

June 11, 2010

League of Woman Voters meeting with City of Olympia Staff

Smith Building Executive Conference Room

Re: Water Resources and Comp Plan Update (Phil Schulte's Notes)

A. Comments About the LVW Recommendations

The process of updating the City of Olympia Comprehensive Plan has only just begun. Keith Staley expressed appreciation for the amount of effort and quality of the LVW recommendations. There will be many more opportunities for input from the League of Woman Voters.

June 21st City staff will be briefing the Land Use Committee regarding the scoping of the Comp Plan process. The scope of the Comp Plan update will be done by topic and not by chapter.

Clydia Cuykendall suggested that the city consider referencing the Comp Plan in the cities development regulations thus making the Comp Plan binding. A recent court decision between a wireless company and Thurston County was mentioned. She also suggested that more performance measures be added to the Comp Plan.

B. Water Supplies

Water utility service plans will be rolled up into the Comp Plan. City agreed with most of the LVW recommendations in this area. Policies regulating exempt wells are extremely limited by state law as to what actions a local jurisdiction can do. It was suggested that the city through inter-governmental agreement could move toward implementing regional regulations regarding exempt wells. Two other suggestions were offered:

- What specific data and other assistance was needed to move forward on restrictions on exempt wells?
- Could the disclosures include benchmarks against other residential users so that customers can see how efficient they are in using this resource?

Growth projections the city uses are from TRPC and go until 2030 (20-year projection). Conservation was a factor in short-term plan. However, conservation was not a factor in long-term water supply. Climate change was included in future projections. Conservation is addressed through instinctive based approaches including rebates and other programs. This is done vs. long term pricing increases.

Climate change and ground water – there is not enough scientific data on this issue. City is working regionally to address climate change. City is looking for funding for climate change studies.

C. Waste Water –

Shared pipes will be individually changed out in the long term throughout downtown Olympia. There is no short-term plan other than to replace pipes when it can be easily done during a redevelopment project. There is no mandate to update the dual system pipes at this time – primarily due to cost. These pipes are recognized as a “vulnerability asset” to the city. The city has partnered with LOTT to deal with shared pipes and LOTT currently accepts combined water flows.

Septic Conversions –

The city has been approaching neighborhoods together, but has found there is a lack of interest. It costs \$20,000 on average for each conversion per home. The city offers discounts to homes where there is already a sew pipe located in front of the property. The city also offers financing to homeowners willing to convert from a septic system to the city sewer system.

D. Stormwater

Low Impact Development –

City staff indicated that they do not accept the universal application of Low Impact Development for the following reasons:

- A. LID is site specific
- B. Lack of standardization: LID is still relatively new to the engineering community and there are still some uncertainties concerning the proper methods to be used
- C. Importance of maintenance of stormwater control systems; if not maintained properly, the stormwater problem is worse than conventional development
- D. City is concerned about the impact of failed projects
- E. City has been proactive in advocating LID principles, including the sidewalk project on Decatur Street which has permeable surfaces
- F. Concerns about the availability of permeable concrete/asphalt

LVW took a different view on Low Impact since LID has been practiced in the East for many years, it is not as uncertain as claimed by the City. Also, failure of projects may be due to uneven enforcement of the development regulations.

The city's current stormwater manual incorporates many low impact development techniques that may not be labeled as "low impact" but they are there and being used through out the city of Olympia. However, specific low impact development goals and policies are currently non-existent in the city's codes or comp plan.

LVW and City agreed on the following

- We have the same goals which are to advance Low Impact Development
- We need to move away from discussing goals and look at individual methods and practices and see which ones have been effective and which have failed
- A separate meeting to talk about LID methods will be established some time in the future'