MEETING NOTICE

THERE WILL BE A MEETING OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AT 6:30 P.M. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1991 AT THE OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION 8149 KENNEDY AVENUE HIGHLAND, INDIANA

AGENDA

1. Call to Order by Chairperson Arlene Colvin
2. Recognition of Visitors, Guests
3. Approval of minutes of November 7, 1991
4. Selection of Nominating Committee for 1992 officers
5. Executive Director's Report
   • Groundbreaking ceremony report
   • Federal Project Construction update
   • Presentation to Gary City Council members on 11/18
6. Reports of Standing Committees

A. Finance/Policy Committee - Clyde Baughard, Treasurer

- Financial status report
- Approval of claims for November, 1991
- Committee meeting held on 12/4 to prepare 1992 budget
- Adoption of NIPRPC contract for administrative services
- Other issues

B. Land Acquisition/Management Committee - Charles Agnew, Chairman

- Committee meeting at 5:30 p.m.
- Appraisals, offers, acquisitions, recommended actions
- Other issues

D. Interim Flood Relief Projects Report - Clyde Baughard, Chairman

- Conrail R.R. culverts reconstruction project report by Mike Kerr, Tenney Pavoni
- Report on Indpls. Blvd. area sediment removal project
- Other issues

E. Breakwaters/Marina Committee - Bill Tanke, Chairman

- Recommendation for selection of consultant services - engineering/financial analysis
- Presentation to GAC meeting on 11/20
- Status of NIPSCO sale of surplus lots
- Other issues

7. Other Business

8. Statements to the Board from the floor

9. Set date for next meeting; adjournment
MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:30 P.M. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1991
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICES
8149 KENNEDY AVENUE, HIGHLAND, INDIANA

Chairperson Arlene Colvin called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. Eight (8) Commissioners were present. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:
George Carlson
Clyde Baughard
Charles Agnew
Dave Springman
Nathaniel Leonard
Steve Davis
Arlene Colvin
John DeMeo

Visitors:
Pete Zak - South Shore Marina
Mary Jane Zak - " "
Richard Bundy - Salmon Unltd.
John Bach - Town of Highland
Bill Leets - Hobart
Herb Read - Izaak Walton
James Flora - R.W. Armstrong
Dick Wawrzeniak - DNR, Div. of Water
Bob Huffman - Munster

Staff:
Dan Gardner
Lou Casale
Sandy Nordus

The minutes of the October 3rd, 1991 meeting were amended to reflect that Commissioner John DeMeo was present at the meeting (his name had been deleted from attendance list) and that Bill Critser was not present at the meeting (his name was listed as present). The minutes were approved by a motion from Clyde Baughard; motion seconded by Dave Springman; motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report: Mr. Gardner invited all Commissioners to attend the groundbreaking ceremony for the first phase construction to be held at 10:00 a.m. Friday, November 8th. It will be held at north Gleason Park off Broadway in Gary.
Mr. Gardner referred to letter from FEMA to the town of Highland regarding the federal decision to not participate in a buyout program. Mr. Gardner further stated that the Commission will pursue the Section 215 and work toward funding the interim levee at Wicker Park Manor following the four conditions adopted by the Board. He further stated that SEH was selected by DNR as the consultant to design the interim levee. A scoping meeting was held with SEH, the Corps, DNR, town of Highland to discuss the design. Pursuance of the 215 cannot be completed until there is a design sketch plan.

Mr. Gardner further stated he needs to meet with the Governor's office to talk about what they can provide to us in terms of commitment. Since it was the state that came to the Commission looking for funding, they should be able to make a commitment for repayment of monies. A lengthy discussion was held regarding the issue.

Federal flood control project report: Phase II DNR permit review is ongoing. Dyer Construction is on the site working on Phase I construction. They are doing some preliminary ditch work that will precede actual levee construction.

Mr. Gardner attended a meeting at the Corps office addressing the issue of "value engineering recreation planning". He referred to correspondence stating the changes in recreation planning for a savings of over $2 million. The proposed changes will pose minimal loss to the recreation portion. The Commission has approved the changes. Changes are (1) eliminate Site 4 as a recreation area. Improve Site 5 by adding amenities such as handicapped parking, picnic areas, grills & landscaping; (2) reduce the size & height of observation deck at Site 5; (3) place comfort station at Site 2 closer to parking lot to shorten utility runs, and (4) eliminate electrical service to comfort stations at Sites 1 & 2.

Mr. Gardner informed Commission he met with Gary officials on October 11th to discuss the storm drainage/sewers in Black Oak.

Mr. Gardner stated he made a presentation to the Munster citizens who live along the river at the Munster Town Hall. The meeting was scheduled at the request of the town officials. The Corps was also present.
Mr. Gardner introduced Jim Flora from R. W. Armstrong, our project engineer, who briefly addressed the Board. He stated he had reviewed plans and specifications for the first phase and has had conversations with the Corps regarding such. Mr. Flora highlighted 4 items of concern to him: They are (1) long term settlement of the levee and what could be expected as to maintenance problems to the Commission; (2) culvert under Harrison Street; (3) borrow site supplied by the government; and (4) vandalism that may occur regarding settlement points installed in the ground for gate wells. These issues would be pursued with the Corps technical staff for further detail.

