

# Flooding woes could halt Village Green project

By MARK JAEGER

Ozaukee Press staff

The developer of the Village Green subdivision were put on notice last week that approval of new homesites could be held up if recurring drainage problems are not cleared up.

Two neighboring property owners appeared before the Village Board last week, complaining about soil erosion and floodwater that has flowed from the north side development.

It was the second time Kendall and Carla Thistle and John Depies protested to village officials about the failures of the stormwater management system on the subdivision being created by Mastercraft Builders.

Last month, the protest spurred a promise from the developer that the problem would be corrected by diverting water into a large detention pond.

After additional erosion concerns were brought to the Village Board last week, trustees said the village could refuse to issue building permits in the 160-acre development until the matter is resolved.

Depies was the most strident in his protests, urging the village to implement a moratorium on work at Village Green.

"I have absolutely no confidence in Mastercraft doing anything to help me. You need to take steps to force them," Depies



**FLOODING ON THE** property of Kendall and Carla Thistle on the west side of Highway 57 has drawn plenty of attention, including a warning from Village of Fredonia officials that the problem must be resolved before new buildings in the Village Green subdivision can start.

*Photo by Sam Arendt*

told the board.

He and his mother own a large parcel on the east side of Highway 57, which has handled water diverted from the subdivision being created on the west side of the highway, between Willow Valley Road and the Thistle property.

Depies said tons of red clay sediment

has washed onto his property, largely filling a 3.6-acre pond he created for wildlife under state and federal review.

A system of field tiles installed on the property in the 1940s have kept the land dry until this year, he said.

Depies said the village has also been negligent in failing to require the developer

to post a bond that could be used to pay for damages suffered by adjoining property owners.

"It is not unheard of for developers to go into bankruptcy and I don't want to see the Village of Fredonia have to bail everyone out," he said.

Village officials said legal counsel has advised them that letters of credit are sufficient to protect the village from financial liability. Officials told Depies other communities also rely on letters of credit.

A team of officials from the village and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources met with representatives from Mastercraft Builders at the Village Green site last week, documenting the drainage concerns.

During the visit, state officials outlined corrective measures that need to be taken, identifying a diversion pipe from the Thistle property to a retention pond as the first priority.

One of the biggest problems cited by DNR stormwater specialist Susan Eichelkraut was that water from the development was being directed into a dirt swale, which is supposed to be covered with vegetation or erosion matting.

Eichelkraut also noted that silt fencing and other steps to stabilize erosion were also lacking at the construction site.

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## Flooding: Developer ordered to take steps

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Village Engineer Al Neumann said stormwater management plans prepared by the developer have proven to be inadequate, but corrective steps ordered by the state are being pursued by Mastercraft.

"Everything the DNR wants is being done," Neumann said.

Of the stormwater system failures, he said, "What looks good on paper sometimes needs modification in the field."

Neumann said the draining problems were unacceptable, adding that village officials will rely on the DNR to create a remediation plan that will repair damages to the Depies and Thistle properties.

Although the board had nothing on its

any new roofs until all of this is fixed and the problem goes away," Dohrwardt said.

"We are going to do the right thing, with oversight from the DNR."

## Fredonia firefighters plan benefit brat fry April 21

The Fredonia Fire and EMS Association will hold its annual spring brat fry and car wash from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 21.

The activity will be outside the Fredonia firehouse, 201 S. Milwaukee St.

The fire department will also be recruiting new members during the event, as well as prospective members of the