

**City of Olympia**  
**Utility Advisory Committee Summary Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, February 5, 2009**  
**5:30 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.**

**A. Meeting began at 5:43 p.m.**

*1. Roll Call*

Members Present: Michael Young, Kip Summers, Mary Groebner, Rob Lowe, Karen Rogers, Lana Hamilton, Emily Lardner, Tim Rogers, Carol Law, and Dave Gordon

Members Absent: None

Guests: Howard Stenn, Stenn Design

Staff Present: Jay Burney, Eric Christensen, Liz Hoenig, Donna Freier, and Andrea Sanchez-Turner

*2. Approval of Meeting Minutes*

- Approved the January 8, 2009, summary meeting minutes.

*3. Acceptance of Agenda*

- Approved the February 5, 2009, agenda.

**B. Comments from the Public in Attendance**

No members of the public were in attendance this evening.

**C. Information Sharing**

*1. Announcements from Members and Staff*

- Dan and Ursula would like to come to UAC next month and discuss the Commercial Organics Program. Staff wants to move it from a pilot program to a new service and want to keep UAC in the loop before they move forward.
- Mary talked about Olympia Salvage and the difficult economic time they are in. She asked that we keep them in mind when hiring or when making donations to local organizations.

*2. Planning Commission Update*

- The Planning Commission deliberated on the West Bay height issue. Although the company withdrew their request for raising height limits, the Commission still considered the one-story addition within the current height limitations. With the addition of a specific percentage pertaining to the required residential floor space, all but one member of the Commission voted to approve the one-story addition, however, the member was more concerned about the process than the addition itself. The Commission will compose a letter to City Council for review.

**D. Business of the Evening**

*1. Onsite Sewage System*

- In the early 1990's the City of Olympia stopped charging customers a Sewer Availability Fee. The City intended to use the monies from this fee for sewer extensions, however, this never happened. There are approximately 180 households that paid this fee and are not connected to sewer.
- In response to questions, Eric said that Thurston County is responsible for condemning properties when a septic system fails. The City is not involved.
- There are over 2,000 properties within the City limits and an additional 2,200 properties within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) that use septic systems.
- Because of water quality, the City Council made the conversion of onsite sewage systems to the public sewer system a priority for the Wastewater Utility when they adopted the current Wastewater Management Plan.
- The intention of the Septic to Sewer program is to:
  - Reduce pollutants in surface water and groundwater,
  - Identify property owners and neighborhoods interested in connecting to the public sewer, and to
  - Provide incentives to help property owners connect to the public sewer.
- The proposed incentives are:
  - Fixed estimated cost for infrastructure if connected within the first year,
  - Payment plan for public sewer infrastructure,
  - Considering a threshold limit on costs recovered for individual connections,
  - Waive the City collection system GFC for 2 years (currently \$2,498), and the
  - Sewer Connection Assistance Loan Program.
- Eric talked about each of the incentives.
- The Wastewater Utility mailed public outreach materials (brochures and surveys) to owners of more than 2,100 properties within the City limits and Urban Growth Area. Five hundred and forty five property owners responded to the survey.
- More than 240 people attended six public (and two private) outreach meetings with staff.
- The economy is a major concern for residents in their consideration to convert from septic to sewer.
- This program is *not* mandatory. The City is trying to make it easier for those residents with a desire to convert from septic to sewer.
- Thirty nine percent of property owners said they have no interest in connecting to public sewer.
- Staff addressed many of the concerns voiced by residents through the surveys and/or meetings.
- Eric finished by saying that the results of the public outreach effort indicated the proposed incentives and cost recovery mechanisms were generally favorable. The utility feels it cannot reasonably provide any further incentives beyond those already proposed.
- He also stated that he does not need UAC to take any action at this time. He will come back to UAC in March with more information.

