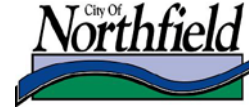


Surface Water Management Policy Questions
First Advisory Committee Meeting and First Public Open House
May 5, 2010



1. Over the past few years some Northfield residents have expressed an interest in using **distributed** infiltration facilities (e.g. homeowner rainwater gardens) to mitigate surface water flow in residential areas. Should the city rely on such facilities to meet state-mandated surface water management goals or should these goals be met through neighborhood-scale (regional) facilities?
 - a. If distributed infiltration facilities should be a major component of city goals, what type of land use (residential vs. commercial) and under what conditions (e.g. redevelopment vs. new development) should these facilities be considered?
 - b. How should the City ensure (inspect and enforce) that facilities on private land are meeting performance standards? How should the City fund the administration of these private facilities?
 - c. Should the stormwater utility rate be increased to create a pool of money to be used for incentives be used to encourage property owners to build them?
 - d. How should costs associated with monitoring performance (state mandates) and enforcing maintenance of distributed facilities be covered?
2. In developing stormwater regulations for redevelopment, should redevelopment sites be held to a higher, lower or the same performance standards as new (Greenfield) development?
 - a. Does your answer vary depending on the performance standard (e.g. rate control, infiltration, water quality)?
3. Should the City consider applying the stricter Rice Creek performance standards citywide, regardless of administration costs, increased costs for (re)development, and increased stormwater utility fees?
4. Should the City consider a reduction in the stormwater utility fee as an incentive to those who build private infiltration facilities (e.g. rain gardens) in areas of existing development? If yes, what measures should be considered to ensure there is adequate funding for the other city-run ongoing surface water management programs (e.g. NPDES requirements)?
 - a. Should the incentive program be short-term to get the program up and running, or should it be perpetual?
 - b. Some alternatives:
 - i. Increase stormwater utility rates across the board to create a pool of money to be used to offset the incentive fee reductions
 - ii. Seek grant money to support a short-term incentive program

- iii. Reduce the scale and cost of city-owned & operated infiltration facilities by relying on privately owned distributed infiltration facilities
 - iv. Other ideas?
- 5. Is the City of Northfield positioned properly with respect to the comparable cities on the stormwater performance standards?
 - a. If not, should the City be more or less proactive than our comparison municipalities?
 - i. Rate Control
 - ii. Infiltration/Volume Control (General)
 - iii. Infiltration/Volume Control (Trout)
 - iv. Water Quality (General)
 - v. Water Quality (Trout)
 - vi. All of the above
 - b. If you feel that stricter performance standards are needed, how much should stormwater utility fees increase (percent) to pay for the higher level of construction and administration necessary to manage and enforce the higher standards?

Responses – Notes on responses of each subgroup of the Advisory Committee are provided below. Please note that the responses are generally the overall view of the group. The views of individual group members may not be represented.

**Advisory Group Meeting (5/5/10) – small group breakout notes
City boards, commissions and City Council Group (Brian Welch note taker)**

Question 1:

- Private rain gardens for roof and driveways only, not roads, so no enforcement needed.
- Any road runoff would have to be on city land or ROW where they will fit.
- Doubling residential SW utility rates is tolerable.

Question 2:

- Redevelopment should be required to buy into city facilities if can't meet onsite – for both residential and commercial/downtown. Should be triggers for catching incremental improvements

Question 3:

- Not necessary to apply all Rice Creek standards to entire City. Revisit itemized requirements once ordinance is drafted to determine if there are some specific Rice Ck elements that could be expanded to citywide application.

Question 4:

- Yes, reduction in utility fees should be considered, after raising rates first (see #1). But, make sure facility is needed and in proper place.
- Consider fee reduction for volume reduction achieved through graywater systems and rain barrels (e.g. one rain barrel could equal one raingarden, rain barrels not administratively burdensome)
- Consider 5 year permit inspection cycle for raingardens, significant management not seen as necessary as per #1.
- On-going inspection of performance and upkeep needed, if not too burdensome.

Question 5:

- Northfield standards should be setting trends relative to other cities.

Advisory Group Meeting (5/5/10) – small group breakout notes
Economic Interests Group (Gina Mitchell, note taker)

Question 1:

- The City should rely on neighborhood or development scale infiltration facilities.
- Distributed infiltration facilities should be encouraged and used to help exceed minimum requirements. A minimum size threshold could be considered to reduce ongoing maintenance costs. They could be used on infill sites where other options aren't available or other constraints exist.
- All types of development should have the opportunity or incentive to use distributed facilities.
- The City should consider collecting stormwater fees as part of street reconstruction projects so existing development pays their fair share.
- All stormwater facilities should be within an easement. More land in an easement results in less land available for development.

Question 2:

- Redevelopment should be required to infiltrate on site or pay money towards a neighborhood infiltration system.

Question 3:

- No responses

Question 4:

- Yes, city should consider reduction in SW utility fee as an incentive to build private infiltration facilities.

Question 5:

- No responses

Advisory Group Meeting (5/5/10) – small group breakout notes
Concerned Citizens for Rice Creek Group (Dan Petrik, John Hanson (JOH), note takers)

Question 1:

- Want systems that will protect the Rice Creek
- Think regional basins might do it better than distributed systems
- Local rainwater gardens should be encouraged
- One negative with regional infiltration is the area and depth (JOH note: not true with the depth since they would still be required to drain dry within 48 hours)
- Think source of groundwater to the creek is local so even more important to require infiltration for groundwater recharge
- Any type of regional basin needs to be infiltration
- Want deep soil medium (at least 4 feet) to try to address thermal impacts
- Concerned about too rapid of infiltration in areas where there is gravel
- With more distributed basins, each one would be less critical from a performance perspective.
- Okay with small increase in utility fee to fund incentive programs (comment from lone person who is city resident, all others signaled support)
- Reduce need for treatment, keep total impervious surface to less than 10%.
- “Questions suggests that it’s an either/or, but it should be both. With redevelopment there needs to be flexibility.”

Question 2:

In general, redevelopment should not be held to the same standards as new development; however, incentive funds (from the stormwater utility fee) should be used to help property owners achieve standards for new development. One person said all development should be held to the same standards. I think the group felt they should try to hold re-development to the same standards but there should be flexibility when it might not be feasible.

Question 3:

“No. That would be silly and expensive. It would be silly to apply Cannon River standards outside of the City limits.” Need separate standards that are specific to the needs of the particular watershed.

Question 4:

- For residential properties, keep incentives simple, a one-time (upfront rebate) versus an on-going credit that needs to be monitored
- Commercial/industrial land uses should get an on-going reduction in their fees if they build private systems (if the fees are currently high)
- Residential fees should be higher than they currently are.

Question 5:

- Rate control for Rice Creek watershed should be compared to pre-settlement – all agreed.
- Infiltration – want to be more aggressive, but would need to have a study to determine impacts (JOH note: I think she meant impacts in the amount of land needed to implement, the feasibility of implementing the practices, etc.)
- Temperature controls are important to include in standards.
- Avoid use of ponds.
- Water quality – want to be more aggressive

Other notes:

- Want to compare Northfield to other communities with brook trout. The group seemed concerned that management techniques would be different for brook trout streams than other type of trout streams.
- The group has done an inventory of many features of the stream