



January 15, 2016

Mr. Greg Fedner, PE  
Private Development Section Manager  
Division of Sewerage & Drainage  
City of Columbus  
910 Dublin Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Subject: Stormwater Drainage Manual Variance Request-Future Upper Albany West 10

Dear Greg,

The Future Upper Albany West 10 is an 18.25 acre project, a portion of the 85.5 acre existing JO-EL Acres plat which was originally recorded in 1972, never improved, acquired by the current applicant May 6, 2005, and is currently in the process of being resubdivided. Upper Albany West 10 is a fully wooded tract of land located at the apex of both the Big Walnut and Rocky Fork watersheds. The project includes proposing a 76 lot subdivision which will connect to the existing Upper Albany West subdivision and include a 2.2 acre tree preservation park and offsite stormwater retention.

The Rocky Fork Creek is located about 1200 feet east of the project site. As part of this development, storm drainage is routed to a regional basin, detained & piped across adjacent land to Rocky Fork Creek. Hoover Reservoir is approximately 2 miles downstream and northwest of the project and the site acreage tributary to Hoover watershed (8.41 acres) currently sheet flows onto adjacent, active farmland which has no plans for redevelopment.

The project is formally requesting a variance to SWDM: Section 2.1.5 (cited below) to divert 6.86 acres of the 8.41 acres naturally tributary to Hoover Reservoir. The Hoover Reservoir watershed area is 121,600 acres and 5,670 acres to Rocky Fork at our outfall

**SWDM: Section 2.1.5 Stormwater System Diversions**

*The diversion of stormwater runoff from one watershed or receiving stormwater system to another is generally prohibited because such diversions have the potential to cause or exacerbate flooding, erosion, or water quality problems in receiving watercourses. For the purposes of the Manual, stormwater diversions are defined as the relocation of stormwater discharges from original receiving streams or stormwater systems to other systems that did not receive such discharges prior to construction. While it is recognized that stormwater runoff from small, onsite, tributary areas must be conveyed between catch basin subcatchments, the City will not allow the diversion of stormwater runoff from one major storm sewer system or open watercourse to another without proper documentation that includes proof of benefit and public comment. Stormwater system diversions between streams shall be considered on a case-by-case basis under circumstances where it can be shown that flooding and erosion will not increase and benefits to each watercourse can be achieved as a result of diverted flows. The diversion of any stormwater runoff from one stormwater system*

*or watercourse to another shall be at the sole discretion of the Administrator or his/her designee.*

**Water Quality Impact:**

None. Runoff will be treated per Ohio EPA requirements.

**Water Quantity Impact:**

The diverted runoff will be over-detained within the basin with its outlet restricted to that of allowable release rates of the Rocky Fork tributary.

**Site Conditions**

This 6.86 acres is approximately 2 miles from the Hoover Reservoir while only 0.3 miles from Rocky Fork. This area is heavily wooded and the developer has previously committed to protecting/preserving and dedicating to the City 2.2± acres of Park/trees. The 6.86 wooded acres is the southern-most limit of the Hoover Reservoir Watershed with no defined outlet. The lack of defined outlet would warrant a dependency on the adjacent property owner to permit installation of approximately 0.5 miles of storm sewer to reach a viable ditch while not interfering with the owner's active farmland. The financial hardships to the developer to meet full compliance include the cost associated with purchase of said access, cost of construction of said offsite storm sewer, and the inability to develop 1.7 acres of site (9.3% of site) which results in a direct loss of 9 lots on site.

**Zoning Commitments**

The zoning commitments don't allow a basin to be installed at the northwest corner of the site as the wooded area is required to be preserved along the rear lot line of the existing Upper Albany West lots. This affects the No Impact and Minimal Impact alternatives from proposing a basin in this area, which would of preserved the lot count proposed with the Preferred Alternative.

In support of the variance request, we are providing exhibits of existing conditions and three (3) design alternatives as outlined in the SWDM. The discussions provided below elaborate on the alternatives and how each relate to the SWDM.

**Preferred Development Plan**

This design provides full development of the site and diversion of 6.86 acres of land to Rocky Fork Creek. Storm sewers will carry water to the off-site basin and provide water quality and quantity control for all disturbed acreage, prior to releasing into the Rocky Fork.

**No Impact Alternative**

This option while in full compliance, results in an additional 0.5 miles of sewer for the City to maintain for the sole purpose of 6.86 acres of development. A wet basin is being proposed along the north side of the development. To keep the proposed grades of the subdivision close to existing grade, the wet basin doesn't have a viable outlet. In order to get to a viable outlet, a storm sewer is needed across the adjacent farm field to the north. It requires both agreements (not guaranteed) and compensation to an adjacent property owner in order to install and maintain said sewer and obtain easement, and results in substantial hardship to the applicant with the loss of developable land and added construction costs in order to provide this outlet.

Minimal Impact Alternative

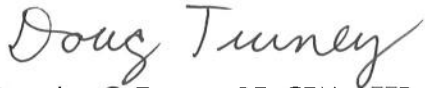
This option provides minimal impact to the SWDM by only diverting 1.05 acres to the Rocky Fork watershed. This option installs a wet basin also along the northern property line, but at a much higher elevation so it can daylight within our property boundary and then flow across the adjacent agricultural field to the north. Significant fill is required to raise the site high enough to install storm sewer and outlet to the pond which has to have a normal pool higher than existing grade since this option is not proposing to install an offsite storm sewer. This causes 0.48 acres of road R/W to be direct released to the east property line as the road is too low to drain back to the proposed basin. This area would not receive water quality treatment. The benefit to this option is that it has eliminated the dependence on the adjacent property owner and associated cost of a 0.5 mile sewer. The hardship of the additional fill (up to 4' within roadway) and associated grading challenges needed to accommodate an outlet at grade makes this option unreasonable and the lack of water quality treatment for a portion of the site.

Due to all of the reasons stated above, we respectfully request your approval of this variance.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. My direct line is (614) 775-4213.

Sincerely,

EVANS, MECHWART, HAMBLETON & TILTON, INC.



Douglas C. Turney, PE, CFM, LEED AP  
Green Infrastructure Practice Leader