one of the most capital intensive services provided by a city government. The typical replacement of a failed stormwater component can require hundreds of thousands of dollars in capital.

Every year the City collects roughly \$100,000 in fees and over the brief life of the stormwater fund it has accumulated a balance of \$730,000. These funds are held in a special account to be specifically used for stormwater issues.

For the first time, a comprehensive inventory of city-wide stormwater assets was started in 2009 and completed in 2010 at a cost of \$21,000. This survey was the first step in categorizing and locating the complete inventory of stormwater components that comprise the stormwater system. There are 807 components in the entire system with varying ages and conditions.

Kensington Road Issues

In 2010 the Board of Mayor and Commissioners (BOMC) began to develop a strategy to provide solutions to reported stormwater issues in the Kensington Road area of the City. In March of 2010, at a cost of \$15,530, the BOMC authorized the City Manager to contract with an outside expert to study in detail the stormwater runoff issues and provide a cost estimate for possible solutions in that specific area of the City. On May 19, 2010 the BOMC received a detailed presentation and report that included an estimate of \$1,107,491 to provide a solution to the majority of the stormwater runoff issues affecting the Kensington Road area. The principal solution would be the installation of a large underground detention tank on several parcels of private land

north of Kensington Road. The million dollar estimate did not include any possible land acquisition or easement costs. However, after considering the high-cost of these improvements, it was determined that additional stormwater studies needed to be completed to research the areas downstream of the initial study area to better understand if the million dollar investment in the Kensington area would yield benefits downstream and spread the million dollar cost among a larger portion of the City.

These additional studies were completed at a cost of \$22,360 and delivered to the BOMC on 02/23/2011. These studies provided detailed information completing an accurate description of the existing stormwater system from the top of Covington Highway near the First Baptist Church until the system exits the City on Memorial Drive off of Hess Drive. These additional studies revealed that the proposed million dollar investment in the Kensington area had very little positive impact downstream.

After the first study was completed, the Museum School occupied a lot at 3191 Covington Highway removing a large portion of the impervious parking surface and adding a large detention pond which may have created a positive impact on the downstream run-off issues immediate to the Kensington area.

During the summer of 2011 the BOMC initiated a new approach in an attempt to both reduce costs and to provide a solution that would create positive benefits to residents city-wide.

Anticipating that the Museum School would be occupying the 3191 Covington location for a short period of time a concept was developed that sought to not only provide a stormwater solution to the Kensington Road area but create additional community-wide benefits to maximize the value of capital funds invested in the project. This plan would incorporate a new green-space that would function as a stormwater detention pond as well as a City park for residents. The City would acquire the portion of the church parking lot occupied by the Museum School, two small empty lots south of the school owned by the church and the residential lot next door to the school. The property acquisition by the City would create a financial benefit to the Museum School by relieving it of the requirement to restore the impervious parking surface. The church would benefit from the proceeds of the land sale on a property that would be underutilized once the school was removed in 2012.

The park/detention concept offered the opportunity to provide a reduction in capital costs while adding city-wide benefits with the addition of new green space.

The estimated park/detention concept costs include:

Phase I and II detention pond & pipes - \$157,000
Park site work, construction costs & landscaping - \$230,000 (3191 site only)
3191 Covington & adjunct south lots land acquisition - \$150,000
Total for 3191 park/detention - \$537,000

Adding the residential lot next door to park/detention pond cost:
Park site work, construction costs & landscaping - \$150,000 (3219 site only)
3191 Covington & adjunct lots land acquisition - \$150,000
Total for 3219 park/detention - \$300,000

Phase III of the stormwater project includes new catch basins and pipes along Kensington Road - **\$175,000**

A design concept for the park/detention was developed and presented to the BOMC in an Executive Session during November, 2011. During this meeting the BOMC authorized the City Manager and the Mayor to negotiate for the purchase of the land. An offer to purchase the residential lot next to the school for a total of \$150,000 was made via a real estate agent representing the City. Over the course of several months no agreement was reached to purchase the residential property. In April of 2012 the City made an offer to purchase the property owned by the First Baptist Church for \$150,000. No agreement was reached to purchase the property.

Conclusion

As it stands now the BOMC has spent a total of \$21,000 on a comprehensive city-wide inventory of our stormwater infrastructure and \$37,890 on researching specific issues related to the Kensington Road area.

The 2011 initial proposal to install the underground detention pond on private property for more than a million dollars was determined to be an inefficient use of city capital.

