

Comments and Suggestions about the School property from the Water Department

Foremost, we all need to keep in mind that the property is within the wellhead protection area (Zone II) and merely 800 feet from one of our public drinking water supply wells. This means that any future uses of the property should be carefully designed to meet state and local performance standards. In my opinion wastewater management, stormwater management, and the storage and use of any toxic and hazardous materials should be high on the list of considerations.

Fortunately, there are some very good, state-of-the-art technologies for both wastewater and stormwater that could be integrated into the redevelopment plans. These could include so-called enhanced, innovative, and alternative (EIA) septic technologies that utilize wood chip bioreactors - these systems are demonstrating 80 - 90% nitrate removal rates higher than standard Title 5 systems. Stormwater systems utilizing bio-retention (vegetated) systems are producing similar results for stormwater. The introduction of these technologies could mitigate any potential water quality threats and would serve as excellent pilot projects for the community—possibly leading the way to improving water quality conditions throughout the village.

To avoid the potential issues associated with toxic and hazardous materials I believe that the list of potential uses should be carefully vetted. Some of the potential uses that were suggested last night would represent no significant water quality threats and could provide significant community benefits. These include use of gymnasium for sports, recreation, and fitness; farmers market, community garden, educational classes, Kettleers' museum, senior center, village dinners, shared workspace, emergency shelter, first response center, and others.

I also believe that there may be some potential future uses of the property by both the Water and Fire Departments. This could include overflow space for storage of files, office space, meeting space for EMT personnel, etc. This could free up needed space at both existing properties for the Water and Fire Departments. Bottom line for me is that more careful study is needed. I suggest that the Prudential Committee should develop a scope of services for a study of potential uses of the property by District residents. My understanding is that there is an existing appropriation for this purpose.

Scott Horsley
Board of Water Commissioners