



MEETING AGENDA

Groton Utilities Watershed - Drinking Water Quality Management Oversight Committee

Thursday, April 19, 2007
9:30 am – 12:30 pm

- 9:30** **Welcome and introductions / Misc. Items** **Al Dion**
- 9:45** **Guest Speaker & Discussion**
- **Speaker:** Tim Bates
 - Topic:** Great Brook Subdivision
- 10:45** **Subcommittees** **Laurie Giannotti**
- **Chairman Reports (max 5 min each):**
 - Land Information
 - Water Information (Water Quality)
 - Communications
 - Consultant Procurement
 - GIS
- 11:05** **Break Out Into Subcommittee Work Sessions**
- 11:35** **Finalization of Planning Process** **Chi Ho Sham**
(working lunch)
- 12:45** **Wrap up / Schedule next meeting (Date & Site)**

Drinking Water Quality Management Plan for Groton Utilities Drinking Water Supply Sources

March 8, 2007 Draft for Comments

As of the end of the summer of 2006, a number of goals and objectives were identified by the workshop participants in developing the Drinking Water Quality Management Plan for Groton Utilities' drinking water supply sources. Goals 3 and 5 are specifically on the process of plan development and revisions.

Goal 3 Implement an open and efficient drinking water protection process

- (a) Use a responsible and open practice to keep the planning process transparent and equitable
 1. Define the process (e.g., involve citizens and stakeholders)
 2. Provide examples and models
- (b) Implement a high quality standard for efficient plan development and fiscal accountability
 1. Define quality standards
 2. Evaluate efficiency and costs
- (c) Be responsive to emerging issues and established priorities
 1. Develop a chain of command or ladder of responsibility
 2. Develop a model for prompt response

Goal 5 Develop a process for plan review and updates

- (a) Create objectives and associated tasks
- (b) Implement tasks or make work assignments as appropriate

A working session was conducted on January 10, 2007 during the oversight committee meeting in Groton to develop a process to accomplish goals 3 and 5. A number of suggestions were made during the discussion and these include:

- Holding multiple public meetings at the town level
- Inviting landowners and developers to attend these public meetings to obtain their inputs
- Making sure that the information provided at these public meetings carry the right message
- Involving the press to provide local coverages
- Keeping all stakeholders involved to ensure the plan is community based
- Showing off past success in working with developers, homeowners, and other stakeholders
- Considering the formulation of regionalized regulations
- Addressing cost-sharing issues (between "upstream" and "downstream" communities) upfront
- Assessing the criteria in determining the Critical Source Areas and focusing on the concept of resource protection and not site-specific contamination potentials

- Setting a budget to provide sensitive land or preservation
- Soliciting best practice ideas from stakeholders will make the plan more acceptable and implementable
- Securing a funding source to support the effort

In addition, the oversight committee reviewed the watershed management plan process developed by the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition (<http://www.pomperaug.org/>). The Coalition developed a process to prepare the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) and this process began with the identification and collection of existing information and ongoing research describing the physical conditions in and concerns about the watershed. When information gaps were noted on understand the hydrology of the watershed and to quantify impacts from withdrawals on streamflows and ecological health, the Coalition collaborated with USGS, state agencies, universities, and watershed professionals to bridge the knowledge and data gaps. As research results became available, in conjunction with other local and regulatory issues and concerns, the Coalition worked with researchers in developing a list of “action items” that takes into account funding, staffing, and community support. These action items are to be evaluated regularly to ensure their relevance and continued effectiveness. The WMP is updated in an iterative process to continue identifying appropriate, cost-effective, and politically desirable management strategies to protect the watershed’s water quality and quantity goals for the present and the future.

On the basis of the discussion during the working session, a proposed Drinking Water Quality Management Plan process has been formulated for review by the oversight committee and further discussion to facilitate the implementation of goals 3 and 5. A graphic depiction of the planning process is presented in Figure 1. The planning process ensures the explicit involvement of citizens and stakeholders through public meetings and readily available information channels (e.g., project-specific website and the press). It also involves highly qualified individuals to oversee the development of high quality work plans associated with action items that take into account fiscal responsibilities. In keeping the plan a “living document,” the process calls upon setting a regular review and update mechanism that is associated with emerging issues and changing conditions.

