



ON-SITE SYSTEMS TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD



SUMMARY OF ACTION

09 January 08

Members Present: Joel Neimeyer PE, Chairman, Mark Musial PE, Vice-Chairman, Linda Kovac, Homeowner, Tim Pampusch, PA

Advisory Members:

Staff Present: Debbie Wockenfuss, Kathy Maricle Permit Clerk, Joe Goodall PE

Guests: Brett Jokela Assistant General Manger, AWWU, Jeff Garness PE, Garness Engineering, Jody Maus, Garness Engineering, Tony Hoffman, LANTECH, Bill Reith, D.E.C., Jeff Begnart, Property Owner

Meeting called to order at 1141.

The December minutes were approved and will be posted on the web site.

Introductions were made.

Brett Jokela, Assistant General Manager of AWWU gave a presentation on AWWU's position on Hillside Wastewater Cluster Systems - in response to a request from the group that is currently developing the Hillside Plan. The AWWU Board is interested in a joint position statement from both the AWWU Board and the On-Site Tech Board. AWWU would like to provide the statement by the first week of February 2008 - when they next meet. At this time AWWU wants to either manage cluster systems entirely, or not have any authority over them. Brett reported that AWWU believes that there should be on entity with oversight responsibility for cluster systems.

Questions were asked of should AWWU own, operate, regulate and inspect these systems. What will happen when the system fails? Will there be a need for certification of installation, what are the guarantees' for proper operations and maintenance? Will the cost associated with cluster systems be more than running and maintaining main line sewer systems? Brett also asked about control issues, administrative cost and the cost recovery. Who will cover the cost of fixing the system?

Jeff Garness of Garness Engineering Group, Ltd mentioned that there currently are some community septic systems operating within the Municipality of Anchorage, and that their design and permitting are done through a process administered by the D.E.C. Bill Reith of the D.E.C. agreed, but stated that there are concerns with some of the community systems.

There was a request from Dan Roth (through Deb Wockenfass) to the Board to consider a request from Tony Hoffman of LANTECH for an immediate code change to AMC 15.65.180(enacted in 1986) to allow a cluster system for proposed subdivisions for single-family home lots. Such a change would allow subdivision of large parcels into individual lots that could be served by a wastewater cluster system. Presently these types of development are accomplished as Planned Unit Developments (PUD), which is a planning concept that allows homes to be developed on large parcels without having to subdivide them. The Tech Board considered the request and declined to take action. Board members want more information before taking any action including what are the specific changes proposed and what impact would these changes have on future subdivision development requests.

Joel Neimeyer expressed support for a joint meeting with the D.E.C., AWWU, On-Site and any other "regulatory" organizations that may have an interest in cluster systems in the Anchorage Bowl. The purpose of this meeting would be to discuss cluster systems and consider further the possibility of a joint position with AWWU and others, as appropriate. The Board would like to learn why only AWWU was approached for a public statement on cluster systems and if the group developing the Hillside Plan is interested in a combined response from those agencies charges with some level of regulatory oversight.

Some issues for consideration include the following:

1. The AWWU February 2008 timeline is ambitious
2. Potential long-term impacts must be considered such as systems not built to AWWU standards and in the future AWWU inherits management of the systems.
3. Cluster systems are not the same as individual on-site systems. The volume of effluent disposed could have a concentrated impact on the groundwater aquifer system.
4. This is an issue for the Hillside and Chugiak/Eagle River.
5. Who has jurisdiction for cluster systems and what is the best option for long-term protection of the aquifer system.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15pm.