

FLOOD REVIEW BOARD

Date: December 17, 2020

Time: 8:30 AM, MST

Locations: Lake Estes Conference Room, 200 W. Oak St., Fort Collins, CO 80521 and remote via Zoom

Contact: Devin Traff, Larimer County Engineering Department

MEETING MINUTES

Staff Present: Devin Traff, Tina Kurtz

Board Members: Chris Thorton, Bets Ervin-Blankenheim, John Hunt, Chad Morris

Applicant Present: Jason Albert (Anderson Consulting Engineers, Inc), Charles Sonnier (Sanderson Stewart), Heidi Hanson (City of Fort Collins)

Ms. Ervin-Blankenheim opened the meeting at 8:33 a.m., MST

Introductions

Item #1: Review LOMR for reach of Cache La Poudre River

Mr. Traff gave an overview of the project.

The first item is a petition on behalf of Post-Modern Development for Board review of a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) and recommendation to the County Engineer whether to sign the FEMA MT-2 form for the LOMR application. The project is located along the Cache La Poudre River west of I-25 crossing at Harmony Road.

This LOMR will account for the floodplain impacts due to the fill material that was placed in a portion of the Cache La Poudre River flood fringe at the southeast corner of Harmony Road and Strauss Cabin on the subject property prior to 2009.

The property was annexed by the City of Fort Collins in 2009. The applicant is required to obtain a LOMR for the parcels involved in the project prior to further development, as part of the City's floodplain regulatory process. There are three parcels within unincorporated Larimer County that are impacted by this LOMR to varying degrees, therefore the County Engineer will have to sign the FEMA MT-2 form as part of the LOMR application.



Three conditions, the corrected effective model, existing condition and as-built condition, were modeled using a mosaic of topography to isolate impacts from the fill placed as part of this project from what was placed around Harmony Road in 2001.

There are two regulatory floodways in this area, the one-foot floodway as shown on the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM), and the six-inch floodway, which the County typically regulates to as it is the best available and most restrictive floodplain data. The 1-foot floodway appears to increase and decrease in County parcels, while the 0.5-foot floodway appears to generally decrease in County parcels.

A comparison of base flood elevations (BFE) for the three county parcels shows that one parcel has 0.02 foot increase in the BFE comparing post-project condition to existing condition, the other two parcels have decreases when comparing post-project to the existing, but there are some increases when comparing existing to effective and corrected effective.

Mr. Albert had the opportunity to speak about the project.

Mr. Albert mentioned that the approach to this project through the use of various topography data and not producing a duplicate effective model (note the effective model was done in HEC-2) was based on conversations with City staff and CDM Smith (FEMA contractor who processes map revisions).

He said the floodplain boundaries as shown on the original floodplain work maps in this study area were shifted when the work maps were digitized into the DFIRM format. A LOMR was completed in 2013 based on better data which shifted the floodplain boundaries downstream of Harmony Rd (within the project area), back to the original work map. The proposed LOMR will fix the DFIRM shift north of Harmony, although it will not have an impact on county properties.

He said there was a LOMR-F (Letter of Map Revision based on fill) filed for the northern portion of the property and the southern half of the property had a CLOMR-F (Conditional Letter of Map Revision based on fill), but it was never completed as LOMR-F.

There was discussion on how the split flow through this area was modeled, including an explanation from Mr. Albert as to why they chose the lateral weir coefficient used in their model. He said that weirs are a little more submerged, so it made the model a bit more stable. This situation better reflects the ground conditions as there are basically two parallel reaches through the project area.

There was discussion on the different topography used in each model run. Mr. Albert said that the fill wasn't in place in 1999, so the 1999 topography was used to isolate the effects of the fill on the existing conditions model. This model was run to isolate the changes that were made to Harmony Road in 2001.

It was mentioned that what the report calls the existing conditions model is pre-project. None of the models represent conditions as they exist today. Mr. Albert said the modeling verbiage was agreed to by the City and CDM Smith prior to beginning modeling for the LOMR.



There was discussion on the specificity of landowner notices. Mr. Hunt pointed out that the notices included with the application packet looked like a form letter and were not individualized for each landowner. Mr. Traff stated that he would work with Mr. Albert to get individualized letters to each impacted landowner once the Board approves a recommendation for the County Engineer to sign the MT-2 form. Mr. Traff said there will be a County notification which will include a map and a second notification with FEMA specified notification will be sent.

There is a county parcel within the study containing an insurable structure that will have a small rise. Mr. Albert has coordinated with FEMA on this issue and FEMA is willing to accept the LOMR with the proposed rise. He said that since all fill placed as part of this project was in the flood fringe and not in the floodway, it was confirmed by FEMA and the City that because no changes occurred within the floodway, rises on insurable structures were allowed up to 0.5 feet.

There was a question on whether this LOMR ties into RiskMAP model or the effective model. Mr. Albert said there are several studies currently ongoing in this area, but the goal for this project was to tie into the effective model. He said this project model ties into the effective model on the upstream and downstream end of the project area study limits. Mr. Traff asked if FEMA requested them to account for RiskMAP in the LOMR submittal to FEMA, as the RiskMAP preliminary maps coming out early next year.

Mr. Albert said they used the RiskMAP models Anderson Consulting Engineers had previously developed for the area south of Harmony Road. He said the RiskMAP discharge is approximately 1,000 cfs less than the effective discharge, so they used the larger discharge for this project.

Ms. Hansen mentioned that FEMA is asking them to tie projects into the effective model and RiskMAP so projects work with both models. This LOMR is tied into the effective model, but it will be superseded by RiskMAP in the near future, and it already takes all of the project fill into account. She said that the applicant had the option to wait for RiskMAP, which will remove the property from the floodplain, but the applicant did not want to wait on RiskMAP adoption. There are two other ongoing projects within this area, the CDOT I-25 project and the Poudre trail project, which will result in a LOMR for the entire reach including the subject property.

Mr. Traff noted the Board would approve the LOMR study as a whole, if so desired, but the County jurisdiction is only over the three unincorporated parcels. The County's signature on the MT-2 form represents that the study has been reviewed and it FEMA requirements for a LOMR.

Motion:

Mr. Thorton, motioned to approve the Letter of Map Revision as written and presented. Mr. Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 am MST