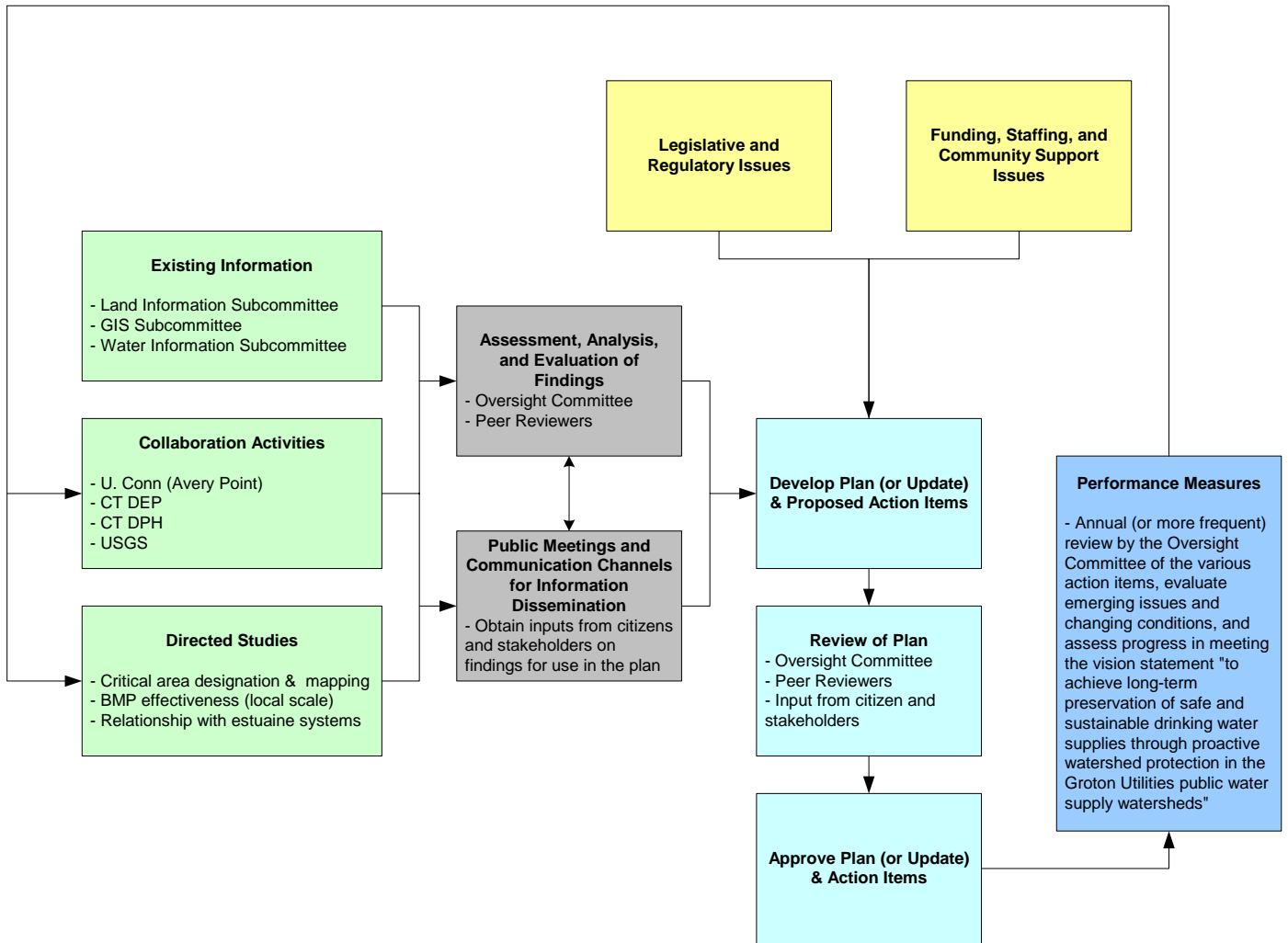


Figure 1. The Drinking Water Quality Management Plan Process – Draft, April 2007

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Re: Drinking Water Quality Management Plan

A Source Water Protection Meeting for the establishment of a Drinking Water Quality Management Plan was held at the Groton Utilities Operations Complex Julio H. Leandri Administration Building Conference Room on April 19, 2007 at 9:30am.

