

Minutes from March 23, 2011 WRAC Meeting

Attending: Ron Beck, Jeff Clymer, Barry Rosen, Matt Mosteller, Helen Probst and Janet Adachi

Ron Beck opened the meeting at 6:51 PM.

Ron had prepared a document that we reviewed at the meeting which addressed a long range stormwater plan for Acton 2020 and some of the critical items that would comprise our bylaw for discussion and to establish direction.

The long range plan consisted of three topics to define our strategy

- Reasons to manage stormwater
- Main factors that need to be managed
- Phased management approach

After reviewing these Acton 2020 items (addressed that way in summary below). We discussed specific issues in structuring the bylaw.

Item 1 – Acton 2020 items

The reasons to manage stormwater were summarized as:

- Protect groundwater;
- Protect surface water;
- Comply with regulatory requirements; and
- As a resource for recharge.

The main factors that challenge the management of stormwater are:

- Runoff instead of recharge;
- Impervious surfaces;
- Clear cutting of wood lands
- Encroaching on stream/pond/wetland borders

These factors lead to increased levels of phosphates, nitrates and other contaminants into the surface water. These symptoms must be managed as well as the causes. Ron suggested that managing these causes might involve credits for wooded land and preserving stream edges. This is not necessarily supported by legislation as the Rivers Act allows building close to stream/river edges if current buildings exist and it is a clean-up or improvement.

The management of these causes is likely to be best accomplished through a phased approach.

- 1) “Starter” bylaw to hold line on impervious surface, create structures for BMPs and for maintenance oversight
- 2) Target conditions which include no increases in impervious surfaces (decrease when possible) and create strong incentives for BMPs and maintenance reporting requirements

3) Storm water utility (self funded and maintenance plan)

Item 2 – Issues affecting Bylaw

Impervious surface limitations were discussed and approximate levels for single family residential and commercial were reviewed. The intent was to address where we are today, what limits we might place both near-term and longer term. This was no more than a first attempt for reaction purposes and more work would be done before

Type	Acreage	Impervious Range	Potential Limit
Single Family	0.25	39% - 40%	40%
Single Family	0.50	22% - 31%	26%
Single Family	1.00	13% - 16%	15%
Commercial	All	52% -98%	81%
Industrial	All		50%

Other areas of concern that were addressed as guidelines for the bylaw:

- Only MS-4 is subject to the bylaw (could be broader and Committee would prefer broader)
- Parking regulations may be counter to stormwater requirements
- Phased in approach is preferable and we discussed initial impervious surface limits for ½, ¼ and village lots of 15%, 20% and 25-27% falling to 12.5%, 15-17% and 20% over a 2 year period. Could drop via credits or move from impervious to pervious surfaces
- Slope, disturbed area, and groundwater zones still need to be addressed as factors in determining applicability of the bylaw.
- Need to define credits for redevelopment (one possible big opportunity is Kelley's Corner)
- Bylaw needs to apply to multi family developments and subdivisions (need to distinguish between residential and residential that behaves as commercial)
- Cost issues – low impact development is generally cheaper except for large developments

We voted to test general agreement with the three phase approach to stormwater management that was laid out in Ron's document and discussed at the meeting (i.e., (1) initial limitations (2) moving to more stringent limitations (3) moving to a stormwater utility). There was consensus that the (1) and (2) phases should be addressed together even though effective at different times.

Homework assigned was for

- 1) Jeff to get data from tax assessor on lot size in each zone
- 2) Ron to write-up 2020 information and to provide starter bylaw

Meeting was adjourned at 8:39.