EASTSIDE WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS

PUBLIC MEETING

December 6, 2012
5:00 P.M.
Skaith Elementary School
4701 Schoolside Lane, St. Joseph, Missouri

HEARING ATTENDEES

Project Team in attendance

– David Frazier, City of St. Joseph
– Andy Macias, Snyder & Associates
– Bill Nash, Burns & McDonnell
– Mark Pearson, Snyder & Associates
– Leigh Barnhart, Shockey Consulting Services
– Barb Sadler, Shockey Consulting Services

Others in attendance

– Doug Baggett, St. Joseph, MO
– Elaine Buckner, City of St. Joseph
– Devin Ferguson, St. Joseph, MO
– Roy Ferguson, St. Joseph, MO
– Chip Gulledge, St. Joseph, MO
– Paul Hart, St. Joseph, MO
– Vern Hart, St. Joseph, MO
– Alexander Hassel, KQ2
– Frank and Pat Hoeffner, Edgerton, MO
– James & Joan Huber, St. Joseph, MO
– Gary Leftin, City of St. Joseph
– Jane Nelson, St. Joseph, MO
– Kim Norvell, St. Joseph News-Press
– Jim Yount, St. Joseph, MO
Leigh Barnhart, Shockey Consulting Services, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that the project is part of St. Joseph’s Water Protection Program, one of the biggest Public Works undertakings for the city. In the next 20 years, $85-$90 million will be spent by the city in infrastructure improvements to address aging facilities and combined sewer overflows. In some cases they are asking the public to address some big issues to help manage stormwater on private properties. She distributed a sign-in sheet, officially opened the public hearing for Eastside Wastewater Improvements, and introduced Mr. Bill Nash of Burns & McDonnell who will be presenting.

Mr. Nash, in turn, introduced Andy Macias of Snyder & Associates, who has teamed with Burns & McDonnell on this project.

Mr. Nash described the purpose of the meeting to receive comments on the environmental impacts that might be associated with the project. They will look at impacts if nothing is done, as well as during and after project construction. This is an opportunity for voicing concerns and asking questions.

**Purpose of the project.** He went on to say that there is an undersized pump station along Easton Road that cannot handle the wet weather flows it receives. In addition, Faraon Street pump station is older and deteriorated and has maintenance and operation issues. The project will provide for future growth on the east side of St. Joseph and is part of the Eastside Master Plan for the wastewater utility. It will increase the service area on the east side of the collection system and replace some undersized sections on Easton Road. It will increase the flow capacity of the collection system.

**Project specifics.** The project will replace 1,500’ of undersized sewer line along Easton Road. The current Easton Road lift station will be abandoned and a new gravity sewer installed adjacent and paralleling Easton Road to Candy Creek Pump Station. Along with the new pump station, a new force main will pump sewage up to the existing gravity sewer to flow into Faraon Street and ultimately gravity flow to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. A new holding basin at Candy Creek will be used for the storage of flows. Faraon Street Pump Station will be rehabilitated as well. There will be a new wetwell, new screen building and utilization of existing lagoons to handle large wet weather flows. He showed a map of the project location and where the force main will connect into the gravity system.

**The existing environmental setting of the project site as it is today.** Land use is residential, commercial and industrial and a small amount of right of way. The project will be in close
proximity to Candy Creek. Many small creeks and streams enter Candy Creek. The Corps of Engineers has determined to require a permit from the Corps that will be covered by the nationwide permit. The consultant has spoken with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Missouri Department of Conservation, and confirmed there are no threatened or endangered species in this area. The State Historical Office reports there are no culturally significant sites within this area. On three occasions environmentalists have toured different parts of the sites on different days. They have identified eight to ten different areas where some of these streams might be impacted by construction and identified those areas. The environmentalists have identified four separate small wetlands. All four sites added together total 1.5 acres.

What will happen to the environment without a project? If nothing is done, the Faraon Street pump station may fail and overflow, spilling wastewater into the environment and adversely affecting water quality in the area. Easton Pump station may have overflows during wet weather flows and untreated sewage discharged to creeks and streams.

Impacts that might happen during construction. During construction there will be heavy equipment, dust and pollutants similar to farming activities. There will be acquisition of land for the new pump station, gravity and forcemain. There could be impacts to water resources to streams nearby due to stormwater runoff during construction, which will be minimized by silt fence. There will be short term loss of native and non-native vegetation in the area. Transportation could be slightly affected by temporary street closures and traffic detours. Health and safety concerns relate specifically to construction personnel, but they are regulated by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA). There will be some aesthetic issues, some excavation and heavy equipment in the area, and staging of materials.

Post construction impacts. The risk for failure of the Faraon Street Pump Station will be greatly reduced and overflows eliminated at Easton Road. Greater sewer capacity will be available on the east side of St. Joseph. There will be an irreversible commitment of resources (land use, materials and fuels) which will be consumed during the course of the project. After construction is complete, there should be no significant impacts to vegetation, wildlife or endangered species in the area, land use, air quality or wetlands. After the project is completed, transportation will return to normal. This project will not create or take any jobs.

Mr. Nash noted the availability of environmental information at this meeting, as well as on the city’s website @ www.stjoemo.info/publicworks/eastside.cfm. Additionally, written comments may be presented to the City of St. Joseph for inclusion in the hearing record if submitted no later than seven days after the date of this hearing.

He opened the meeting up to questions. A citizen present asked if the system will involve sewer treatment. Mr. Nash said there will be some primary treatment (screening and grit
removal) at Candy Creek, but no wastewater treatment. The citizen, describing himself as a geophysicist, said he was there to represent the interests of a private sector developer. They have an agriculture research facility south of St. Joseph which requires some treatment before it gets into a controlled system. They are interested geographically and in the process for treatment. He asked what the pipes contain and Mr. Nash responded “wastewater.”

The citizen asked if this project relates to an U.S. Environmental Protection Agency notification that this area is in violation. Mr. Nash said it has no connection to past problems. Mr. Macias said all they are doing right now is enlarging the capacity of the existing system and moving the pump station. The whole network doesn’t change that much except to move one pump station downstream two miles to open up a new service area. It still goes to the same treatment facilities. The citizen asked if the city has a current problem with combined sewer overflows. Mr. Macias responded “not on the east side.” The citizen asked if adding volume would complicate treatment plant operations. Mr. Nash responded that it would not. He offered to discuss this more with the gentleman after the public hearing. The citizen asked why it was decided to stop at this intermediate place. Mr. Macias said it relates to State Revolving Fund (SRF) funding. The further you get to the east it is closer to the floodway and there are jurisdictional issues. The project was moved as far east as possible without getting into floodway issues.

A citizen asked if there are problems with pressure lines leaking. Mr. Macias explained that all lines are pressure tested during construction. The citizen asked how will the city know if an area is settling. Mr. Macias responded that the city maintains the system and checks it frequently. It will be visible, not lost somewhere in the woods. Mr. Pearson explained that if a force main is leaking, pump performance will deteriorate and daily operational records will back that up.

The public hearing closed at 5:30 p.m.