Finance/Policy Committee - Treasurer Clyde Baughard presented the financial status report for October as well as the claims. Mr. Baughard made a motion to approve the pending claims; motion seconded by John DeMeo; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Baughard will schedule a finance meeting before the next monthly meeting to talk about the 1992 budget.

Land Acquisition/Management Committee - Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew gave the land acquisition report. Mr. Agnew made a motion instructing the attorney to proceed with condemnation for needed Phase II properties. They are DC116 (Kensey), DC117 (Davis) and DC360 (Busch Raymond). Motion was seconded by John DeMeo; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Agnew made a motion to roll over the existing lease with Marquette Yacht Club for the same monies to cover the boating season of 1992; motion seconded by Clyde Baughard; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Agnew made a motion to enter into an agreement with the Corps to allow right-of-entry upon Commission land to perform tests for pre-consolidation contingent upon property being verified it is indeed Commission-owned and agreement must be approved by attorney; motion seconded by John DeMeo; motion passed unanimously.

Legislative Committee - Mr. Gardner announced staff would be doing a legislative update in the near future to be mailed to all area legislators, especially the new ones who have not been involved in the planning stages of the project, outlining what the Commission financial needs will be in the future.
Interim Flood Committee - Committee Chairman Clyde Baughard reported that Dyer Construction is on site and ready to begin the culvert replacement project at ConRail the beginning of the week. He also reported that Hammond and Highland are pursuing removing the sediment from the river at Indianapolis Blvd. site. John Bach, Public Works Director for the town of Highland, informed the Commission that all permits are in hand and when the weather breaks, Dyer Construction is ready to work. They have their equipment at the site.

Marina/Breakwater Committee - In Committee Chairman Bill Tanke's absence, Mr. Gardner reported that the trip to St. Joseph, MI to view several marinas was very informative. John Hannon from Portage accompanied several Commissioners on the outing. He also reported that another meeting was held with NIPSCO in regard to their property on marina site. The Mayor was also present. Steps to acquire the surplus NIPSCO property will be started by the attorney. Mr. Casale will contact appraisers to assign an appraised value to the property.

Mr. Gardner also stated that several engineering firms will be solicited, in addition to public legal announcement, in order to secure an engineering/financial analysis plan for the Portage public marina. The solicitation will address five points: (1) project development layout, (2) preliminary engineering feasibility detailing project facilities and features, (3) material specifications and cost estimates of facilities proposed suitable for preparing construction specifications; (4) prospective financial analysis of project costs, income projections, debt service limits, slip rate/distribution recommendations and a determination of financial feasibility; and (5) recommended project financing scheme with fund amounts and sources identified and project phasing outlined. Mr. Agnew made a motion to approve the solicitation and advertise; motion seconded by Nathaniel Leonard; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Agnew then made a motion to adopt Resolution 91-2 which is a resolution of support urging the Lake Michigan Marina Development Commission to allocate one million dollars to the city of Portage from the Commission's 1991-93 biennial budget appropriation for needed public marina development in Portage; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.
LCRBDC Minutes  
November 7, 1991  
Page 5

Mr. Baughard made a motion to send the draft letter to Frank Sullivan of the State Budget Agency addressing 87/88 monies not yet appropriated to the city of Portage. The letter urged appropriating the remaining $776,000 to Portage so they could use it toward the public marina project; motion seconded by Dave Springman; motion passed unanimously.

Statements from floor - Herb Read, Izaak Walton, urged the Commission not to lose sight of the recreational green belt corridor along the river. His concern is the open space that is there be preserved. He urged the Commission continuing to secure the green belt right-of-way.

Richard Bundy, Salmon Unltd., expressed his concern about the new Kennedy Avenue interchange design. He feels that the way it is designed, all the water is going to go south and Highland will be inundated with even more water.

John Bach, town of Highland, inquired about the possibility of the consultant, SEB, to attend a session with the Town Council to talk about the design of the interim levee for Wicker Park Manor. Mr. Gardner informed him that it would be a good idea for that to happen and Highland will be included in the entire process of discussions/meetings concerning the levee.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next meeting date was set for December 5, 1991.

/sjm
Little Cal flood control project unleashed

By WHIT ANDREWS
Times Staff Writer

If the Little Calumet River’s waters ever get past the curb, Dorothy Muir is ready to get the piano up on cinder blocks.

The washer and dryer will join the instrument on makeshift stilts, she said, and the less essential – and more portable – items will be taken care of in phase two of her plan for foiling the flood.

Muir, 65, saw the floodwaters advance their farthest toward her Ham mond home on River Drive when they reached the curb during a summer downpour in June 1980. And she hopes she never has to put her plan into action.

Toward that end, officials will gather today in Gary for the formal groundbreaking of the Little Calumet River Flood Control and Recreation Project.

