

**10 Mile Creek Limited Amendment to the Clarksburg Master Plan
February 25, 2013 meeting Q & A**

Q: How wide is a stream buffer?

A: The Clarksburg Master Plan specifies a minimum 175 foot buffer from each side of a stream. A wider buffer may be required where steep slopes or other environmental features extend beyond the 175 feet.

Q: For the land uses recommended in the 1994 Plan at the I-270 interchange with Stringtown Rd. (470,000 sq. ft.) – what is a comparable scale in terms of commercial development?

A: The level of development planned in the 1994 Plan would require multi-story office buildings along with some surface and structured parking. In terms of the scale of comparable commercial development, this could translate to about 3-4 Big Box stores.

Q: What is a Limited Amendment?

A: It is a master plan amendment that is limited to the Ten Mile Creek watershed within the Clarksburg Master Plan area. This limited amendment focuses on the environmental and community building goals that apply to this area.

Q: Is the creek that runs along the houses on New Cut Road within the Ten Mile Creek watershed, and is it part of this plan?

A: No. That is Little Seneca Creek and it is not part of this plan.

Q: The map of Existing Land Cover shows 46% forest. Is the remaining 54% agricultural land?

A: The map shows that 46% of the land is forest and 54% is not forest. The 54% includes agriculture, meadows, lawns, buildings and roads.

Q: In the map of Aquatic Habitat & Biology, what is the quality rating of other streams that feed the watershed?

A: Most other streams that flow to Little Seneca Lake are considered Fair or Good.

Q: What storm water management practices applied when the 1994 Master Plan was prepared?

A: They are specified in the Water Quality Regulations for Special Protection Areas and include detention ponds, sand filters and redundant facilities to provide additional treatment.

Q: Were data from Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS) volunteers obtained and used, and what did they show?

A: They showed high quality stream conditions - similar to Department of Environmental Protection

data. The ANS data provide additional information for locations which they have monitored over the years.

Q: Is the Cabin Branch included in the study?

A: No, the County Council asked that the study focus solely on Ten Mile Creek.

Q: What does "stabilize erodible soils" mean and how is that accomplished?

A: Erodible soils require special care when development is underway and if possible, they are not disturbed at all. When that is not possible special hydro-seeding techniques, combined with the use of geotextiles and other methods, are used to allow quick re-vegetation to avoid soil erosion.

Q: For new projects, can more than 2/3 of a site be graded – how does that apply to existing projects?

A: New State regulations allow for only 20 acres to be graded at one time on any site.

Q: Is a traffic impact study being done?

A: Yes. The impacts of plan scenarios on traffic will be studied.

Q: Is a sanitary sewer proposed within Ten Mile Creek – where will it go?

A: Yes, it will be served both by sewer and water. Water lines for the most part will be under streets while sewer lines will mainly follow stream valleys, outside buffer areas except where a stream crossing or bridge requires that they are closer.

Q: What is included in the scenarios – when will they and the supporting analysis be available?

A: After the March 14 meeting with the Planning Board, we will firm up which other scenarios will be studied (in addition to the 1994 Plan). This information along with any available analysis will be posted on our web site.

Q: How will the amendment affect the Master Plan and future development?

A: The County Council will ultimately determine that when they discuss the plan in late 2013, prior to adoption.

Q: What is the relationship between impervious land cover and water quality – how does that affect model assumptions?

A: The pollutant loading model and the hydrologic model both account for Environmental Site Design practices and impervious surfaces. We also have a model that correlates imperviousness to stream quality that does not take ESD into account. Results from that model will have to be considered based on professional judgment.

Q: Has Environmental Site Design (ESD) been applied elsewhere in the County at this scale?

A: It has been applied in many locations throughout the County, but not at the scale of an entire watershed.

Q: How much water quality degradation is reasonable?

A: That will have to be determined by policy makers.

Q: Will stream biology be assessed?

A: The potential effect of change on stream biology by pollutant loadings and changes to land cover will have to be assessed by the Environmental Agency staff.

Q: How can anyone conclude that development densities can be increased if special protection areas are expanded and environmental concerns are fully addressed?

A: It is possible that development densities could be increased if their impacts can be offset or mitigated.

Q: Will the environmental models reflect changes in land use – from farmland to high density?

A: Yes

Q: In addition to storm water management practices, what other methods of stream protection will be analyzed?

A: We will look at the effects of planting more forests in stream buffers, removal of existing impervious surfaces and the treatment of older development that currently does not employ stormwater management.

Q: Will a safety margin be applied to account for potential ESD maintenance issues or failures?

A: Yes, we will look at reasonable assumptions that account for long term reductions in efficiency.

Q: Would the environmental model show watershed improvement if barren land is excluded?

A: Yes. Barren land with no vegetation has some of the highest likelihood for stream pollution.

Q: How is the removal of forest cover in Ten Mile Creek affected by the County's tree preservation policies and goals?

A: The development regulations are designed to help achieve the County's tree preservation goals. In many cases, forest that is removed will have to be replanted. Unfortunately, the loss of some forest through development cannot be avoided.

Q: To avoid this planning effort and related costs, why didn't the County Council just determine whether fair is an acceptable water quality goal?

A: The 1994 Master Plan and the County Council both recognize the high quality of Ten Mile Creek. In

the end, the County Council will make the final call based on the results of our analysis and determine what is an acceptable level of water quality for the Ten Mile Creek watershed.

Q: Is ESD being comparably applied elsewhere in the US?

A: Yes, ESD is being applied in many places throughout the US, but we are not aware of any watershed-wide application.

Q: Should a geologic analysis should be undertaken to determine how future development will affect the aquifer and ground water supply?

A: Our knowledge of groundwater is limited in this area. While this will be considered during our analysis, it is unlikely we will be able to A: that question definitively. The infiltration practices of ESD are likely to assure that groundwater quantity will remain relatively unaffected and the natural filtering will remove most pollutants.