

## **March 9, 2018 Letter from a group of property owners to all residents**

Dear Waterford Property Owners,

Many thanks to those of you who made up the over 50 attendees at the February 21<sup>st</sup> public meeting with our colleagues from the County Water and Wastewater Program. We are pleased to inform you that Mr Joe Lock of the County's Environmental Health Division has agreed to speak to us about individual wells and water systems on **Monday March 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm in the Old School auditorium**. For many property owners in Waterford, flow rates are outdated, well functionality unpredictable and sources of ground water differ significantly among neighbors. Mr Lock is in the best position to help us understand just what is known today about wells and the water situation in Waterford. Send Anica Haracic ([Anica.Haracic@loudoun.gov](mailto:Anica.Haracic@loudoun.gov)) your questions beforehand and she'll forward them in mass to Mr Lock

What we do know from personal experience as a village, is that a number of our properties have severe limitations in solving their individual water deficiencies. A handful of owners have been willing to share with us in confidence, their stories of going temporarily dry, but few want to publicize their plight. However, Paul and Kitty Rose's email shared with the village in February was helpful and below is the recent experience (which could happen to any of us) of Mike Stup during the 2017 holidays and into 2018:

*Our old shallow well began to show signs of low water yield 5-8 years ago. It finally went dry in December 2017. The county health department reacted swiftly to our calls for a new well permit. The new well @ 700' yielded only ½ gallon a minute during two tests (ideally the county standard goal is 5 gallons a minute). Final costs are not in yet, however total so far is \$16,000.00 plus burying the electric line at some point. We are not planning to go deeper than 700'; it takes a different rig and the price per foot goes up by more than 50% per foot plus there is no good evidence that we would find water if we went another 2-400 feet.*

*Two months after the new well was installed the current yield is only 0-20 gallons a day, so despite the labor and costs experienced above, we continue sparing use of water. Some days the pressure gauge does not move up at all with zero water usage. So to fulfill our needs we are using 5 gallon water jugs for kitchen and drinking use, only one shower a week (others at the gym or friends) and one dishwasher run for a week. Toilets are being refilled from 1 gallon jugs. We are investigating having tanks (2\* 300 gallon 'doorway tanks) in the basement connected into the water pressure tank system. These tanks would be filled monthly (estimate) from an outside water company source that we are investigating.*

*Thank you to many community members over the last year and especially the last 4 months for the showers,*

*washing machine use and hose water to fill gallon jugs to flush toilets.*

*Best to all, Mike*

*(15520 Second St.)*

In regards to the Waterford application; property owners (see list below and in full disclosure, includes the sender of this email) of 32 properties have signed the petition asking for assistance with water issues and water service improvements. Almost all, (twenty eight of the 32 properties) have water quality and/or quantity issues. Over 50% of these owners met recently and agreed to go forward with the application. Three individuals have agreed to coordinate the application process: Kathleen Hughes ([khughes868@aol.com](mailto:khughes868@aol.com)), Sharyn Franck ([sharynfranck@gmail.com](mailto:sharynfranck@gmail.com)) and Mary Dudley ([dudmaster@earthlink.net](mailto:dudmaster@earthlink.net)). As was discussed in the public meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup>; the application can include more than one grouping of eligible structures outlined by boundaries to define each community of need. As can be seen in the attached rough map; several groupings of properties exist on lower and upper Main St; and around lower Second St. Since owners are still signing and Mr Lock's talk on March 19th will be informative; the coordinators have set Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> as the **deadline for signing**. This allows the Coordinators three working days to finalize the boundary lines and deliver the application by the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline

While the signers know that there exist uncertainties

about just what the County might offer Waterford in the way of improvements, they believe that it would be negligent for stewards of Waterford (and a National Landmark at that) not to explore the County's offer to thoroughly examine the water situation and recommend solutions.

- Can the village afford the risk of having abandoned houses along its streets due to lack of viable sources of water?
- Should not every opportunity be taken to equip as many of the Foundation's eligible properties as possible with water to increase enjoyment of their use and potential rental proceeds to finance preservation needs?
- Does not the concept of a few groupings of structures within a boundary, each grouping served by one permit-specific private well or 'public water well' (a well serving greater than 15 connections) mitigate the threat of outside development?
- Has not the threat of development among vacant lots within the village always existed, been protected so far and would not be increased because of a few additional wells that are permitted to only serve certain structures within a

boundary? Would not present stewards succeed in securing substantial sources of grants and budgetary funds to mitigate infrastructure costs as they have in the past?

- Is not the County's word that--any feasibility study scope or solutions offered to the community could be rejected by the community--good enough assurance to find out what the County has to offer?
- Is not the County's written word that no community would be 'responsible for paying back the cost of the feasibility study if the project is not completed', good enough to assume no one will receive a large invoice at the end of the day (see attached GS-14)?

In short, for the common good, the signers believe the risks of *not doing anything* about the water situation in this Historic Landmark far outweigh the risks of applying for the County's assistance.

Kathleen, Sharyn, Mary and Wendy (but on leave overseas from March 14-April 4) are happy to answer any questions; please remember however, they are volunteers, with jobs and caretaking and stewardship responsibilities, so please be patient re response times...

Sincerely,

Eugene and Annette Scheel

Peter Thomas

Mary Dudley

Peggy and Dave Bednarik

Paige Cox and Mike Stup

Kathleen and Neil Hughes

Sharyn Franck

Ann Mathews

Jill Beach

Wendy Roseberry and Brian Whelan

Carole and Andy Levin

Nancy Langston

Mary Williams

Tom and Christy Hertel

Joellen Keating

Cate Wyatt

Ray and Corinne Daffner

Ron Benschoter and Glenn Jessee

John Buzzard and David Bertolotti

Diane Brake

Bill and Sue McGuire

Patricia Mogannam

Steve and Barbara Soechtig

Kitty and Paul Rose