

# City of Oronoco Special City Council Meeting Saturday, June 2, 2007 7:30am - 11:30am

**Present:** Mayor Scott Keigley, Councilor Brian Breider, Councilor Jackie Hall, City Clerk Cheryl Nymann, City Engineer Joe Palen, Ted Field (Bonestroo), Charles Schwartz (Bonestroo), Russ Stammer (Bonestroo), Phil Wheeler (Olmsted County), Sheila Craig (SE MN Wastewater Initiative), Charlie Fried, Laurie Long, Councilor Tom Novak, Lee Forstie, Kevin Holz, Carl Riess, Jeff Smith (MPCA), Jean Tiedeman, Jeanne Wittlief, Councilor Kevin McDermott arrived at 10:30am

City Engineer Joe Palen began with introductions. The workshop objective was to formulate a vision for addressing Oronoco's future sewer and water needs, and to develop an action plan to implement this vision.

## ORONOCO WATER & SEWER COMMITTEE

Oronoco's Water & Sewer Committee has done studies gathering information on the area including:

- Received grants for studies, and area in NE quadrant could do individual septic systems if they had a shared well (they currently have shallow wells);
- Constraints with area to the south with rock – would need a cluster system off site.
- Council passed pumping ordinance that systems need to be pumped every 3 years;
- Homeowner surveys asking people what type of systems they have, and many did not know what they had.
- Terry Lee provided free nitrate testing to the City.
- Doug Malchow presented on caring for septic systems.
- Met with Rochester and toured their site.

They are ready to move forward with a plan and want to pursue bringing the interim residential systems together.

## MINNESTOA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY (MPCA)

Mr. Smith discussed State's perspective which was that Oronoco is in a major growth corridor. They've seen a large increase in sub-surface systems, but it is a higher probability of nitrate contamination. They will take a more critical look at accumulation of systems to protect the groundwater. If the City connects with Rochester or Pine Island, the MPCA permits with those cities. Permitting for commercial in this situation depends on what type of industry is brought in. Systems can be designed for high use.

## OLMSTED COUNTY

If there was a treatment facility the high use businesses would probably come. Mr. Wheeler discussed his duties, including cluster systems under 10,000 gallon. County's position with regard to

sewer and water expansion in Oronoco is to see a linkage with the older parts of town with the new systems in Oronoco. Oronoco has its own land use and planning authority, but the County Dept. of Health would like to see the linkage. Demand for growth within 16 miles of Rochester, accounts for 93% of growth in region. If City was to have Water & Sewer facilities, the City would grow as fast or if not faster than Byron. Oronoco's competitive advantage would be extremely high if they had these services, but goes to zero without the systems. Oronoco is eligible with Olmsted County for properties to receive grant for sewage treatment problems. Sales tax may be a source for funding (County wide because groundwater is a regional problem). Olmsted County accounts for 73% of 7 county areas. A failing septic is easy to deal with. A failing well is more difficult to deal with. Would like to see it treated as a community problem because it is a public health issue. County Board has analogous situation elsewhere (Kings Park and Cedar Beach has similar issues of Oronoco). Oronoco has a higher density interim development. Discussion items on everything that occurs (like a County Sales Tax) in Olmsted County happens in Rochester, and why would they want to vote for a tax to a small town. Mr. Wheeler stated that the sales tax would go for other areas of the County, not just Oronoco.

## CITY OF ORONOCO

Saturday, June 02, 2007

The City knows that it will grow. They've been told that the funding for systems has 'dried up'. In Rochester, developers now pay 75% of expansion and road grades up to their developments. The other 25% of the money is municipal state aid money. Mr. Wheeler suggested leveraging growth to help pay for it. City Government has had differing opinions. Has the County given the City mixed messages by allowing the City to go ahead with cluster systems in their new developments? Can the County or State take the approach to stop the development? Mr. Wheeler commented that developments have taken place inside City Limits, and the County is not in the position to tell the City they cannot do that because they have their own Land Use and Planning & Zoning authority. And, there have also been numerous County Commissioners elected, and are not consistent as well. Kevin Holz encouraged the City to work side by side with County and State agencies. The City needs to make a decision on the direction, and then focus on financing on how to get there. Discussion on priorities (drinking water, commercial water, amenities for growth).

## CONCEPTS

City Engineer Joe Palen reviewed previous facilities plan and prepared mapping for discussion.

- One option is for wastewater treatment facility on the east side of oronoco (east of CW)
- Construction of a wastewater main south to Rochester (with pumping station located in CW II), involved 9 miles of pipe south to 100th Street over to 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 75<sup>th</sup> Street (significant cost 9 million).
- Rochester's planning infrastructure to trailer park in 2016, and would connect by forced main {2.2 miles}. Rochester has land area to expand a service area up to 300,000 people (est. cost of Rochester to get to the trailer park is 30 million, SAC for this general service area is higher [\$12,000 / acre])
- Interim treatment and collection sooner than 2016 discussed. There would be potential grants available for interim systems. Funding eligibility and financing opportunities discussed. As applying for any funding program, bring in the entire picture.

## WATER SUPPLY WITHIN THE CITY

**This is the City's number one priority.** Engineering in the facility plan created in 2002 was viable. And, the plan looked at establishing above the ground storage system (across from cemetery on north end of town). The city has place 2 million for this type of project in CIP. Trunk main would come down Minnesota avenue and into 5<sup>th</sup> street SW to municipal well in River Park. This could be considered as Phase 1 of project. (cost estimate at 2.6 million) [which would include capacity of a 100 system hook-ups]. And could provide fire hydrant service (to construct them would be \$4,000 each). The question was asked if there was any way to lay the line for the sewer at the same time so streets wouldn't be torn up twice? City of Rochester does not allow new septic systems in areas that are expecting to be served (it has to be an interim approach).

Phase 2 would include extending water line in casing under Hwy. 52 to the west side well in Riverwood Hills. [less costly than Phase 1]. Could be developer driven, Economic development (DEED's program).

Services from Pine Island. GGG, and Geoff Griffith is the engineer for Tower Investments, and they are currently in design for the Elk Farm; with the initial construction on the north end of the property (where the bio medical facility will be). Mr. Wheeler reported that he has a letter which states that Mayo Clinic has no interest in bio medical building at the Elk Farm, and via phone conversations, the University of MN isn't interested either. Pine Island has set regional wastewater facility just north of the elk farm, and alignment to the City of Oronoco could come to the north end of the city on County 18. First phase of Elk Run will be under construction this Fall. Residential development on the south end in 5 years. Accuracy of information from Tower Investments and Geoff Griffiths discussed. This may provide an option to a regional sewer district. But, the City would have to pump to the gravity system on the top of the hill along County 18 but would still need to lift it. No guarantees on anything.

In summary the City is looking at 2 Regional options, with costs and time frame as important factors . What are cost participation and future cost participation, and would the City be a percentage owner or simply contracted with them? Discussion on going North to Pine Island or South to Rochester (distance to both would be within fraction of each other). Mr. Wheeler encouraged Council to make an informed decision on the direction (request information from Pine Island). Olmsted County can help out interim septic systems on when plans are made.

*Saturday, June 02, 2007*

**Direction for the City:**

1. Need documentation on water via a feasibility report in order to get some funding started. Phase I feasibility report is needed for preapplications for grants.
2. Meet with Pine Island to discuss Elk Run (the Mayor, GGG and Joe [maybe Judy Ohly]) City Engineer Joe Palen will set up meeting).\*

Communication is the key to any plan for the City.