

**Village of Northport
Infrastructure Committee Agenda
November 17, 2021
1:30pm**

Call to Order

Additions to the Agenda

Public Comments

Streetlight Update – Steve

Status on the Children’s Center building

**Fourth Street Ditch RFP’s –Cindy
(Discussion to follow.)**

Report on the Culvert at Rose and Second Streets.

Update on our Street Ordinance

DPW Report

Planning Commission Report

Public Comments

Adjourn

TO: Northport Village Council
FROM: Marcia Boynton 115 E 4th St
RE: 4th Street Drain
DATE: December 8, 2021

Thanks to the infrastructure committee for discussing this issue the other night and agreeing to engage engineers for soil borings so a better detailed RFP can be prepared and resubmitted to vendors ASAP.

In order to keep this work moving forward, I have a couple suggestions – perhaps we could create a work group – and include affected property owners? This is such a localized issue, my sense is that each of us has a slightly different experience. Progress should be reported out monthly... spring will be here before we know it. As you know, you have several property owners who are highly motivated about resolving this issue and I am sure would gladly participate/staff this work to keep it moving along.

Let's set a target date for completion of a revised RFP.

As Infrastructure noted, it's hard to go forward without foundational knowledge, so as to background for and revisions in the RFP, I offer these few thoughts/questions:

1. Why is there a focus on the Mill Pond and 4th St as a route to the Bay when we know the Mill Pond drains through Northport Creek along 3d St?
2. There are covered drains/streams terminating in PVC pipe that drain into the bay at 5th & 6th streets (for sure) and 7th St (I believe) – can someone tell us a) why this approach is suited to those streets and not suitable to 4th and b) when those systems were installed and c) why 4th St was not addressed in the same way at the same time? I presume EGLE is aware of these 3 nearby road end water management systems, but if not, it seems we need to look at the logic behind differential approaches in similar situations; and then validate or reject the logic.
3. This may just be my own knowledge deficit, but what do we know about EGLE's historic resistance to resolving 4th St drainage in a meaningful way? Can someone let me know if this was primarily an ecological concern, questions about whether it's a stream or a drain, or primarily a matter of stream enclosure vs daylighting? As I think we all understand, the permitting pathway for us will depend on one or the other of these rationales rising to the surface.
4. I understand there were prior detailed plans and elevations drawn for work on 4th St – perhaps as long as a decade ago or more -- but the work was not completed or was insufficient? While it seems those plans may be part of history – at the same time, they might tell us something about what was known at the time, and what the exact deficiencies were in execution so they can be prevented going forward.

5. I appreciate the repeated acknowledgement on the record that there is an aged, unmaintained clay tile system draining 4th St. As Chris knows from our many prior conversations about the water in my home at 115 E 4th Street, I am convinced that in addition to the essentially abandoned clay tile system -- the sewer and subsequent water work done on Rose St had the practical effect of creating a new physical barrier to water flowing into drainage routing to the bay from my place. As I have stated repeatedly, when we first occupied that property, there was a year round trickle on the order of a 2-4" stream flowing through the crawl space – sometimes it was completely dry. It was never completely wet. The lawn was often damp, and I routinely have the greenest yard in August! This is acceptable to me.... I have no expectation of a truly dry basement. However, since the sewer and water work was done on Rose (including installation of fire hydrant on my property), the basement sometimes fills to the extent that the entire floor surface has been covered with water of 6 or more inches, my furnace chamber is rusting, and the control panels on the furnace were damaged by moisture to the extent that they needed to be replaced. Bob Wheeler, Clay Grooms, Ryan Blessing and techs from Michigan Dry Basement are among the local contractors who have joined Chris looking at my basement problems over the YEARS – this has been going on for over a decade – and FAR pre dates the “Great Lakes high water” of a few years ago, which just provided the Village with a temporary excuse to stall further.
6. Just to remind you all, in 2018/19 I spent about \$16,000 on a barrier system and new gutters to try to control water flow into/around this house – but it’s been ineffective. Demand was such that the first sump pump burned out in six months, and as you all know, I have an emerging swamp on the property line between my place and Erika’s – since there is simply nowhere for the water to go. I further spent \$3500 with Deering Tree in August of 2021 for the removal of the Sycamore late this summer in preparation for excavation when the village was prepared to partner with me on an plan to at least flow my sump discharge closer to the 4th St drain; and then within a few months, I was advised that I was “on my own.” As I started calling contractors to basically “dig my own ditch” – we came to this point in which it now appears the Village is indeed ready to resolve this issue in a comprehensive way.
7. I cannot tell you how happy I am to see this item appear on the capital budget list, awaiting a dollar evaluation following completion of the RFP work.

Thank you very much for taking this issue seriously, and let me know of any way I can be assistance.

Marcia Boynton

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