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**SIDEBAR: TROUBLED WATERS – WHO MAINTAINS AND REPAIRS IT? (See also main WOODHAVEN PROPERTY story) (Published Dec. 25, 2004, in the Columbia Business Times) - 12/6/2004**

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**SIDEBAR: TROUBLED WATERS – WHO MAINTAINS AND REPAIRS IT?**

While the water supply to the former Woodhaven campus is crystal clear, the issue of jurisdiction over the Woodhaven water system is as murky as a fish tank with a busted filter.

The Department of Natural Resources is studying unresolved issues involving water jurisdiction on the property, according to a DNR spokesman.

Although Boys and Girls Town of Missouri has presented plans to connect to the city water system, water maintenance and repair jurisdiction may become an issue for the development, along with any other future development planned for the former Woodhaven campus. According to DNR, Woodhaven's water quality is fine. The issue is who is responsible if something in the system goes wrong.

"The regional office drinking water staff are investigating some jurisdictional responsibility issues for the drinking water service in that development," said Kerry Cordray, spokesman for DNR's water quality division. "We haven't identified any actual water quality concerns, but something to do with all the property transfers in the subdivision, and who provides what in the way of maintenance – or whether anybody is actually doing maintenance of the water lines in that area – has raised some jurisdictional issues that the department is trying to coordinate or iron out. Our northeast regional office is in discussions now with Boone County Number 1 and the owner to sort out the jurisdictional issues."

The City of Columbia only provides water service to the Woodhaven office on Woodhaven Drive off of Nifong Blvd. Although the Boys and Girls Town property has been annexed into the City of Columbia, Consolidated Public Water Supply District Number 1 of Boone County still supplies water to the property until a petition is submitted to the city to provide water service.

Anything on the east side of Bearfield Road usually is the Consolidated District's

responsibility, said Otis Shields, water distribution superintendent for the City, although the city offers water to a subdivision on the west side of the street. Even it lies to the east of Bearfield Road, the Boys and Girls Town property is in the city's territory because it has been annexed.

Boys and Girls Town has submitted plans for a 12-inch water main extension to the City, and those plans have been presented for approval to the City Council. Although it may be planning to do so, Boys and Girls Town has not yet petitioned the city to provide water.

The owner of the property selling to Boys and Girls Town says the city is fully aware of the organization's plans. "The water issue at Woodhaven will have no impact on Boys Town," said George Pfenenger, president of GAP Properties L.L.C., which is selling the property to Boys and Girls Town of Missouri. "They are connecting to the city water supply from the beginning as part of their overall plan. They are now annexed into the city. Their plan is available from the city, I believe, which shows the easements for water lines."

The County Consolidated Water Supply District apparently still supplies most of the rest of the former Woodhaven campus with water. However, the District does not claim any responsibility past its master meter on the property.

"We have a water meter there that we supply Woodhaven with, and that's all I know about it," said Gary Woody, general manager of the consolidated water district. "The only ones out there that pay us for water are Woodhaven Learning Center and the Sheltered Workshop. So if something breaks down, who repairs it?"

"You tell me," Woody said. "We sell water to Woodhaven. We bought the well from them there, and we had an agreement to sell them water, but we didn't have an agreement with them to sell anyone else water."

Woody said he assumes repairs would fall upon Woodhaven. He also said the water district has a territorial agreement with the City of Columbia that requires any new customers in that area to go to the City of Columbia.

Woody and Shields agreed that regulations require the water district to provide maintenance up to the master meter. After that, the owner would be responsible for repairs, which would appear to be Boys and Girls Town for the section of property purchased by the organization.

For other parts of the property not annexed by the city, such as the small pocket upon which the Hand-In-Hand Learning Center and Bearfield School buildings sit, the water district still provides water, but the responsibility for repairs may fall upon GAP Properties or Woodhaven, which still appears to pay the water bill. There has been no application to the city to provide water for these buildings.

According to Sheryl Bassford, owner of Hand-In-Hand, a DNR inspector visited and told her that DNR may require either monthly inspections of the water supply or a hookup to city water for her building and the Bearfield School building, although this information was not confirmed by DNR.

She hopes the DNR inquiry will help to clarify the situation, but for now the matter is as

clear as mud.

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