



## DRAFT REPORT OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

### Southeast Connecticut Regional Drinking Water Quality Management Plan Groton, Ledyard, Preston, North Stonington, Norwich, Montville, and Waterford Tuesday, June 24, 2008

A meeting of the DWQMP Advisory Committee was held on June 24, 2008 at the Groton Utilities Operations Complex Julio H. Leandri Administration Building Conference Room. The meeting was facilitated by Jeanine Armstrong Bonin, P.E., Vice President of Milone & MacBroom, Inc. (MMI). Also present from MMI was David Murphy, P.E. The following members were in attendance:

Advisory Group Members	Representing		Guests	
Al Dion	PRI – Groton Utilities	X	Karl Acimovic, GU	X
Rick Stevens	ALT – Groton Utilities	X	Joyce Brown, GU	X
Mike Murphy	PRI – Town of Groton		Ronald Bata, GU	X
Deborah Jones	ALT – Town of Groton	X	Jeff Butensky, EPA	X
Mayor Fred Allyn	PRI – Town of Ledyard		Mike Boland, MPTN	X
Mike Cherry	ALT – Town of Ledyard		Marc Cohen	
Marcia Vlaun	PRI – Town of Montville	X	Pat Bresnahan, UCONN	
Tom Wagner	PRI – Town of Waterford	X		
Neftali Soto	ALT – Town of Waterford			
Mike Schaefer	PRI – City of Norwich	X		
John Bilda	ALT – City of Norwich			
Kathy Warzecha	PRI – Town of Preston			
1 <sup>st</sup> Selectman Robert Congdon	ALT – Town of Preston	X		
Juliet Leeming	PRI – Town of N. Stonington	X		
1 <sup>st</sup> Selectman Nicholas Mullane	ALT – Town of N. Stonington			
Robert Birmingham, AICP	PRI – Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation			
Ken Greenwood	ALT – Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation	X		
Jennifer Pagach	PRI – State & Federal Agencies	X		
Lori Mathieu	ALT – State & Federal Agencies			
Gregory Leonard	PRI – Water Utilities			
Ed Monahan	ALT – Water Utilities	X		
Tom Seidel	PRI –Regional Planning			
Jim Butler	ALT –Regional Planning	X		
Peter Gardner	PRI – Land Owners/Developers			
Clint Brown	ALT – Land Owners/Developers			
Margaret Miner	PRI – Open Space/Conservation			
Sydney VanZandt	ALT – Open Space/Conservation	X		
Zell Steever	PRI – Environmental Groups	X		
Open	ALT – Environmental Groups			
Ryan McCammon	PRI – Health Districts			
Amy Eberly	ALT – Health Districts			
William Sweeney, AICP	PRI – Land Use Consultants/Attorneys			
Tim Bates, Esq.	ALT – Land Use Consultants/Attorneys			
Deborah Donovan	PRI – Business/Industry	X		
Open	ALT – Business/Industry			

### Welcome and Introductions

→ J. Bonin opened the meeting at 9:35 a.m. Attendee introductions were made around the table.

### Review of Meeting Minutes and Correspondence

→ J. Bonin invited comments, questions, or discussion on the previously distributed May 15, 2008 Advisory Committee and Administration Group meeting minutes as well as the June 1, 2008 progress memorandum.

→ Z. Steever asked about the meaning of the statement in the Administration Group meeting minutes regarding the Advisory Committee meetings: ". . . too much of the focus is on the policy of the process, rather than the technical elements." J. Bonin clarified that the statement spoke to the group's opinion that a disproportionate amount of time and focus was being spent in the Advisory Committee meetings on committee process and membership, rather than the technical elements of the DWQMP.

→ A. Dion reported that Sharon Mann from DPUC will replace Jerry Iwan's previous Water Planning Council role on the Advisory Committee.