- Present were:
 - Laurie Giannotti DPH
 - Lori Mathieu DPH
 - Chi Ho Sham VP CADMUS Group
 - Jeff Butensky US EPA New England
 - Al Dion Groton Utilities
 - Rick Stevens Groton Utilities
 - Karl Acimovic Consultant, Groton Utilities
 - Ron Bata Groton Utilities
 - Barbara Goodrich City of Groton Planner
 - Steve Masalin Public Works Director, Ledyard
 - Steve Mansfield Deputy Director, Ledge Light Health District
 - Tim Bates Robinson & Cole
 - Marc Cohen Atlantic States Rural Water
 - Margaret Miner Rivers Alliance of CT
 - Joan Smith Groton Open Space Association
 - Sidney Van Zandt Groton Resident
 - Zel Steever Environmental Consultant
 - Syma Ebbin Groton Resident
 - John Witherspoon Visiting Asst. Prof. / Connecticut College
Chairman of AWWA National
Source Water Protection Program

Items of discussion:

Al Dion Comments:

- Opened the meeting by welcoming and thanking everyone for attending and for all their contributions.
- Introductions around the room.
- Introduced Guest Speakers:
 - Dr. John Witherspoon, Chair of the National Source Water Protection Committee for the American Water Works Association.
 - Attorney Tim Bates, to discuss Great Brook Subdivision Project.

John Witherspoon Comments:

- Our current DWQMP Program is well ahead of schedule.
- He was a prior Water Director for the City of Springfield, Missouri Utilities.
 - It took the Springfield, Missouri Municipality 7 to 8 years to get where our DWQMP Program is today after 3 years.
- Having stakeholders, planners, city and state officials, and local municipality personnel all gathering in the same room is outstanding and commendable.
- Our program must have community consensus support or the program will not be a success.
- Our program is a prime candidate for the National AWWA Source Water Award.
 - Outstanding award and recognition for an application in the future.

Al Dion Comments:

- In addition, future planning of a Stormwater Protection Program is a must.

John Witherspoon Comments:

- As a reminder, the overall goal for the program cannot be obtained overnight, must be accomplished in small steps.
- Very important to communicate small successes within the Committee to the public.
 - Small explanations of how and why projects worked is a plus for all to understand and is a front-runner for future projects.

Lori Mathieu Comments:

- We do need to market ourselves better.
- Success stories and goals met in circulations could assist our overall program.

Joan Smith Comment:

- Getting the word out to the public could only aid our existence.
- Let everyone know and understand we are blessed with an abundance of water resource.
- Possibly look at venues for national publicity.

Al Dion Comment:

- Recognized Dr. Chi Ho Sham as future Chair to relieve Dr. John Witherspoon.

Karl Acimovic Comment:

- Question to Dr. Witherspoon. What did the Springfield, Missouri municipality end up with (as a deliverable) through their Source Water Protection Program?

John Witherspoon Comment:

- Springfield Utility's achievement was the creation of a nonprofit organization called "Watershed Committee of the Ozarks" (see <http://www.watershedcommittee.org/wordpress/>) that reviews all Plans and Specifications for development; they have input in the approval/disapproval process.
- The program revised local Planning and Zoning Regulations to fit watershed protection needs. No Federal Regulations were changed that he knew of.
- Overall the Ozarks Committee has received approximately \$2,000,000 in 319 Grants.
- On the EPA Website, Springfield, Missouri remains one of the Case Studies.

Chi Ho Sham Comment:

- This DWQMP Committee can consider if a nonprofit Watershed Organization such as the Springfield Committee will work for our area.

Lori Mathieu Comment:

- Question to Dr. Witherspoon. How many municipalities were involved with the organization?

John Witherspoon Comments:

- Program began with one municipality.
- More joined over the years, approximately 6, remembering Springfield Water Company supplies a population of about 420,000.
- Watershed Committee of the Ozarks continues to work with other municipalities and communities to build committees to work together.

Al Dion Comments:

- Thanked Dr. Witherspoon for his time and comments.
- Introduced Attorney Tim Bates.

Tim Bates Comments:

- Gave a presentation on the Great Brook Subdivision Project.
- This is a proposed 125-acre subdivision along Great Brook, which is a tributary to the GU PWSW.
- A consultant was retained to “model” groundwater plumes to assess potential water quality impacts from individual septic systems. This model was used to help delineate buildable areas.
- Local Health only has authority to decide whether projects meet their regulations or not.
- The subdivision has a 150-foot no disturbance wetland buffer.
- The BMPs and legal documents that Mr. Bates provided are an excellent starting point for our Committees to use within areas of the watershed that are determined to be suitable for development.
- Chi Ho is an excellent resource to our group as he worked with a LI project on PN loading models for 10 years.
- It will be interesting to see if the BMPs being utilized by the Great Brook Subdivision are enforceable.
- There are a series of State statutes that require towns to consider drinking water protection. Including: CGS 22a-42f, 8-2a, and PA 85279.