The project has been in the works for more than two decades, as U.S. and state lawmakers cast around for the more than $80 million the corridor park and revamped levee system is expected to cost.

Officials believe the project will protect 9,000 buildings from flooding. Damage to those structures from overflowing waters is believed to top $9 million annually, officials said.

In addition to 3,500 acres of homes, the project should protect a 4,000-acre corridor park along the river and open 5,000 acres of marginal land for development.

Muir never expected to see a flood control plan begun, but it’s a welcome start.

“After hearing what those people in...” See LITTLE, Page B-2

Little

Continued from Page B-1

Wicker Park went through,” she said, “I wouldn’t want that to happen to me.”

Last year, a flood in Highland’s Wicker Park Manor displaced 300 people, who lost much of their homes’ contents to 10 feet of rushing water.

Protection from floodwaters also will increase property values, Muir said.

That by-product of the public works project also has occurred to Duane Dedelow Jr., whose home on Southmoor Drive has had floodwaters come within a few feet of it.

Dedelow, who was elected to the City Council on Tuesday, said he likes the privacy and scenery the river provides, and is prepared to dike off his house if necessary to protect it.

But he would rather the levy project protect his home without such drastic measures, and without a need to call the Hammond civil defense for sandbags, he said.
Start of Little Cal project marked

Post-Tribune staff report

GARY — Public officials Friday formally marked the beginning of the long-awaited Little Calumet River flood control and recreation project.

Although some site preparation work began as long as a year ago, the officials gathered at Indiana University Northwest to note that the $92.3 million project that has been a quarter-century in the making was underway.

"Federal money is now being spent on something other than studies," said Dan Gardner, executive director of the Little Calumet River Basin Commission, the local non-federal sponsor of the project.

The federal government is providing $63.8 million of the funding, with the balance coming from state and local sources.

To date, the Indiana General Assembly has committed $16 million to the project.

Other speakers at the IUN ceremony included Gary Mayor Thomas V. Barnes; state Sen. Earline Rogers, D-Gary; Lt. Col. Randall R. Inouye of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which planned and designed the Little Calumet project; Arlene Colvin, chairwoman of the basin commission; and representatives of U.S. Sens. Richard Lugar and Dan Coats, U.S. Rep. Peter Visclosky and Gov. Evan Bayh.

Dyer Construction Co. has begun work on the first levee along the river, from Harrison Street to Broadway in Gary.

The company received a $358,158 contract for the work, Gardner said.

When completed in 1996, the project will give flood protection to 9,600 homes and businesses in Gary, Griffith, Highland and Munster through replacement of 9.5 miles of existing levees, and construction of 12.2 miles of new river levees plus 9.7 miles of levees set back from the river.

Seven miles of the river will be dredged and 16.8 miles of hiking trails will be constructed.
STATE TO SPEND $91 MILLION TO HOLD BACK LITTLE CALUMET’S WATER

By WHIT ANDREWS
Times Staff Writer

U

nally, the Little Calumet River in eastern
Lake County is a trickle whose identity is
so weak that it flows both east and west,
depending on how hard the rain is falling
at which end.

But when the big rains come, it swells into a
formidable rope of water, capable of surging across an
expansive floodplain including almost 5,000 homes.

In an ambitious plan to contain the swollen phase
of the river—which between the state line and Martin
Luther King Drive serves as drainage for some 100
square miles of watershed—the Little Calumet River
Basin Development Commission plans to spend more
than $91 million in the next six or seven years.

Officials say that the project will halt the river’s
flooding in Munster, Highland, Griffith, Hammond
and Gary, opening acres of land for development
while preserving a swath of marsh in southern Gary.

Other features include miles of new levees, renovations
to highway bridges and almost 17 miles of hiking
trails and similar recreation facilities in a corridor park.

The mammoth Little Calumet River Flood Con-

trol/Recreation Project plan was launched by state
Sen. Birch Bayh in the mid-1960s after several signifi-
cant floods in the previous decade.

It has had several powerful sponsors since then,
necessary to hold the legislature to putting away about
$1 million annually since 1975 to pay the state’s $16.5
million portion of the project.

The first federal money was spent several weeks
ago as crews started work on new levees in Gary.

An originally projected finish date of 1996 is overly
optimistic, but completion by the end of the decade is
probable, said Dan Gardner, executive director of the
river basin commission.

The project will include nearly 10 miles of new leve-
es in Gary and Griffith, mostly surrounding a marsh
motorists cross on the Brown Expressway.

