McHenry County’s Streamlined Permitting Process

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The Problem

For certain types of projects,
Permit Cost > Construction Cost

Stormwater Management Ordinance lacked the flexibility to ease permit requirements where necessary
Natural Resources

- Rivers and Lakes
- Wetlands
- Floodplains
urbanization in the county
mitigate the effects of
Adopted to manage and
Stormwater Ordinance
Stormwater Ordinance

Development:
Any man-made change to real estate by a private party or public entity
Stormwater Ordinance

Regulated Development
- Floodplain, Floodway, Flood Prone Areas
- Wetland Impacts
- Disturbance near Wetlands
Stormwater Ordinance

Minimum Submittal Requirements

- Grading Plan with Existing and Proposed Contours
- Most minor permit fee $230
Stormwater Ordinance

Additional Requirements for Special Management Areas

- Wetland Delineation
- Deed/Plat Restriction
- Compensatory Storage
- Plans prepared by a professional engineer
Intended to...

- Reduce the public burden
- Encourage permit applications
Steps Toward Adoption

- Technical Advisory Committee
- States Attorney's Office
- Stormwater Committee
- FEMA/IDNR
- Public Hearing
- County Board
Countywide Permits

- Utility Installation
- Shoreline and Streambank Stabilization
- Boardwalks, Trails, Patios
- Piers, Docks
- Topsoil and Sand Restoration
- Rehabilitation of Roads, Bridges, Culverts, Storm Sewers
General Conditions

- Less than 20,000 square feet
- Less than 0.10 acre wetland
- Impacts (Not High Quality)
- No impact of drainage or flood heights
Submittal Requirements

- Description/Depiction of Proposed Development
- Signed Permit Conditions
- Federal, State, Local Permits
- Before and After Photos (by County)
- Permit Fee
Utility Installation
Streambank Stabilization and Shoreline
Piers
Rehabilitation of Roads, Bridges, Culverts, Storm Sewers
How it’s Working

- How it has been received
- Most Commonly Used
  - Streambank and Shoreline Protection
  - Underground and Overhead Utilities
Lessons Learned

- Allow for more involvement from public/contractors to fit process better to projects
- After review process was complete, some conditions were more strict than a normal permit
- It is difficult to make language consistent with ordinance and other permits (temporary wetland impact)
- Decide how to deal with after-the-fact projects
- More communication is needed (office and field/reviewer owner)
- Requires more staff time/resources
Future Modifications

- Require applicant to provide photos with initial application
- More site time / interaction
- Add additional permit categories
  - Demolition
  - Farm Drainage Maintenance
  - Pools
  - Septic replacement
  - Restoration/enhancement projects
not need a full permit with simple projects that did allowing the flexibility to deal. The Countywide Permit. It's all ordinances are never one size.

Final Thoughts
Questions

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