RAMSEY COUNTY GIS USER GROUP

An alliance of communities sharing Geographical Information Systems

Meeting Minutes
2:00 – 4:00 PM, March 4, 2010
Shoreview City Hall, 4600 Victoria St N

1. Introductions

Carrie Mack, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District
Matt Baker, City of Shoreview
Melissa Baker, Capitol Region Watershed District
Jan Vanderwall, Roseville School District
Steve Lorbach, St. Paul Regional Water Services
Deb Jones, City of Falcon Heights
Connie Bernardy, Active Living Ramsey Communities
Curt Peterson, Ramsey County
Jolinda Stapleton, City of Roseville
Joel Koepp, City of Roseville/City of North St Paul
Tom Peterson, Ramsey Conservation District

The meeting was called to order by Carrie Mack, Chair of the User Group

2. Agenda Correction

The Ramsey Conservation District aerial imagery agenda item was moved to later in the agenda.

2. February 2010 minutes

The minutes from the February meeting were approved with no changes.

4. Update on MnGEO 2010 Aerial Photography Project

Joel Koepp summarized his phone conversation with Chris Cialek from MnGEO about the 2010 aerial flight. The project is going ahead regardless of any financial contribution from the User Group, and will likely have 18" pixel resolution of the whole metro area. There is a federal grant pending that may improve the specifications to 12" pixel resolution. Jan Vanderwall and other members reiterated the opinion that with brand new aerial data just received in 2009, the User Group would not get enough value from trying to fund an increase in resolution for Ramsey County, and should just wait for the metro-wide imagery from the planned project.

Curt Peterson added that Ramsey County is offering to provide support in the form of their ground control for accuracy, but has no budget to commit funds. Curt mentioned some other upcoming data products: the state is planning to acquire new LIDAR data in 2011 that can support the creation of new 2 foot contours, and Kucera's 2009 County flight also resulted in the updating of the County's DEM in select locations.

Curt mentioned that the County is considering altering their data gathering to a schedule of every 2 years for imagery, but waiting to do physical feature updates every 4 years.

Chair	**Vice Chair**	**Secretary**
Carrie Mack	Matt Baker	Joel Koepp
carrie.mack@rwmwd.org	mbaker@shoreviewmn.gov	joel.koepp@ci.roseville.mn.us

5. Active Living Ramsey County: Connie Bernardy

Connie shared updates on Active Living Ramsey County's recent work. Curt Peterson and Jody Yungers recently presented to the County department managers about some grant money to complete a project to gather park facility data. The grant money would fund an intern. The goal of the project is to create a web portal for finding park facilities in an area and have multi-model routing (bus, bike, walking, etc). ALRC has been meeting with other metro area Active Living groups to collaborate on a consistent data scheme for gathering data.

Connie distributed copies of the database schema to Group members, along with instructions for downloading a spreadsheet template from the Ramsey County FTP site.
(Link: ftp://ftp.co.ramsey.mn.us/PubWorks/Outgoing/ALRC_GIS/)

Connie stressed that only information about the physical facilities themselves is being collected, not the activities that take place at the locations. Curt demoed the spreadsheet on the projector and showed the data fields, many of which have dropdown menus for easy data entry. They are hoping to get support from GIS staff at the cities throughout the County to help locate facilities. In places where no address exists, they would like the nearest address put in the spreadsheet so the location can be geocoded and then manually moved to the correct spot later.

Joel Koepp asked if it would be possible to get broader participation by non-GIS professionals if facility information could be edited for free on OpenStreetMap (http://www.openstreetmap.org). He demonstrated basic editing on the OSM site, which allows simple feature creation and tagging to enable basic attribute creation. He suggested that features could be created on the site and then downloaded later for adding further attributes. This could bypass the process of geocoding locations and then manually correcting them, since points or other features could be created in their exact locations initially using the OSM air photo backdrop.

Matt Baker asked how Active Living intended to identify and display multi-use trails.

6. Ramsey Conservation District Imagery Funding Request: Tom Peterson

Tom Peterson from the Ramsey Conservation District gave the Group some background on his request for partial funding of the 1991 historical aerial imagery. In the early 1990s, the state passed the Wetland Conservation Act, and the DNR began enforcement on January 1, 1992. The aerial photography in question dates from the summer of 1991, so it's a valuable tool for helping to determine if a certain development was or was not in place prior to the enactment of the wetland conservation law.

Tom explained that over the years, the film negatives have been in storage at the County and need to be cleaned and scanned. The vendor will be a company called Dudley-Thompson from Canada. The proposal is for the Ramsey County GIS User Group to contribute $6,000 of the total $15,500 of the project. $5,500 will come from the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources, and the remaining $4,000 will be contributed by a handful of Watershed Management Organizations in the County.

Tom mentioned that one of the film photographs from this imagery set has already successfully been used as evidence in a jury trial to convict a violator of the Wetland Conservation Act.

Jan Vanderwall moved, Deb Jones seconded that the Ramsey County GIS User Group authorize the expenditure of $6,000 to contribute to the funding of the project to digitize the 1991 aerial photos. All voting members present approved, but there were not enough votes to form a quorum.

Deb Jones asked if having the photos digitized might have a deterrent effect on violators. Tom indicated that the most common method that his office learns of potential violations is through disputes between neighbors.

7. Ramsey County Updates: Curt Peterson

Curt Peterson informed the User Group that the first extracts from the County's new GRM tax system have been produced. They are still working through some errors and inconsistencies on some taxpayer names, addresses, and PINs. The County is still waiting for the final physical feature update from Kucera from the 2009 imagery project. A new County paper map is going to the printers after some delays from the conversion from the RGB to the CMYK color process. Interviews were conducted for the open County GIS Manager position and an offer was extended to a candidate, but it was turned down.

8. Community Announcements

Connie Bernardy noted that the Ramsey County board had voted at a recent meeting to support the Complete Streets movement, which gives local governments more flexibility in working with MnDOT on the standards for street design. She also offered to share information on the City of North St. Paul's Green Streets movement for reducing the amount of pavement if anyone wanted to know more. Deb Jones mentioned that the National Street Address Standard which MetroGIS has been involved with was being put out for public review and comment by the Federal Geographic Data Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 PM.

Minutes submitted by Joel Koepp, Secretary

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