Much stronger levees also will replace flood barri-
ers in towns east of Ind. 912, totaling about 10 more

FLOOD TIMELINE: A chronology of events surrounding the flood

Nov. 27, 1998
Rains begin

Gov. Evan Bayh declares
Wicker Park Manor
disaster area; orders investigation into
flood’s cause

Dec. 3
Flood victims

and officials allowed into
homes for 30 minutes

Dec. 10
EPA says further tests show homes are free of
PCBs; residents allowed back into homes

Dec. 20
Bayh orders construction of
emergency levee to replace one
that was moved by Tri State
Consolidated during packing lot
construction earlier this year

Feb. 1991
Federal Emergency
Management Agency
announces to drop buyout plan

March 15
Emergency dike
construction completed
except for a survey

Nov. 11
Dredging begins on
Little Calumet

Present
Officials continue to seek
funding for permanent
defense around Wicker Park Manor

Late October
Federal Emergency
Management Agency
announces to drop buyout plan

See STATE, Page A-8
Alert officials can spot warning signs of floods

By WHIT ANDREWS
Times Staff Writer

To know the Little Calumet River flood will come, watch the spiky cold-front line on the weather maps.

When rain is falling along that line and it stops moving over Northwest Indiana, get out the sandbags.

That's how alert officials spot flood conditions, said Ronald Janke, chairman of the Meteorology Department at Valparaiso University.

Such a situation cannot be predicted months in advance, he said, or even weeks. A couple of days is usually the most warning anyone has.

Most often, what happens is upper air winds bend unusually and bar the cold front from passing to the east, he said.

Less common circumstances leading to a stalled front include what happened in early November of this year, when a strong storm off the East Coast halted land weather and kept it inland, he said.

The situations leading to floods have become more frequent in recent years, Janke said, as extremes play a greater role in weather conditions.

Familiar ranges of normal weather to which meteorologists had grown accustomed started to fade about 10 years ago, he said.

A series of several "100-year floods" since 1985 in the area has pointed up the unpredictability of old standards, he said.

The once-reliable 1 percent chance of getting such a deluge in any given year has collapsed as various factors have contributed to drastic weather changes, Janke said.

Meteorologists are debating whether weather is changing because of the expected tilt of Earth's axis away from the sun, the "greenhouse effect," or more exotic causes such as sunspots, he said.

But the most likely possibility is that changes can be attributed to all of the above factors plus others not yet fully understood, he said, explaining the tendency to extremes instead of to a single trend of warmer or cooler temperatures.

State

Continued from Page A-7

miles of levees.

In the same area, 12.2 miles of new levees are to be built, as is a "diversion structure," a huge pond expected to serve as a retention basin at the intersection of the river and the Hart Ditch on the border of Highland and Munster.

This final design comes as an alternative to an original Army Corps of Engineers design that called for the river to be widened to 200 feet from its current 40- to 50-foot size, Gardner said.

Such a project was untenable, he said, not least because of the homes it would require to be destroyed along the river.

Federal regulations protecting wetlands eventually led to a compromise, he said, which is now in final form.

Whatever the government ends up doing won't be affecting a pristine waterway, said Terry McCloskey, regional vice president of the Izaak Walton league.

That's because the river was irrevocably altered during Chicago public works projects at the end of the last century, McCloskey said, which turned it from a tributary of Lake Michigan into a drainage ditch.

The river connects to Lake Michigan at two points, one in Cook County and one in LaPorte County. The waterway's high point is at Indianapolis Boulevard, from which it tends to flow one way or the other.

What the project will do for flood protection is spectacular, Gardner said.

Built to withstand a so-called 200-year flood, statistically predicted to have a one-half of 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year, the protection system will keep the river out of all residential areas, he said.

According to the calculated floodplain, that includes houses as far south from the riverbank as Broadmoor Avenue in Munster.

The new levees for the section between Ind. 912 and the Indiana-Illinois state line will replace levees that the Army Corps of Engineers has not certified — which means that for federal purposes, they do not exist.

The fact that the project is taking place only on the Indiana of the state line also has contributed to some interesting features.

After a series of disputes between Illinois and Indiana as they started to consider flood-control projects for the river, state officials signed a pact that allows neither jurisdiction to hit the other with more floodwaters because of its project.

That reinforced the need for retention basins on either side, Gardner said that Illinois is preparing to use abandoned quarries for its needs, and the Indiana project includes the massive pond at Hart Ditch to keep water from backing into Illinois.

Also, the 800 acres of wetlands enclosed in the levees and protected from development will serve not only as a wildlife habitat but as a sponge for floodwaters — called "overbank storage" in flood-control jargon.

Wetlands also help to filter pollutants out of runoff before they contaminate waterways. Artificial wetlands are being built in some parts of the country to filter runoff from new developments.

"The water quality in the Little Cal isn't too good," said Bob Robertson, district fisheries biologist for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. "But it would be a lot worse without those wetlands."

Because the water quality is not the best, he said, most of the species officials believe to live in the river are the sort that are resistant to poor water quality: brown bullhead catfish, carp, green sunfish.
# LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

**MERCANTILE NATIONAL BANK**

**JANUARY 1, 1991 - OCTOBER 31, 1991**

## CASH POSITION - JANUARY 1, 1991

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## RECEIPTS - JANUARY 1, 1991-October 31, 1991

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## DISBURSEMENTS - JANUARY 1, 1991-OCTOBER 31, 1991

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## CASH POSITION - OCTOBER 31, 1991

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Little Cal dredging to begin

Wet weather, other projects, lack of permit delayed work for nearly a month

By RADA INDJICH
Times Staff Writer

HIGHLAND - After delay of nearly a month, dredging of the Little Calumet River near Wicker Park Manor subdivision is slated to begin either today or Wednesday.

