



**Kathleen Doran-Norton**  
**Bridgewater Township, chair**

While reviewing historical annexation records last year, I found historical records for our township's FEMA applications. Meteorologists and the state insurance professional group say our climate-change-fueled weather started changing in the late '90's – heavier or extended rainfall. And my township had FEMA applications or discussions on flood damages to roads and bridges for 1998, 2000, the 2007 hailstorm, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016. Because flood projections are built from past events, the definition of a 100-year 24 hour rain was raised from 6 inches to 7.3 inches, as we all joked that 100 years just wasn't what it used to be. You can be sure that with continuing heavy or extended rains, that measurement will rise again.

In Fall 2013, Councilmember Zweifel and Beth Kallestad, then with CRWP, convened a community discussion where we learned there was a MN DNR Flood Mitigation office. Councilmember Zweifel, Ross Currier from NDDC and others wrote a grant to analyze the Spring Creek flooding which runs through the Fargaze neighborhood and the Carleton campus. Because of staff turnovers in the city of Northfield, Bridgewater Township took the lead on this project.

In January 2014, the kick-off meeting for this project included former Northfield staffer Jasper Kruggel and Professor Mary Savina, and when it was completed Bridgewater Township applied for an implementation grant.

We have had the Fargaze neighborhood fill our town hall, saying former city staffers said it was their fault their basements were flooding, apparently unaware it was city staff and city planning commissions which allowed their houses to be built and exterior doors to be installed in basement levels. Northfielders were surprised to learn the soccer fields and park provide storm-water protection through the Spring Creek floodplain. We were surprised to learn the neighborhood ponds were owned and managed by neighborhood associations, not the city. We found we needed to push hard to design and implement "100-year" flood event projects, even though those are the ones that damage property and threaten safety.

A 2 acre SWCD funded, on-farm project on the Salisbury farm south of 125<sup>th</sup> Street was finished in 2015. 125<sup>th</sup> Street blew out two years in a row during heavy rains, even though there is a 12 ft. culvert under a stream that generally runs hand-high. This project reduces flow by a third in that section of the stream.

The township has now implemented a 2 acre pond east of the Dundas Bridgewater Heights neighborhood pond. This reduces the downstream flow rate (which runs north of CSAH 1 and then east into Northfield) by 90%. It does not help the Dundas neighbors who find the waters 15 feet from their back door during heavy rain events, with only half of the 400 plats developed. It does not help the farmer who lives west of that neighborhood and finds his fields eroding. Rainwater does not infiltrate roofs, roads, and driveways which will be added. The Middle School never implemented some of the storm-water measures included in their original design, and neighbors to the south have experienced flooding, even though a ditch was added on the west side of Division/Dennison Blvd (TH246). We've had rains that overtop the TH246 road.