Sidney VanZandt Comments:

- Following Tim Bates discussion it is noted that after many months of negotiation between his client and the Groton Open Space Association (GOSA), changes were made following recommendations of GOSA’s hired environmental expert.
- The original development called for high density in the sewer avoidance zone was changed to fewer lots that had minimal damage to the wetlands vernal pools, and Great Brook which is a tributary of the Groton Reservoir.

An open discussion ensued throughout all Committee Members on Wetland Requirements including:

- Requirements
- Limitations
- Land Trusts
- Grants
- Land Purchase

Steve Masalin Comments:

- To reiterate our goal of looking at undeveloped properties and setting guidelines for development especially land that is near the watershed.
- The Land Information Committee is putting together the criteria for development.
- But there is also an issue with land that is currently developed that could and in many cases does have existing issues. The LIC is also considering areas that need/are feasible for remediation.

Lori Mathieu Comments:

- Agree with Steve.
- Committee needs to look at criteria for baseline data and regulations for hot spots, land that is a must for protecting the watershed.

Laurie Giannotti Comment:

- Comments on each Subcommittee on their activities.
- Land Information Subcommittee
 - Held a meeting with distributed Minutes.
- Water Information Subcommittee
 - Has a draft list of water quality monitoring sites and testing.
 - Waiting on Dr. Kortman, Consultant for action item updates.
- Communications Subcommittee
 - Currently on hold.
 - Will start working with Mark Cohen, ASRWVA on:
 - Goal 1 - *Preserve Drinking Water Quality and Protect Public Health*; and
 - Goal 5 - *Develop a process for Plan review and updates.*
- GIS Subcommittee
 - Has a spreadsheet of GIS status for member towns.
 - Ready to supply information as needed.
 - If a Subcommittee needs GIS support, request from Karl.
- Consultant Procurement Subcommittee
 - Mike Murphy is reviewing DPH Draft Correspondence.

Chi Ho Sham Comments:

- Presented Planning Process Document to complete:
- **Goal 3 - *Implement an open and efficient drinking water protection process***
 - **Objective 1: Use a responsible and open practice to keep the planning process transparent and equitable**
 - **Oversight Committee Tasks:**

- Work with Communications Committee to define the process (e.g., involve citizens and stakeholders)
 - Provide examples and models
 - **Objective 2: Implement a high quality standard for efficient plan revisions, implementation and fiscal accountability**
 - **Oversight Committee Tasks:**
 - Define quality standards
 - Evaluate efficiency and costs
 - **Objective 3: Be responsive to emerging issues and established priorities**
 - **Oversight Committee Tasks:**
 - Develop a chain of command or ladder of responsibility
 - Work with Communications Committee to develop a model for prompt response
- **Goal 5 - Develop a process for Plan review and updates**
 - **Oversight Committee Objectives and Tasks:**
 - To be defined
- Develop a plan for:
 - Regulations
 - Best Management Practices
 - Possible Land Purchase

Laurie Giannotti Comments:

- USGS will have a presentation at the next meeting.
- At that time we may entertain a proposal from USGS to complete parts of:
 - **Goal 1** - *Preserve Drinking Water Quality and Protect Public Health*
 - **Goal 2** - *Proactively Protect Critical Watershed Areas through Land Management*

Lori Mathieu Comment:

- The use of USGS will likely require funding.
- This may have to be a future recommendation.

Margaret Miner Comment:

- Is there a possibility of creating a Groton Utilities Source Water Protection Award for community to strive for and publicity of the program?

Al Dion Comment:

- We currently have a Community Service Award that we annually issue and will be developing parameters for a Source Water Protection award.

Margaret Miner Comment:

- Great, maybe that program can be enhanced to focus on source protection as well as community service.

Lori Mathieu Comments:

- There needs to be a listing begun, during the meetings, of “Big Picture” items to add to as we move forward that will be related to the completion of Goal 6 - *Develop a Model Plan for the State.*

Laurie Giannotti Comments:

- Handling Action Items suggestions:
 - Update Plan, how frequently will this happen? Oversight Committee needs to decide.
 - Oversight Committee also needs to decide upon rules on how items are acted upon
 - Use of a “Quorum” of our Oversight Committee in order to approve future updates to the DWQMP:
- Agenda items for next meeting
 - Performance Measures
 - Frequency of updates
 - USGS
 - Subcommittee Involvement

Al Dion Comments:

- Thank everyone for attending.
- Next meeting will be Wednesday June 6, 2007 at 9:30am at the Groton Utilities Operation Complex in the Julio H. Leandri Administration Building Conference Room.

Meeting adjourned.