Harold Maupin, an estimator for Dyer Construction Co. of Dyer, which was contracted to do the work, said Monday the wet weather has hampered efforts to dredge.

Juggling other work assignments also slowed dredging; Dyer had expected to begin the work in mid-October.

But perhaps the biggest obstacle came when town officials discovered that before dredging could be done, they first had to receive a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the federal agency that oversees the nation's waterways. That permit was received last month.

The subdivision, south of the river at 81st Street and Indianapolis Boulevard, was devastated 11 months ago when floodwaters poured over an embankment lowered by Tri-State Coach Lines when the firm built a parking lot.

That embankment has since been raised.

To improve the river's flow, 700 feet of the river will be dredged: 350 west of Indianapolis Boulevard and 350 east of it.

Once work begins, Maupin estimated it will take about two weeks to complete.

Dredging will cost $43,450. Seventy-five percent of that will be paid for by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The remaining 25 percent will be split equally between the town and the city of Hammond, which borders the river on the north.
Crews begin Little Calumet dredging project

By RADA INDIICH
Times Staff Writer

HIGHLAND – After nearly a month's delay, dredging of the Little Calumet River near the Wicker Park Manor subdivision began Tuesday in an effort to prevent potential flooding by improving the river's flow.

Work should be finished by Thanksgiving, and when it's all over, there will be enough silt dragged from the river's bottom to fill a two-story building 40 feet wide and 100 feet long, said Harold Maupin.

Maupin is an estimator for the Dyer Construction Co. of Dyer, which is being paid $43,400 to scoop out about 3,300 cubic yards of the river's bottom.

About 700 feet of the river will be dredged: 350 feet west of Indianapolis Boulevard and 350 feet east of it. The dredgings, Maupin said, will be spread out on the river's north bank.

Before dredging could begin Tuesday, crews had to yank six steel pilings from the river west of Indianapolis Boulevard. The pilings were left from a structure that once had spanned the river.

The trickiest part of the job will be dredging under the Indianapolis Boulevard bridge. To do that, crews first will have to build two dikes from bank to bank, drain the water between the banks and then dredge the riverbed.

Maupin said as long as the river doesn't rise, he doesn't anticipate any problems with dredging under the bridge. But if it does rise, crews will have to wait until waters recede before dredging that portion.

Although Dyer had dredging equipment at the river by mid-October, the work was delayed because a permit first had to be secured from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

See DREDGING, Page A-7

Dredging

Continued from Page A-1

While waiting for the permit, the river rose enough to delay work again.

Then Dyer had to arrange its work schedule to begin dredging.

The Wicker Park Manor subdivision, south of the river at 81st Street and Indianapolis Boulevard, was ravaged 11 months ago when floodwaters poured over an embankment lowered by Tri State Coach Lines when the firm built a parking lot. That embankment has since been raised.

Seventy-five percent of the dredging cost will be paid for by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The remaining 25 percent will be split equally between the town and the city of Hammond, which borders the river on the north.
Dredging to increase flow of Little Cal

By Tim Zorn

HIGHLAND — The Little Calumet River could flow more freely past the Indianapolis Boulevard bridge in a few weeks.

A Highland-sponsored dredging project, to remove islands of silt that built up in the riverbed since last November, began this week.

"It'll eliminate the bottleneck we've been trying to get out," Highland Public Works Director John Bach said of the project. "It'll allow the river to flow more efficiently."

The silt buildup is a remnant of last November's flood, in which the rain-swelled Little Calumet River inundated a Highland neighborhood.

Highland officials, concerned that the silt could cause the river to back up and overflow again after a heavy rainfall, originally thought that a state agency would clean out the river.

In September, the town decided to take over the project because of bureaucratic delays in state government.

Last month, Dyer Construction Co. won the dredging contract with a $43,450 bid.

Bach said he expects the project will be finished by Thanksgiving.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is expected to reimburse the town for most of the project's costs, Bach has said. The town expects to split the rest of the costs with Hammond; the river forms the boundary between Hammond and Highland.

Highland still is waiting to hear from the state about another flood-control measure — replacing the Indianapolis Boulevard bridge. The bridge is the lowest point in the levee system along the riverbank, and the bridge deck sits only a few feet over the water level.

The town has asked the state to replace the bridge next year, when the Indiana Department of Transportation will rebuild the nearby Indianapolis Boulevard interchange with the Nor- man Expressway.

But Bach said the last word he had is that the state plans doesn't replace the bridge until 1995.

The current bridge's pilings trap debris when the river is high, Bach said. Also, he said, closing the bridge during floods cripples traffic.

The bridge deck needs to be raised eight to 10 feet, he said.