## 2. *Groundwater Protection Ordinance Changes*

- Liz began her presentation by saying that she would like UAC's input and comments with the understanding that this is very much a work in progress. She would also like a letter from the UAC to the Planning Commission with comments/suggestions concerning this issue.
- The following is a list of Groundwater Protection Strategies presented by Liz:
  - Expand "early warning" groundwater monitoring network.
  - Social marketing/education programs.
  - Spill prevention/response.
  - Strengthen policies and development reviews.
- Liz also provided a background on the local hydrogeology, which is the study of water underground and its interaction with surface waters.
- The proposed revisions to the Olympia Municipal Code pertain to:
  - Drinking Water Protection Area Boundaries, and
  - Technical Review and Mitigation.
- The last boundary revisions were in 1997 and are defined by "time-of-travel" zones. A new improved computer model gives us new information about groundwater flow and local geology.
- The boundary revisions focus on areas that pose a significant risk to our water sources and doesn't regulate those areas that don't pose a significant risk.
- Liz reviewed maps of the different Wellhead Protection Areas.
- Liz gave a brief description of the following wells and provided maps of their drinking water protection areas (DWPA):
  - Hoffman Well (#3)
  - Indian Summer Well (#20)
  - Shana Park Well (#11)
  - Allison Springs Wells (#13, #19)
  - Kaiser Well (#1)
  - The future Biggs Well
  - McAllister Springs
- Liz also provided a list of contamination risks for some of the wells, which included pesticides and fertilizers, transportation and utility corridors, and existing abandoned landfills.
- Suggested changes concerning Technical Review and Mitigation may meet with the following challenges: uncertainty about what mitigation may be required; the Hydrogeological Report requirement may be more onerous than the proposed mitigation; it may be time-consuming to produce and review reports for staff and applicants; and reports not necessary for projects with known risks and hydrogeology.
- The following are staff recommended changes for the Ordinance:
  - Remove much of Chapter 14; consolidate with 18.
  - Waive Hydrogeological Report for known risks and local hydrogeology. (18.32.230 (B))
  - "Up front" Minimum Mitigation Standards (for example: hazardous materials, landscaping, irrigation). (18.32.221)
  - CTED requirement for handling adjacent properties. (18.32.205)

- Consider adding other existing uses to match Minimum Mitigation Standards. (18.32.235)
- Changing designation to not include exhibits, but instead reference WAC for updating maps. Also including City proposed DWPA's for situations like Briggs. (18.32.205)
- Including DWPA reference in addition to Wellhead Protection Areas
- Check for consistency with CTED and other jurisdictions
- Minimum irrigation standards include:
  - Hazardous materials consultation.
  - Landscaping and irrigation requirements.
  - Access granted for educational programs and to monitor compliance.
- Howard Stenn provided a more detailed analysis about fertilizer limits, planting type restrictions, and efficient irrigation standards.
- The next steps for each follows:
  - Fertilizer Limits:
    - Limit applications to maximum of 4 pounds Nitrogen per year – WSU Standard.
    - Require all or part of Nitrogen application in slow-release form.
    - Limit to 1 pound of Nitrogen or less per application.
    - Nitrogen limit in composts applied at construction.
  - Planting-Type Restrictions:
    - Limit turf areas to 25% maximum of landscaped area.
    - Limit planting beds to native or approved “trouble-free” (e.g. pest- and disease-resistant) plants, or native plants.
  - Efficient Irrigation Standards:
    - Design standards for efficient irrigation systems to ensure even applications and minimize nutrient leaching.
    - Water budgets to gauge / enforce efficient irrigation.
- Discussion surrounded the wording and the need for clarification because of interpretation.
- There were concerns about the application requirements of 4-pounds of Nitrogen per year; and with the following wording: “...The Hydrogeological Report requirement can be waived at the discretion of staff...”
- Mary will write a letter from UAC to the Planning Commission stating that UAC approved the direction of the changes presented to them. Liz will return to UAC with an update at a later date.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.