

GEM Committee Minutes---September 7, 2006

1. The Committee is pleased to welcome Karen Smith. Brian Carver accepted a planning job for the cities and towns of the Bear River and will be replaced as the committee representative of the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget by Laura Ault. Melodie Hansen resigned for personal reasons.

The following members had asked to be excused: Cindy Beger, Joan Blanchard, Paul DeLong, John Klisch, Helene Liebman, Jamie Lythgoe, Pam Kramer, Jeff Sunderland.

The following members were in attendance: Art Roscoe, Kim Wheatley, Steve Roberts, Bob Dyer, Lowell Peterson, Sharon Holmstrom, Ron Gleason, Steve Clarke, Kirk Langford, Laura Ault, Sharon Vause, Rick Kearn, Debbi Kearn, Jack Wright, Pamela Danner, Randy Shepherd, Jeff Burton.

2. Minutes of the August 3rd meeting were read and approved.
3. Lowell Peterson introduced the topic "A Valley Waste Water Treatment Facility as It Relates to the General Plan". He explained that the Wolf Creek Water and Sewer District has expanded twice, once to accept Eagle Ridge and again to accept the Sauers subdivision. Recently they have been asked by developers of two large subdivisions to expand and include their new homes. Wolf Creek has declined. Both the State Division of Water Quality and the County Engineer have asked Wolf Creek to consider expanding their sewer district to include new subdivisions, noting the new plant being installed by Wolf Creek produces Class A (drinking water quality) water as the effluent and alternate systems considered by developers use common drain fields or much less sophisticated package plants. The interest of the State and County is to protect the quality of the groundwater to the maximum extent possible. They have suggested to Wolf Creek Water and Sewer that a committee of residents (possibly the GEM Committee) be organized to look at the issue of proliferation of small sewer systems in the Valley and make recommendations.

Steve Clarke reported on a discussion on the topic with Camille Cain, County Commissioner, on September 6th. She offered as background the fact that providing sewage treatment from more than 1 home in a common facility requires a "body politic" be established to manage the common facility by forming a small sewer district. The County is the logical body politic, and they either fill this role or shut down development of subdivisions which want to handle sewage in a common facility. She feels the problem is that the County does not do a good job of running a sewer district. They have neither the inspection/management or operations skills, nor do they adequately stay in touch with the needs and desires of the users.

The Commissioners have agreed to be the body politic for one of the large

subdivisions which earlier approached Wolf Creek, Moose Mountain, located adjacent to the Wolf Mountain resort. Commissioner Cain is proposing that a Sewer District be established which would oversee all future subdivisions which request such support from the County. Such a Sewer District would have a Board plus an Operations Department.

Commissioner Cain hopes the GEM Committee will:

- a. Do a scenario analysis of possible solutions and policies related to the proliferation of sewer systems.
- b. Make a recommendation to the Commissioners.
- c. Help in establishing/identifying skills/people for the Board and Operations.
- d. Have a goal of doing this before the first phase of 40 homes at Moose Mountain requires service.

When asked how to respond to the fears of residents about the existence of infrastructure like sewer bringing about rezoning to ¼ acre lots she responded “don’t confuse management of zoning with management of resident’s health. Sewers don’t bring increased density by themselves.

The Committee then had an extended discussion to improve understanding of the issues and the implications for the GEM Committee. There was a strong sentiment, first expressed by Steve Clarke and echoed by Kirk Langford and Debbi Kearl, that citizens will hear the Committee is looking at “sewer” and will immediately jump to the conclusion that sewer brings down zoning and rampant development. Sharon Holmstrom noted that there is evidence to support that in the west Weber County. Lowell Peterson expressed the sentiment that the west County desperately needs sewer for health reasons, not to compare them with our circumstances. There is a real fear that formally associating GEM with a “sewer investigation” will destroy citizen confidence in the work of the GEM Committee, including TDR, Sensitive lands, and Resort Zone Ordinances. On the other hand the Committee felt that there could hardly be a more important topic for the proper development of the Valley, and does fall in the GEM Committee charter. Kim Wheatley noted that culinary water is similarly spread among many small suppliers and would benefit from being included in the same type of analysis. Steve Roberts pointed out the difference in management; no body politic is required for culinary systems. (Editor Note: I was not successful in capturing all the discussion or questions which were discussed.) There was a discussion about asking the County to form a separate committee for the sewer investigation and study. Others asked what the GEM Committee could do to help with the work. It was suggested that members of the GEM Committee could serve on the new Committee.

Sharon Holmstrom made a motion that the GEM Committee request the County Commission form a new committee to address the Proliferation of Waste Water Treatment and also suggest the names of members for the new committee. It was

seconded by Bob Dyer and approved unanimously. Subsequent discussion indicated the desire to have some number of GEM Committee members be part of the new group.

4. Subcommittees gave reports:
 - a. Stakeholders (Kirk Langford reporting) – Work on the 3 new ordinances (Recreation Zone, Sensitive Lands, and TDR) is proceeding well. There is a good level of comfort with the work. The group is also making a recommendation on the location of a zone for parking heavy construction equipment. The next Stakeholder meeting is September 28 at 3 pm in the Library. A public meeting is targeted for October with a goal to see the ordinances adopted by year end.
 - b. Transportation (Rick Kearn reporting) – The Committee is working on meeting with UDOT and trying to connect to the formal planning/budgeting process. They are trying to find out where the planning is being done for the Valley.
 - c. Impact Fees (Ron Gleason reporting) – Ron reviewed a meeting with Commissioner Bischoff followed a week later by a meeting with Commissioner Cain. The Committee was successful in seeing Commissioner Cain move the Impact Fee proposal (as imperfect as it is) back to the action list. She will call a meeting of key County people the week of 9/11 with the idea of getting impact fees established by year end.
 - d. Parks (Steve Clarke reporting) – The Committee has had a first pass on a vision of parks for the Valley and is now trying to obtain visual images that could be used to help present the vision. Ron Gleason and Kirk Langford requested a copy of the vision document.
 - e. Political Outreach (Steve Clarke reporting) – The committee sponsored a meeting with Commissioner Ken Bischoff earlier in the day. All Commissioner candidates have met with the GEM Committee. The consensus is that every candidate understands the work of the GEM Committee and supports the goals of the Committee.
5. The next meeting of the Committee will be held in the Huntsville Library Auditorium on October 5th at 5:00 P.M.
6. The meeting was adjourned about 7:00 P.M.