John Ewen drives the dragline to dredge the Little Calumet River near the Indianapolis Boulevard bridge in Highland.
Disaster prompted work to prevent another flood

By WHIT ANDREWS
Times Staff Writer

Last year's crest that deluged Wicker Park Manor came after drenching rains that first soaked the ground, then poured down the watershed to swell the Little Calumet River.

Could it happen again? Nobody can predict when or where, so area officials are working to foil the rise of the river.

Several factors can combine to increase the likelihood of flooding.

See DISASTER, Page A-12

Volunteer rescue workers carry a Highland resident from her flooded home last November.

Highland, Wicker Park Manor is a neighborhood of curving streets lined with mature trees. Isolated from the rest of the town of about 23,000, the subdivision is nestled in the shadow of an overpass in a shallow valley on the south bank of the Little Calumet River.

Many who travel U.S. 41 were oblivious to the few hundred homes hidden from view east of the stoplight at 81st Street — until the subdivision flooded Nov. 28, 1990.

The disaster focused all of Northwest Indiana on the 263 homes that were devastated and the hundreds left homeless. They were moved from their beds in the early hours of that day to be taken to the town's community center while floodwaters rushed over an embankment that had been lowered when nearby Tri State Coach Lines enlarged its parking lot.

Rain storms pummeled Lake County, dumping an estimated 6 inches of water in less than a day. When floodwaters crested over the embankment, nearly 3 million gallons filled the subdivision, the tide reaching to 6 feet in some living rooms.

Since then, residents have struggled with every level of government and the bureaucrats who go along with it, seeking to get their lives in order.

The shock initially left them angry and vocal. Meetings with officials to explain options and constraints often erupted into shouting matches.

When the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reported floodwaters that had engulfed 120 of the homes on the subdivision's north side contained cancer-causing polychlorinated biphenyls nearly 25 times higher than federal health standards allow, their emotions turned to fear and outrage.

The report, released about a week after the flood, prompted the Indiana State Board of Health to bar residents from entering their homes until they could be certain the area was safe.

Further tests by the EPA showed nearly half the homes thought to be contaminated by PCBs were free of the substance and residents were allowed back into their homes. But many remained skeptical.

How could PCBs in such a dangerous quantity be found and then just disappear? No one seemed to have an answer.

Shortly before Christmas, Gov. Evan Bayh ordered reconstruction of a levee to “replace one that was moved by Tri State Coach Lines during parking lot construction.” A later investigation ordered by Bayh into the flood’s cause again blamed Tri State. The reconstruction was completed three months later.

As residents began the arduous cleanup of their homes, they also grappled with temporary housing, deciding whether to rebuild their homes, how to finance reconstruction and other related issues.

For those who qualified, low-interest loans became available through the Small Business Administration. A buyout of homes with extensive damage was sought from the federal government, but not without complications.

See FLOOD, Page A-12
**Disaster**

Continued from Page A-1

along the river that winds through Lake County and into Illinois.

Water on the Little Calumet rises swiftly when a great deal of rain falls on saturated ground. Depending on how dry the soil is, a heavy rain over a short period can have little effect — or it can bring the waters up the levee in short order.

Among other flood contributors are increased development, which allows less soil to soak up rain, and unusually snow melt.

To fend off a flood, officials say sufficiently high and well-maintained levees are needed.

Calumet City, for instance, has spent the past year upgrading barriers that withstand 1990’s smashing flood crests, the city engineer said.

The levees — not even 10 years old — are built to withstand a water rush at a point short of the 100-year flood. Russ Prekwas said. A 100-year flood is one of such intensity that it is likely to occur only once a century.

“We make sure they’re not eroding,” he said, “and the city performs the appropriate maintenance measures before they make decisions about how to stop floods from sweeping through town.”

Damage to levees, whether from human error, a stray tree root or burning rowdies, can have tragic consequences.

A state investigation blamed the 1990 Highland flooding on a levee that was lowered during construction of a bus terminal parking lot, allowing water from the swollen Little Calumet to rush across Indianapolis Boulevard and into the Wicker Park Manor subdivision.

That levee has since been rebuilt, and Highland is prepared to reinforce another levee that is at its lowest point of the river’s intersection with Indianapolis Boulevard.

Per 1990, officials are waiting for the results of a $230,000 flood control study before they make decisions about how to stop floods from sweeping through town.

In the meantime, said an official in the village’s building office who asked not to be identified, the village needs capability to deal with such emergencies.

A chance to carry out one of its new strategies came several weeks ago, when a digging mishap outside town cut off telephone service for about 1,200 village residents.

Officials broadcast information over the phone’s cable TV service about how to get to a mobile telephone in case of an emergency. It was the first real-life test of the system, part of a pact the village and the company reached in the past several months, the official said.

The kind of crisis management the village will concentrate on until the study’s results are known, the official said.

The village will include such detail as a topographical map accurate to one-foot increments, allowing officials to see at a glance what areas are flooded at any flood stage.

**Flood**

Continued from Page A-1

The initial plan, formulated by a flood expert hired by the town, called for a buyout of homes north of 81st Street, where the majority were heavily damaged. The expert believed the buyout application had been accepted by the federal government.

