

WHITE & SMITH, LLC

MEMORANDUM

Ada County, ID



To: Mark Perfect, Planning and Zoning Administrator, Development Services
From: White & Smith, LLC
Date: May 27, 2021
Re: ZOA Listening Sessions 11 Notes

MEETING ATTENDEES

On May 26, 2021, the Consultant Team – White & Smith, LLC (Mark White and Rhys Wilson) joined staff to discuss issues and concerns about the Ada County Zoning Ordinance.

- Mark Perfect
- Brent Moore
- Leon Letson
- Richard Beck
- Aaron Scheff (DEQ – Boise regional office administrator)
- Zach Kirk (Ada County Engineer)
- Jen Schneider (Assistant Dean Public Service at BSU, Environmental Policy, Treasure Valley Water Atlas)
- Ed Hagan (DEQ, Groundwater Bureau Chief)
- Lance Holloway (DEQ)
- Mike Reno (Central District Health)
- Albert Crawshaw (DEQ)
- Valerie Greear (DEQ)

NOTES BY QUESTION

Discussion

The Consultant Team noted the following discussion points.

- What is working well or not working well with the existing Zoning Ordinance? What issues are the County facing with regard to water supply and water quality due to development?
 - Prohibition of individual wells, fewer holes are better, and minimize septic tank.
 - Does well requiring water hookups and sewer.
 - Prefer central treatment v. wells.
 - Could require PWS connection, Twin Falls tried that and not allowed.
 - By requiring hookup that removes incentive for private well.
 - The code encourages hookup to central sewer or water, if fails and within 300' they require hookup.
 - If irrigation water rights, its beneficial to have a separate irrigation system.
 - Reduces potential for x-connection contamination, use preexisting systems in new development.
 - Will be impactful, and look at ordinances and encourage developers to design greywater systems to reuse water.
 - We have a rich water supply, compared to other parts of Snake River Plain, due to recharge.
 - Agriculture doing flood irrigation.
 - As we develop faster we risk the recharge, population, higher temps, decreasing water resources.
 - Contaminants in surface water – areas that can provide basins for recharge would be valuable.
 - As we transition from agriculture to residential we may not have consumptive use for water supply.
 - Recharge district or conservation district is interesting.
 - Do we have the level of detail to establish the districts?
 - Elmore County has developed recharge basins.
 - Its active right now.
 - Working with SPF.
 - Maybe tie in with parks.
 - Look at Hubbard Reservoir in SW County.
 - IDWR – granularity of data has improved over last 5-6 years.
 - Elmore may have water shortage while the valley has an embarrassment of riches.
 - Ground Water Monitoring Technical Committee – government agencies to coordinate GW sampling focusing on quality.
 - DWR, gives presentations.

- MTC (TV Monitoring Technical Advisory Committee – Sean Vincent at IWR) working on a model.
 - Working on it for a number of years – looks at impact of aquifer recharge on water levels, in a matter of days could flow back into river, deeper aquifers, perching potential.
- Are there any specific design standards that the County needs to tune up? What zoning controls could the County put in place to protect water supply? What zoning controls could the County put in place to protect water quality?
 - Lots of subdivisions with grass and water hungry, non-native landscaping with no habitat.
 - HOAs very strict about landscaping and require grassed front yard.
 - Maybe encourage and HOAs to change paradigm.
 - Hot political issue – maybe incentivize.
 - Not aware of any assured water supply requirements in ID.
 - PWS have to demonstrate water supply, not sure of their requirements, have lost capacity due to water level decline (ask IDWR).
- Are there any uses that are a concern, or that the Zoning Ordinance should do a better job of accommodating?
 - CAFO siting team (in statute) – may say that before permitted, provides info to county regarding whether high or low risk location
 - The County can restrict operations based on hazard mitigation.
 - The County actually has a CAFO ordinance in place.
 - Maybe craft language better as part of submittal.
- Are zoning application processes meeting the needs of staff and the development community?
 - Environmental comment requests received weekly about
 - Subdivisions, where located, density, how to handle water supply.
 - May trigger pathogen study if septic part of project.
 - Helpful and seems routine.
 - No problems at this point.
 - Incentives to encourage hookup to POTW or central sewer would help.
- What should the primary outcome of the Zoning Ordinance update be?
 - Integrate source water delineations into process – identify drinking water supply aquifers.
 - Lots of area that don't overlay water supplies.
 - E.g. if permit landfills, other facilities that have contamination, keep out of areas that impact water supply wells.
 - Meridian does a good job with this.

- If protect subdivisions outside city boundaries and not municipal wells that would protect the capital investment in wells.
- Flooding – anticipate there being a lot more precipitation events with climate change, bigger rain, harder for COE to manage.
 - Increasing development along river, how zoning could mitigate that.