

The following is an excerpt from a report on the April 5 meeting of the Walton Village Board regarding flood prevention in the Village of Walton.

By Glenn Graves

In other business, the board was given a presentation by the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and a consultant, Rick Weidt, who was hired through a Catskill Watershed Corporation Grant, to do a study on stream hydraulics and flood prevention for the village. Weidt said that much of the repetitive flooding problems in Walton could be alleviated by reclaiming some of the floodplains that have been filled and removing selected debris that accumulated in streams and along stream banks.

SWCD Executive Director Rick Weidenbach said that with some fundamental actions, that don't cost a lot of money, the village may be able to reduce the occurrence of damaging floods and the amount of damage. He commended the board and Mayor Ed Snow for taking the initiative to have the study done.

Weidenbach said that most people don't understand the nature of streams. "A stream's job isn't to move water," he said, "A stream's job is to move sediment." He said that when the stream is carrying large volumes of sediment, as during a flood, and comes up against a greater flow, the sediment can be deposited in a spot that increases flooding, such as at the confluence of east Brook and the west branch of the Delaware River.

Weidenbach also said that floodplains are considered an integral part of a stream, "And, guess what? Two-thirds of Walton is built on a floodplain." Weidt said the village would be wise to restrict floodplain filling and reclaim any floodplains that haven't been developed. Snow said he had spoken with Weidenbach and Weidt earlier and they had decided that it might be wise for the village to form a flood control commission to look at problems and search for solutions. Weidenbach said that he wasn't aware of any small communities that have taken such a "proactive" initiative and suggested funding opportunities for flood control measures, planning and mitigation may be more available for a community "demonstrating such concern."

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