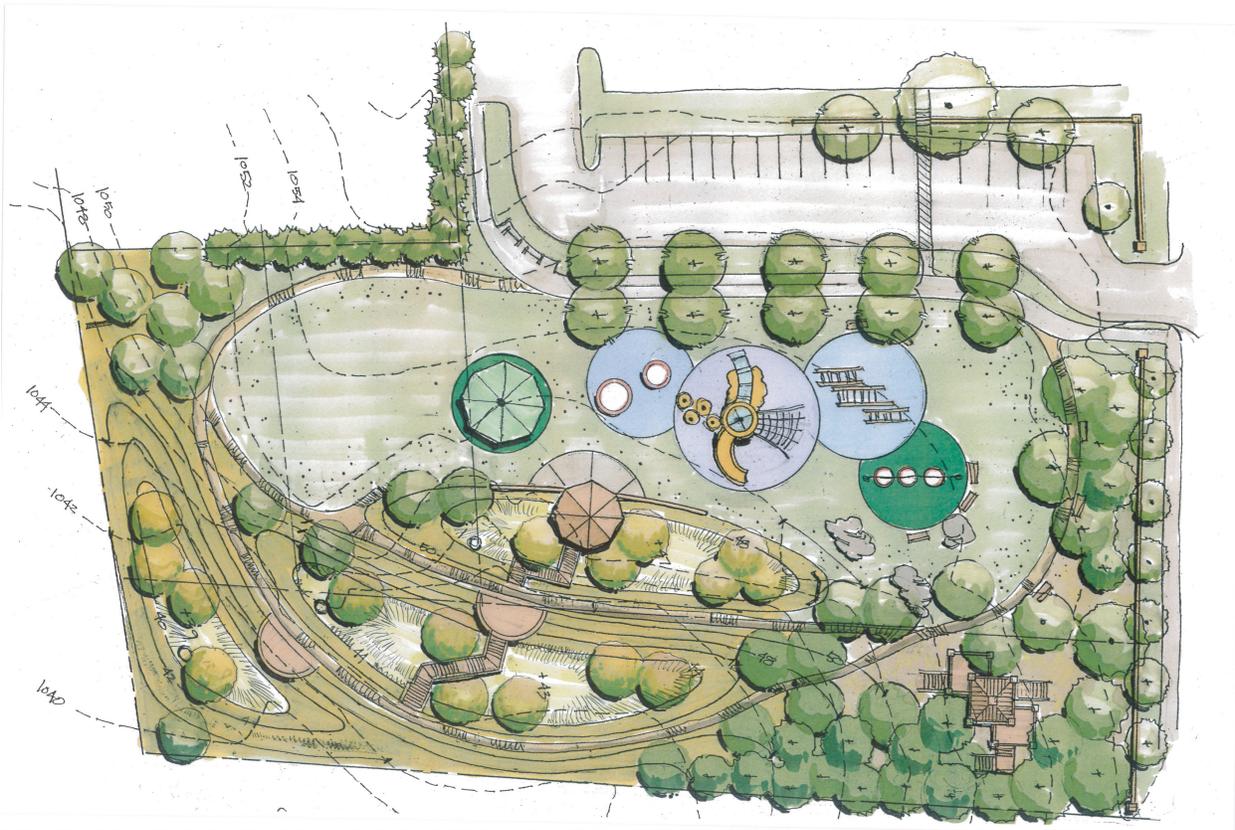
The 2012 proposal for the City to purchase property to create a new City park designed to remediate stormwater issues and provide usable green space for all citizens at an estimated cost of \$537,000, is dependent on the current property owners willingness to sell their property to the City at a price commiserate with the fiscal constraints of the project. Currently there are no ongoing discussions regarding this property transaction.

As a result the BOMC is seeking a plan that remediates a significant amount of stormwater issues in the Kensington area while producing meaningful results at a capital cost that is efficient and produces a range of benefits city wide. The BOMC and city staff will continue to seek possible solutions to this issue in the future.

Cordially,

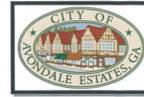
Ed Rieker
Mayor, City of Avondale Estates

Concept Rendering of Stormwater Detention Green Space



Timeline of Activity

Stormwater Timeline - 2009												
	January (2009)	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
RFP advertised for stormwater utility mapping					5/28/2009							
Corporate Environmental Risk Management (C.E.R.M.) Selected as Stormwater Utility Consultant								8/31/2009				
Agreement with C.E.R.M.										10/2/2009		
Kick-off meeting with C.E.R.M.										10/19/2009		
Stormwater Survey started by C.E.R.M.										10/26/2009		



Stormwater Timeline - 2010												
	January (2010)	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Advertised bids for Phase I Stormwater Survey		2/10/2010										
Clark Patterson Lee awarded Phase I Contract with Clark Patterson Lee - Drainage Study at Kensington Road and Covington Highway - Phase I started (\$15,530)			3/3/2010									
Stormwater Overview by C.E.R.M at BOMC Work Session			3/17/2010									
Letter sent to residents re: Stormwater Update by Clark Patterson Lee				4/21/2010								
Stormwater Update by Clark Patterson Lee at BOMC Work Session					5/13/2010							
Proposal sent for Phase II Downstream Survey					5/19/2010							
Contract with Clark Patterson Lee - Drainage Study at Kensington Road and Covington Highway - Phase II started (\$18,360)					5/28/2010							
						6/29/2010						