### Web Site Update

→ R. Stevens stated that site design is due July 4 and Groton Utilities' initial approval is due by July 8. The web site will be presented to the Administration Group at the July 17, 2008 meeting. D. Murphy has provided Brown Bear Creative with all pertinent documents, meeting minutes, and memorandums through June 18, 2008.

### Stormwater Utility Discussion

→ D. Murphy presented two stormwater management related memorandums. The first provided an explanation of stormwater utilities and the second provided an explanation of stormwater management in the Towns of Groton and Ledyard.

→ The resulting discussion (documented below) alternated between comments about stormwater utilities and comments regarding potential stormwater management scenarios that would not necessarily require creation of a stormwater utility.

→ M. Schaefer kicked off the discussion with a comment that any additional fee for a service would not be favorable at this time. As a resident of Killingly, he asserted that a stormwater utility would not be approved in his community due to the financial impacts.

→ S. VanZandt and Z. Steever expressed their support for shellfish advocates, who believe that minimum stormwater standards for drinking water quality are not sufficient for shellfish. S. VanZandt referred to separate correspondence from the Groton Shellfish Commission,

provided to D. Murphy and J. Bonin at the beginning of the meeting. J. Bonin reminded the group that their legislative charge relates to drinking water quality and anything that is accomplished to protect or improve drinking water quality will benefit water quality for shellfish. However, protection and/or improvement of water quality to shellfish standards needs to occur outside of the DWQMP process.

- M. Vlaun led a discussion about management of post-construction stormwater. She would prefer that burdens no longer be placed on local governments. Instead, burden would be better placed upon the developers and owners of the stormwater management systems. One means of addressing stormwater is by using centralized or regional treatment systems. Each system could handle one large development or several smaller ones. Locations off-site should be identified if necessary, especially as more challenging site designs are being proposed to local commissions. J. Bonin likened this to the work near Lake Whitney where the Regional Water Authority is treating stormwater in constructed wetlands. M. Vlaun further explained that systems could be sufficiently large that future generators of stormwater would tie into them and also "buy into" them.
- Z. Steever perceives two big problems with stormwater utilities. First, the State may not allow them yet. Second, people are not in favor of more fees.
- J. Pagach suggested contacting Chris Malik at DEP about the status of enabling legislation or new opinions regarding stormwater utilities. She also commented that public buy-in can't occur unless people perceive that there is a problem to solve. S. VanZandt remarked that people don't view stormwater as they view other services, like garbage collection.
- J. Bonin remarked that stormwater utilities in Connecticut would not be able to enjoy the economy of scale seen in states with stronger county-wide government.
- T. Wagner recommended that the group investigate the stormwater utility pilot program here in Connecticut; the final report was due earlier this year.
- J. Butler wondered how already-developed properties would be assessed for a new regional or centralized stormwater system, as they may be creating the greatest problems. M. Vlaun responded that this is a persistent problem, and it is extremely difficult to go back and bring existing properties into the same level of compliance unless they come back for plan revisions or redevelopment approvals.
- M. Schaefer remarked that another layer of government is not a good direction. A. Dion concurred that nobody wants another fee. Stormwater management could continue in existing frameworks and could be better managed in existing departments.
- J. Bonin remarked that a portion of the water bills for customers served by the Groton Utilities system could be earmarked for centralized stormwater systems. A. Dion noted that the Pequot Medical Center basin is located on Groton Utilities owned land.

- Z. Steever stated that it would be useful to review the results of the Phase II programs in place. T. Wagner replied that it's difficult to measure results, and that only limited monitoring data is available. K. Acimovic stated that Groton Utilities maintains a database of monitoring results related to their stormwater MOUs.
- M. Schaefer wondered how the plan could compel the CT DOT to maintain and clean their stormwater systems. A. Dion noted that he has trouble getting DOT to maintain its systems along I-95.
- J. Leeming wondered about the direction of the discussion. If the desired goal is consistency among towns regarding stormwater regulations, wouldn't a stormwater utility help bring about this consistency? J. Bonin suggested that consistency could be an implementation goal of the regional DWQMP.

