

Normal Neighborhood Plan Working Group

Thank you for another great discussion. The wetlands/conservation/riparian/open spaces certainly generated a lively discussion. Land that is wet is important for so many reasons, and certainly needs to be treated with respect.

- 1) **Wildlife corridor**-Many creatures depend upon these narrow corridors. Grey fox, opossum, raccoon, skunk, deer, lizards, frogs, bears, coyotes and cougars regularly walk through the wet areas. A cougar was shot several years back in Wingspread, and probably others have visited since. A bear slept in the cottonwoods in Cemetery Creek this past spring, and a pack of coyotes often sings just below my house. These same corridors are very important migration routes for birds, and I'm amazed at the variety of species.
- 2) **Floodplain**-This hasn't been discussed much, but water must go somewhere. Some folks are saying that Cemetery Creek isn't that wet. I agree, except when a heavy rain comes, or a blockage releases upstream. The water really rushes by, and comes from somewhere and needs to go somewhere. The gentleman that said his land is dry must miss the wet times, as I do see cattails on his site. Cemetery Creek has native cottonwoods, willows and cattails.
- 3) I hope that the latest FEMA flood plan has been consulted. My house just misses Ashland's Modified Flood Zone by two houses. It would be so easy for Clay Creek or Cemetery Creek to cause problems in the future. The HOA for Meadowbrook Park Estates had to have many cottonwoods cut down that were threatening houses (built before the current setback rules). After the trees were cut, our HOA paid for removal of the boulders and grass, and a replanting of all native plants in accordance with Ashland's current riparian guidelines.
- 4) **Visual appreciation and value**-These green areas are sometimes spoken of as a problem or impediment to construction. How about the added property value? Why not embrace the greenbelts as special to the area? I actually bought my house after looking around Ashland and deciding that Cemetery Creek was special and would enhance the quality of my life. Is the Normal Plan being crafted for the neighborhoods or the builders?
- 5) **Water issues**-I lived in Chautauqua Trace before I purchased in MPE. The Trace homes were built on wet areas, and the wetlands were mitigated to a very small section. Well, many of the houses have water in the crawlspace, and the lawns are often saturated. One day our HOA gardener was mowing, when a large sinkhole opened under him. Fortunately he didn't fall in! The hole was deep and fairly large, but that can happen when wetlands and flow aren't respected.

Thank you for all you do.

Respectively,

Jan Vidmar

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