

SPOKANE COUNTY WATER AVAILABILITY ADVISORY GROUP

Thursday, April 12, 2012

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Spokane Regional Health District Auditorium

1101 W College Ave

Spokane, WA

MEETING SUMMARY

Attending:

Rob Lindsay, <i>Spokane County</i>	Mike Hermanson, <i>Spokane County</i>
Dick Price, <i>Stevens PUD</i>	Ty Wick, <i>SAJB</i>
Susan McGeorge, <i>Whitworth Water</i>	Jeanne Barnes, <i>Spokane Assoc. of Realtors</i>
Jim Kolva, <i>Jim Kolva Associates</i>	Charlie Kessler, <i>Stevens Co. Conservation District</i>
Joe Foote, <i>Murray, Smith & Associates</i>	Walt Edelen, <i>Spokane Conservation District</i>
Doug Greenland, <i>City of Spokane</i>	John Covert, <i>WDOE</i>
Katherine Rowden, <i>Nat'l. Weather Service</i>	Rusty Post, <i>WDOE</i>
Rick Dullanty, <i>Witherspoon Kelley</i>	Joel White, <i>Spokane Homebuilders Assoc.</i>
Steve Davenport, <i>Spokane County Planning</i>	Karen Skoog, <i>Stevens Co. Farm Bureau</i>
Ken Garceau, <i>Spokane Assoc. of Realtors</i>	Rachael Osborn, <i>CELP</i>
Dave Andersen, <i>WA Dept. of Commerce</i>	Kitty Klitzke, <i>Futurewise</i>
Steven Holderby, <i>Spokane Regional Health District</i>	Dwight Hume, <i>Land Use Solutions and Entitlement</i>
Alene Lindstrand, <i>Realtor</i>	Jim Mathieu, <i>Northwest Land and Water</i>
Suzy Dix, <i>Farmer/Realtor</i>	Susan Gulick, <i>Sound Resolutions (Facilitator)</i>

1. Potential Revisions to Testing Procedures, Reporting Requirements, and County Review

- ❑ Jim Mathieu of Northwest Land Water, a hydro-geologist who is a sub-consultant on this project, presented options for revised requirements to evaluate water availability, including procedures for pump tests, reporting requirements, and county review.
- ❑ Jim offered 2 options: the first would require well pumpers to follow a prescribed testing protocol and to provide more detailed data than is now required. This would allow a simple analysis of the data to determine whether the well is projected to retain a 1 gallon per minute (gpm) pumping rate for a minimum of 7 days.
- ❑ The second option would not require the pumper to provide more detailed data. However, it would require the County or the applicant to engage a hydro-geologist or someone with very strong technical skills to analyze the data.
- ❑ The primary difference between the two options is that the first would require a specific test protocol and analysis to be performed by the pump test company ; the second would allow more flexibility in the test protocol but require more rigor on behalf of the County or the applicant's hydrogeologist to analyze the results.
- ❑ Both options would retain the current requirement of a 4 hour pump test that requires the well to meet a minimum requirement of 1gpm projected for 7 days.

2. Advisory Group Discussion

- ❑ The Advisory Group had many questions about these options.

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- Jim explained that a longer pump test is always better, but that 4 hours provides adequate data. The increased value of additional data may not be worth the cost of a longer pump test.
- Jim also explained that extrapolating the data for a 7 day trend will provide a much better indication of the long-term sustainability of the well. While nothing is certain, a 7 day projection is much better than the current procedure, which simply measures 1 gpm over 4 hours and does not extend this trend into the future.
- The Advisory Group could choose a different length of time (e.g. 5 days or 10 days) but with 10 days the extrapolation will be less accurate, and 5 days may not be long enough to identify wells that cannot sustain 1 gpm for the long-term.
- The Advisory Group is also interested in a sliding standard where a six-hour pump test would be required if it appeared that the well would have difficulty meeting the 1 gpm standard. This would allow better data from wells on the margin of meeting the standard, while not requiring the cost of a longer pump test by applicants whose well appears to be well above the 1 gpm standard.
- The Advisory Group would like to hear from pumpers on the impact of the new requirements and how it would affect their costs. Mike or Susan will try to contact pumpers to gather information about this.
- It was noted that the County should not overly regulate the development process. However, the information gathered from these additional requirements may also be very useful to homebuyers. It is important that the requirements are reasonable.
- It was also noted that the County should avoid unintended consequences, such as excessive litigation. The best way to avoid unintended consequences is to develop very clear standards.
- A question was raised about finding more water supplies in the region. There are enough data in Spokane for the State feel very confident that there are no new groundwater supplies that have not been discovered. Spokane County is continuing to gather hydrogeologic data throughout the county to better understand the trends and relationships of the various aquifers.
- The Advisory Group also discussed how to protect adjacent landowners from new wells that could impact the water supply to existing homes. While the existing homes have seniority over new wells, it is very difficult to prove that a new well caused the existing home to lose water.
- There are many complications with evaluating potential impacts on neighbor's wells, such as different aquifers, multiple wells in a small area so that it's impossible to know which wells are causing problems, etc. This remains an outstanding issue for the Advisory Group.

3. Next Steps

- The Advisory Group generally likes the first option, requiring pumpers to report more rigorous information from pump tests. However there are some outstanding issues/questions that need further attention:
 - Information from pumpers to determine the impact of this option on their procedures and costs.

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- Identification of geographic zones/ problem areas that would be subject to more stringent standards, longer pump tests, and/or more intensive analysis of the data submitted.
 - Consideration of options to assess the potential impact of a new well on neighbors' wells as well as on stream flows.
 - Development and distribution of educational materials for both existing residents and applicants for new developments.
- These topics will be discussed at future meetings.

4. Upcoming Meetings

Date	Topics
<i>Thursday, April 26, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Potential recommendation for test procedures and reporting requirements ✓ Options for sub-basin/regional tools ✓ Options for multiple sites/sub-divisions
<i>Thursday, May 24, 2:00-4:00 p.m.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review of draft recommendations
<i>Thursday, June 14, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Finalize recommendations

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