### Brainstorming Session

- This session was intended to help collect ideas for inclusion in the DWQMP. Ideas that were generated are listed below. The DWQMP should:
  - ❑ Provide for consistency among towns regarding stormwater management.
  - ❑ Provide for minimum standards, linking it to EPA programs and possible 319 funding.
  - ❑ Foster a shared responsibility between people who consume the water and people who live in the watersheds.
  - ❑ Look at future drinking water service areas.
  - ❑ Look at future build-out to help locate treatment areas.
  - ❑ Utilize existing DEP guidance documents and not "reinvent the wheel".
  - ❑ Rely on the "gold start" of low impact development, Prince George's County in Maryland.
  - ❑ Add web-based electronic NRCS soil survey mapping to the toolbox.
  - ❑ Provide references and resources.
  - ❑ Find opportunities for buy-in.
  - ❑ Cite alternatives: zoning, land acquisition, and development easements.
  - ❑ Evaluate regulation, acquisition, and partnerships.
  - ❑ Investigate the least-cost solutions.
  - ❑ Identify non-utility owned land that would be considered Class I and II if it were utility-owned.
  - ❑ Discuss the State Plan of Conservation & Development.
  - ❑ Investigate review areas and recommend extending or increasing them.
- M. Vlaun expressed frustration that too many of the ideas being raised were already discussed in the previous two years of the project, and that nothing new was being heard.

→ Most participants concurred that the most effective method to proceed is to allow the consultant to draft DWQMP sections for Advisory Committee review. J. Bonin noted that draft recommendations will need to be "reality-tested" with this group at a future meeting.

### Additional Discussions

→ Additional management strategies to be evaluated include topics such as security, regional/centralized treatment, MOUs, land acquisitions, and water quality monitoring. T. Wagner stated that the water quality assessment should be linked to a threat assessment and current levels of development.

→ Content of the technical memorandums developed to date will be incorporated into the DWQMP but the memorandums will not be wholly attached or appended, in the interest of keeping the DWQMP document as concise as possible. The memorandums will be available elsewhere, such as the web site.

→ A discussion about watershed lands then ensued. J. Leeming inquired about the statement in the conceptual watershed report that existing land uses were depicted but did not reflect current conditions. The consultants will check this statement.

→ K. Acimovic showed the Class I and II map and wondered how the DWQMP could help property owners manage their land the same way that Groton Utilities would. Z. Steever reminded the group that too much regulation runs the risk of being considered a "taking." The DWQMP won't propose anything that could be considered a taking. Review areas are different and allowable. T. Wagner doesn't want to see these worries prevent the DWQMP from trying to come up with creative ideas for better management in watershed lands.

→ J. Pagach suggested that the group might want to spend more time presenting and discussing what is already in place regarding controls on watershed lands.

→ A. Dion will provide D. Murphy with additions to the treatment memorandum in July.

→ T. Wagner inquired about the public recreation component. D. Murphy explained that this would be linked with the security analysis. A. Dion remarked that there has been progress on the greenway.

→ M. Vlaun led a discussion about pilot payments. The fundamental question is: what is important – development or the taxes? Acquisitions and setbacks reduce taxes by taking development off the table. Pilot payments are common when towns receive payments for hosting undesirable facilities, like prisons. Here, they would be considered funds in lieu of taxes, and the DWQMP should evaluate opportunities to locate such funds. For example, if a town sets land aside or prevents development, how could it be compensated? Water users could pay, and towns consuming the water should help pay as well. Stony Brook Reservoir was cited as an example. Montville has trouble getting industrial development in the

watershed, but doesn't get anything in return for not having the development. Payments would help offset this.

→ B. Congdon remarked that water users are not paying for undeveloped land right now, so how would they come to pay in the future?

*Future Meetings*

→ Subsequent meetings are scheduled for July 17, August 21, and September 18, 2008.

*Adjourn*

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.