But an outcry from flood victims who called the plan discriminatory later prompted the town to allow anyone with federal flood insurance to apply for a buyout.

Initially, 162 homeowners applied. Federal officials expected a decision on the buyout application by mid-June. But it was not until August that the application was dropped. By that time, only 21 homeowners remained part of the application.

The federal government was pinning its hopes on the construction of an interim levee.

Meanwhile, others began securing permits to rebuild homes. They dealt with insurance agents, contractors and inspectors and tried to find the money to do the work.

The calamity touched businesses and residents throughout the area, and a flood relief fund was established almost immediately after the disaster by the Bank of Highland.

The goal was to raise $1 million to aid victims; more than $900,000 was raised and distributed among them.

In March, Bayh urged the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to raise the dike surrounding the subdivision so the area would be guaranteed it would not flood again.

Although the corps had plans of its own, a project that will cost close to $1 billion has been planned to raise the banks of the river from Gary to the Illinois state line to prevent flooding.

Officials estimated it would cost $25 million to raise Wicker Park Manor area until the mid-1990s.

In the meantime, 143 families have rebuilt homes and moved in. Some still haven’t decided what to do with their houses. Others have sold their property and left. But so far, there are no commitments from any level of government to build the interim levee.

That’s why when it rains, some residents still climb the dike to check the river’s level.

**A YEAR AFTER THE FLOOD**

In March, Bayh urged the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to raise the dike surrounding the subdivision so the area would be guaranteed it would not flood again. But so far, there are no commitments from any level of government to build the interim levee.
Bureaucracy, broken hearts sent some elsewhere

A TIMES SPECIAL REPORT ■ STORIES BY RADA INDJICH

HIGHLAND — So far, 143 families have returned to live in the Wicker Park Manor subdivision, where 263 homes were damaged during last year's flood. Dozens of others are rebuilding.

But while some of the homeowners are starting over again by rebuilding their homes and lives, others have decided to pack it in and move out.

"Why did we leave?" repeated former Wicker Park Manor homeowner Spencer Burrows when the question was posed to him. "I really don't think there's any one thing you can put your finger on."

"Everyone went through a decision-making process that was right for them," he said. "This decision was right for us."

"My wife and I just felt that given the daily stresses in our lives and the demands of our career, trying to tame that bureaucratic animal of the flood process wasn't realistic," he said.

Instead, he and his wife, Janice, sold their home on 81st Street and bought one in Schererville.

"There was no end in sight for the paperwork and the hoops the families still can't jump over — I can't emphasize what would happen — as jumping through that subdivision," he said.

"We just weren't willing to jump through every hoop for every detail for the permit process (to rebuild)."

Tim Culver's decision to leave was based on a number of factors, including his frustration with the town government.

"I don't believe the town of Highland anymore," he said. "I was kind of angry the town kept making excuses about everything. It was just constant excuses."

— Tim Culver, Highland flood victim

Flood damage lawsuit looms against Tri State Coach Lines

HIGHLAND — Almost immediately after losing their homes and possessions in last November's flood, angry, tired and frustrated residents started to point fingers at Tri State Coach Lines as the cause for their misery.

They alleged that when Tri State, which is immediately west of the Wicker Park Manor subdivision, enlarged its parking lot some months before the flood, a portion of the river's embankment was lower-
ed.

Tri State offers a shuttle bus service to O'Hare and Midway airports. Many who use the service leave their vehicles in the firm's parking lot, sometimes for days.

During the first few weeks following the flood, some of the victims began to seek legal recourse. Among the first to contact Ruman, Clements and Tobin, a Hammond law firm, were Alice Knighten, Cornelia and Charles Wilson and Bonnie Warner.

They are plaintiffs along with "all others similarly situated" in a class-action lawsuit filed in late December which names Tri State Coach Lines, Shapiro and Associates, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the town of Highland, the Lake County Drainage Board as defendants.

Other residents since have joined the pending suit, bringing the number of plaintiffs to 681.

See FLOOD, Page A-6.

Flood

Continued from Page A-1

"That is an exact figure that includes everyone in families," said Michelle Moskovitz, a paralegal with Ruman, Clements and Tobin. "It would estimate the number of families represented at approximately 245."

David Holub, one of the four lawyers for the plaintiffs, said he hopes to recover about $17 million in damages for them.

"That is a very rough estimate," Holub said. "And it's just for straight-out property loss. I'm not counting things like the distress or inconvenience that was caused."

"We're attempting to hold every party responsible for things they may have done to cause the flood," he said.

According to the complaint, Shapiro and Associates is a land surveyor and development firm that was hired by Tri State to design an expansion to the parking lot.

The complaint alleges Shapiro and Associates altered a levee and failed to rebuild it during the expansion.

The town of Highland, the county Drainage Board and the Corps of Engineers "failed to properly inspect the levee and negligently approved the plans containing an improperly constructed levee," according to the complaint.

"Holub said it's possible others, including more governmental agencies, may be added to the suit."

Holub and Saul Ruman, who also is representing the plaintiffs, estimate the lawsuit could go to trial by spring or summer. The case, which will be tried in Newton County Circuit Court, may take weeks to complete, Holub said.

Whatever the ruling turns out to be, it may be appealed by the appropriate parties. It could be several months before an appeal is resolved.

"We are moving as fast as we can (with this case)," said Holub, "as fast as the court system will allow."
November 12, 1991

Northern Indiana Public Service Company
5265 Hohman Avenue
Hammond, Indiana 46320

Attention: Bruce Thvenin

RE: Acquisition of Surplus Lots along
Burns Waterway by the Little Calumet
River Basin Development Commission

Dear Bruce,

This letter is to confirm our recent conversation concerning acquisition of the surplus lots owned by Northern Indiana Public Service Company along Burns Waterway in Porter County Indiana. Pursuant to said conversation, I have contacted Milo Vale Jr. regarding appraisal of said lots. It is my intention that he contact Vern Lee for a second appraisal. As we have discussed, we will share equally in the cost of these appraisals which will be used to ascertain the value of said property. Please forward whatever legal descriptions and drawings you have of the lots at your earliest convenience so I can expedite the process of appraising same.

Thank you for this in past considerations. If there are any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Louis M. Casale

cc Dan Gardner

LMC/maa
# COMPARISON OF PORTAGE MARINA CONSULTANT PROPOSALS

**SOLICITATION:** PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING FEASIBILITY AND MARKET/FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY STUDY  
**PROPOSALS DUE:** WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1991  
**COMMISSION SELECTION:** THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1991 AT MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

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### Monthly Budget Report
**November 30, 1991**

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<td>5431</td>
<td>LAKE COUNTY RECORDER OFFICE</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>COST INCURRED RE: SURVEY PLATS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5440</td>
<td>DON POWERS AGENCY, INC.</td>
<td>750.00</td>
<td>COST INCURRED RE: INSURANCE POLICY ON LCRDRC PROPERTY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5460</td>
<td>SOUTH SHORE MARINA, INC.</td>
<td>970.00</td>
<td>COST INCURRED RE: REMOVAL OF HANDRAILS INVOICE NO. 0681</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**$29,789.78**
# 1992 OPERATING BUDGET

## ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1991 Budget</th>
<th>Proposed 1992</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5119</td>
<td>Fer Diem Expenses</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5311</td>
<td>Legal Services</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5312</td>
<td>NIRPC Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Basic Staff Support</td>
<td>94,000</td>
<td>94,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Mileage/Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Room Rental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) Telephone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) Postage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f) Copying machine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g) Printing/Graphics labor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>h) Office Supplies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i) Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5323</td>
<td>Travel &amp; Mileage</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5331</td>
<td>Printing &amp; Advertising</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5341</td>
<td>Bonds &amp; Insurance</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5361</td>
<td>Emergency Maintenance Costs</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5399</td>
<td>Meeting Expenses</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUB TOTAL** | **140,000** | **140,000** |

## LAND ACQUISITION/PROJECT DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5410</td>
<td>Legal Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5420</td>
<td>Professional/Consultant/Contract Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5421</td>
<td>Appraisal Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5422</td>
<td>Engineering/design services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5423</td>
<td>Land Purchase contractual services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5424</td>
<td>Land management services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5425</td>
<td>Facilities/project maintenance services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5426</td>
<td>Operational services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5427</td>
<td>Surveying services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5428</td>
<td>Economic/marketing sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5430</td>
<td>Project Land Purchase Costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5431</td>
<td>Property &amp; Structures costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5432</td>
<td>Moving/relocation costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5433</td>
<td>Real Estate Taxes Owed Account (pass through)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5440</td>
<td>Property/Structures Insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>5450</td>
<td>Utility Relocation Costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5460</td>
<td>Land Capital Improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>5470</td>
<td>Structures Capital Improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>5480</td>
<td>DNR/Shoreline sand fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5490</td>
<td>Project Cost Share Payments/Escrow Account</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUB TOTAL** | **4,756,705** | **5,701,958** |

**TOTAL BUDGET** | **5,841,958** |

Includes: Present allocated funds $1,701,958
Appropriated funds ('89) 2,000,000
Appropriated funds ('91) 2,000,000
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,250</td>
<td>+ 5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>+ 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8 hrs w/overhead 20 hrs direct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copies</td>
<td>$.05¢</td>
<td>$.07¢</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>$225</td>
<td>$235</td>
<td>+4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ $150 additional space</td>
<td>$150</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME (please print)</td>
<td>Organization and/or Address</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Swanson</td>
<td>WJOB - News</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Platt</td>
<td>8410 Wicker Pk Dr. Highland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIKE KERR</td>
<td>TPA</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOB HUFFMAN</td>
<td>Munster</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DICK WAWRZYNIK</td>
<td>DNR</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan ZAK</td>
<td>St. John's, Manistee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chairman: Arlene Colin  
Location: