

Results of the 2005 MWPCA Sewer Survey

Surveys were mailed to every resident and homeowner within the MWPCA Geographical areas that we could identify and locate.

120 surveys returned

Question 1. Would you support the creation of a district that would allow our community to control the size of houses regardless of the type of waste treatment system in use?

Yes: 66; No: 23; Maybe: 27; See Comments: 2; No Answer: 2

Question 2. What % of house size to lot size would you prefer?

10%: 2; 12%: 1; 15%: 1; 17.75%: 45; 18%: 1; 20%: 13; 22%: 1; 25%: 10;

30%: 26; 35%: 1; 36%: 1; 50%: 1 See comments: 4; No answer: 13

Question 3. There are seven homes over 4000 sq. ft. in our community; most homes are between 1000 and 2500 sq. ft. What do you feel should be the maximum house size in our community?

2000 sq. ft.: 2; 2100 sq. ft.: 1; 2500 sq. ft.: 15; 2750 sq. ft.: 1; 3000 sq. ft.: 26;

3200 sq. ft.: 1; 3500 sq. ft.: 7; 3600 sq. ft.: 1; 4000 sq. ft.: 22; 4500 sq. ft.: 3;

5000 sq. ft.: 5; 5500 sq. ft.: 1; 6500 sq. ft.: 1; 7000 sq. ft.: 4; 8000 sq. ft.: 1;

See comments: 18; No answer: 9

Question 4. Which waste treatment system(s) do you want in our community?

 41 Sewer; 25 Septic; 51 Both; No answer: 3

Question 5. Would you hook up to a sewer system if the costs were the same or less than installing a new septic system? [See info on costs on opposite page]

 68 Yes; 20 No; 24 Maybe; See comments: 5; No Answer: 3

Question 6. Would you join a property assessment district and pay a tax to help fund the cost of sewers to your residence? 54 Yes; 30 No; 32 Maybe; See comments 1; No answer: 3

Question 7. The estimated cost to proceed with an engineering feasibility study is \$30,000—\$35,000. The plan group has raised \$6,000 to date. Should the community undertake a sewer feasibility study? 76 Yes; 35 No ; See

Comments: 3 No answer: 6

Question 8. Would you be willing to contribute to the costs of the engineering study? 72 Yes; 40 No; See comments: 1 No answer: 6

If yes, what amount would you be willing to contribute? \$ 50: 1; \$75: 1; \$100: 26;

\$200: 17; \$300: 1; \$400: 1; \$500: 7; \$1000: 3

See comments next pages.

SURVEY COMMENTS NOVEMBER 2005

I feel it is critical to have a sewer service in our community, at least for those residents who want it. We should be able to control development through other means.

Size of lots should determine size of home; however, size of house should not exceed 3000 sq. ft. Sewer survey of \$30,000 to \$35,000 is excessive unless drawings and engineering is included. Ridge Ave. should go by viaduct over Dipsea area to Homestead.

What mechanism will be used to acquire sewer easements across private property when the owner(s) are unwilling to make sewer easement dedications? How will this be funded?

House size depends on lot size.

No limits on house size. I think that the sewer issue should be separate from house size and other building issues. Any new construction should hook up to a sewer if available.

No preference for FAR and house size.

County limits on house size.

"I don't know" to questions 5, 6, & 7. Without a broader understanding of the issues surrounding these questions it is hard to make a determination.

I would be willing to contribute up to \$500 for the engineering study but would want more info on terms of number of contributors, etc. Also would like more info regarding specific advantages sewer development would bring to the individual and the community. i.e., how can we limit explosive growth but at the same time create more livable homes and green belt areas. I guess I could answer these questions by coming to the Friday nite meetings once a month. Thank you for your time and energy!

Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 more information on the advantages and disadvantages of forming a "District" is needed to answer these questions. For example a). What will it cost the home owners? How funded? Do the annual charges provided for Tam and Homestead Valleys cover both planning and sewers? Who will staff the "District", volunteers, paid employees, Marin County, consultants? b). Will the "District" be independent or advisory to the Marin Supervisors? c). Should the "District" be incorporated into the Tam or Homestead Districts? d). What are the disadvantages of following the current Marin County Planning requirements? Questions 5. I would only mark (Yes if the County directed a replacement for my septic system, and a detailed service life cost comparison favored a sewer hook-up. It will be difficult for the Plan and Sewer Group to determine a sense of the community from the responses to this question until Marin County strengthens and enforces the septic system rules. Questions 7 and 8. Is the proposal to conduct a study after the formation of a District? I will be glad to join the Sewer Group if there is additional work to be done.

FAR: Don't know. House size: I need advice. Will contribute "My share" to engineering study. Some of the questions require more expertise than I have. If there is a sewer system installed, the size of the house doesn't seem to matter. My personal feelings about 4000 square foot houses aside. It would be an achievement to have all homeowners agree as to the need of sewer versus septic with the new rules for septic leaching lines, not many new home builders could opt for septic over sewer. Thanks for all your good efforts.

Question 1. It would be nice if it were possible, but I don't believe it is possible. Question 3. This should be a matter of FAR & design review, looking at visual impacts. Question 5. False choice/non-choice. See other 16 Monte Cimas questionnaire. While I am very pleased to see the research on FAR and building size, I am very troubled by the questionnaire. I am concerned that some of the questions are either naive,

uninformed, or worse, crassly manipulative. I am not satisfied that the committee is operating in an even-handed, truth-seeking fashion. I hereby renew my offer to review future surveys for objectivity, legal and factual accuracy, and fair play. [This questionnaire was filled in and signed by a neighbor behalf of the other owners.]

Hook up to sewer only if I needed it. Yearly inspection required by county on new septic systems runs from \$300-\$400.

If a district is formed, please set the sphere of influence down the center of Ridge Ave. Our septic tank is 280' down the west ridge and I doubt the community wants to foot the bill for installing a pump system for the Tourist Club and neighboring 10 homes in Muir Woods Park Subdivision # 1 map area.

Good luck. I would love to have a sewer hook-up.

It's worth doing the study - ask each house to contribute their pro-rata share of the cost (\$30,000/275 houses = \$100+,-, /household). I'd prefer to pay entire cost for sewer hookup to house from my own pocket for my house vs. a tax assessment fee. I think the est. for septic repair is way too high; I believe cost can be 1/2 of this. I think sewer hookups can exceed \$25,000/household (depends on location of area to be serviced). Not all homes will want sewer hookup, so I'm doubtful this concept of sewer hookup to all homes will occur anywhere in the near future.

If there is enough community support to warrant moving forward, the study is the next step. Amount to be contributed depends on when \$s due.

Were would the rest of the money come from to do the study? This is a little difficult for us, since we just spent \$100,000 on our septic system 2 years ago. At this time we would not elect to hook up to a sewer for financial reasons, but might consider it down the road.

Questions 7 & 8. Maybe.

I have owned my lot, on which there was home prior to its destruction by fire, for over 40 years. It had a septic system. I have dreamed of living there if I had a sewer system or affordable septic system. It has been my intention to rebuild the home and reside there. The house would be under 2000 sq. ft. I believe that the size of homes should be less than 4000 sq. ft. in the area of Washington Park. I would seriously consider making a contribution toward an engineering study.

Unfortunately, I am not financially able to support with \$s - I feel we can wait 10 years. I like the rural septic life but will accommodate for the good of the community if absolutely necessary. I don't want to be like President Bush who is the only national representative holding back the world on environmental cleanup change. I wish so much I did not have the debt I have - maybe I would be more enthusiastic. Thank you for caring and doing such excellent service for all of us. gratefully,

Question 5. Would hook up if paid out over 30 years. Could not afford \$60,000 all at once.

Already have contributed to the sewer fund. My greatest concern is that of "over development" of expanded existing homes & substandard lots being developed and putting an unbearable load on already overcrowded, narrow driveways in a fire prone area. My second concern is that if sewers are brought in, trees presently nurtured by septic systems will dry and die and create an unbearable fire hazard. Increased fire hazards coupled to more people on unimproved roads can set us up for disaster.

I enjoy our community as is. I prefer and value our unique environment and scenery more than the grandeur of a large home. Maintain the footprint and size to lot ratios. Preserve our therapeutic vistas.

Question 5. Already on sewer. Question 6. N/A

Question 7. Funds should go to the system not a study!

Questions. What are the legal issues surrounding the limitation of dwelling sq. footage? This seems questionable or possibly legally unenforceable. Can you dictate house size? I would think the parentage is the best?? Certainly most all of us on Edgewood have suffered a bit from the development of **very** large homes. Yikes this is a thorny issue, isn't it? Than you for all the work you've put into this.

This community needs access to a sewer system, and we would be happy to bear our share of the costs of making this happen. However, we are very concerned that this worthwhile community project has somehow been combined with an anti-growth, "anti-everything" effort led by a small, vocal minority in the community. Marin County's existing rules on house size are adequate, and we do not support creating yet another layer of regulations for property owners on the mountain. We do not need an "Ayatola" of Mt. Tam to give us rules for proper behavior.

House size depends on size of lot. Sewer should be for all unless the hook up creates a financial hardship for an individual. Probably would join an assessment district - with more info.

Question 2. Per County regs. Question 3. None - Follow County Regs. A vast amount of the septic systems in this community are in real disrepair. I think failing systems leads to living an unhealthy lifestyle. The density of housing in this area warrants a sewer system.

Question 7. We need the help of some governmental agency. Question 8. We need major outside help in this. I don't think the community alone can afford it.

To prevent overbuilding - No dividing property (or only once). Limit size of homes to 3,000 or 4,000 sq. ft. Beware of speculators. They will destroy the mt. (as we know it). Those who are older or on a fixed income would be forced to move. \$30,000 (25+5) up front & then \$61,200 +,-,over 30 yrs. By the time the engineers, the water co., the county & the commissioners get through it's going to cost over \$100,000 per household. Ouch!. Allow in-law apts. to bring working class folk here. I don't believe it would cost \$60,000 - 100,000 dollars to put in a septic system. Check your math.

I am generally in favor of changing to septic but this questionnaire does not provide enough # info for me to give definitive opinions.

Question 3. 4000 sq. ft with restrictions. Question 4. Sewer . Eventually this is likely pref. from environmental standpoint. Question 8. Amount depends on what I could afford at the time.

Question 2. 30% at least on smaller lots. Question 3. Depends on lot size ~ 4500 sq. ft. Question 7. What is Marin County's position? I have a relatively new septic system. I like the idea of giving people an option if it is fair and affordable.

I would like things to remain as they are. I'm on a fixed income. Could not afford either plan.

[Survey returned blank.]

Question 3. No max

Question 3. See comment. We would suggest that the maximum size vary with lot size instead of an absolute maximum for all. These numbers are made up, but you get the idea. For example: Lot size 0-10,000, max size 3,000; lot size 10-20,000,max size 4,000; lot size 20 - 30,000, max size 5,000; lot size >30,000, max size 6,000.

What is the time frame/time line? Provider hook-up fees appear misleading as they apply to that particular community - would we be paying the same amounts? Septic systems which are not technically failing & therefore need no replacement or repairs could actually be immune to all costs outlined - what is the incentive to hook up? Will such systems be penalized by being forced to "join the sewer community?" The quoted \$25,000/household applies of all houses connect - what if only half connect? What will happen to those fees? Finally - any participation would be contingent on time frame/time issues. As time will dictate the need to repair/replace septic.

Question 4 sewer, when necessary. Question 7. Yes, if necessary.

[returned a blank survey]

In 2002 I received permission by the county to install a sewer line from the Swiss Club to 655 & 659 Edgewood Rd. The length was 1400 linear feet. The approximate construction cost was \$140,000. The engineering plan was paid for by me and approved for construction by county. Wayne Bush & City of MV Supervisors blocked the connection to their line, so project could not commence. Please contact me if you want to save some engineering costs, because I have a set of build able plans. Subsequently, I installed a septic system at cost of \$60,000 & engineering fees to service 2 existing homes. It is time to step into the 21st (or even the 20th) century & allow people a modern sanitation option. I think there should be controls on the maximum FAR or house size so community can retain a semi-rural feel. Tying sanitation to house size/development is artificial & the 3 need to be separated.

Question 3. House size limit based on parcel size and off street parking. Our major concerns: We do not want lot subdivisions that would increase the potential of a large number of new homes being built. Off street parking should be a requirement. I don't know what the current requirement is, but something like 2 spaces for the 1st bedroom & 1 space for each additional bedroom. No more than 2 buildings containing bedrooms per lot - house & guest house - ok; house & 2 or more guest houses - not ok.

Question 3. No max. See # 2

Question 5, Maybe, when mine failed. I'm concerned about the size of houses being built - the size seems to be inversely proportional to the character content of the residents. More disturbing to us on Edgewood is the behavior of the developers - wrecking our streets and generally bulldozing the trees and the wishes of the other residents to get what they want. We need to form and stick together as a community to keep these self-serving guys from destroying our neighborhoods. case in point: Kalle Tavela 840 Edgewood - destroying our street & playing games w/ City of Mill Valley to keep from fixing it. Also, clear cut his property. Now, it is a scar on the side of the mountain instead of trees.

Question 2. Whatever the county allows now. Question 3. Whatever is current code - why do we have to change? Question 7. I already have. Question 8. If you guys get off this changing county code for housing stuff and take whatever sewer district that will take us , I'll give ya a grand. This is not about stopping monster houses. It's about getting sewer so get with it!

I think maximum house size should be a separate issue from septic/sewer - & chosen as a separate policy. Septic/sewer choice should not be influenced by wish to keep houses small but by what is best for soil and health of the community.

I installed a \$50k septic system less than 10 years ago, so I have little interest in a sewer hook up or contributing to a sewer program that will only make the unbuildable lots become developed. I have the most modern and expensive septic system of all 18 houses on my street, and basically have already spent the money that most people aren't willing to spend. (and now I'm broke!).

Question 1. It would be nice if it were possible, but I don't believe it is possible. Question 3. It should be a matter of FAR & visual impact on the community, thru design review. Question 5. The question is meaningless; current law & regulation does not allow such a choice. If a sewer is built, those within 400' have to hook up. I apologize for mailing these forms late - they got lost in a pile in my office. Question # 1 presumes the feasibility of constructing a district to control land use in our neighborhood. While such a result would be desirable, I have no reason to believe that it would be legally or politically possible. Before generating false hope that this is possible, I believe the responsible thing to do is thoroughly investigate the issue of land use control, with full disclosure in the newsletter, BEFORE doing anything further about sewers. I believe questions #1 & 5 mislead the community and pose options that are not actually available to us, thereby creating enthusiasm & false hope. This is known as a "push pull".

I am strongly in favor of a sewer hook up. I would be happy to contribute to this effort. I am ambivalent about restricting the size of homes. While I am in favor of responsible use of land and have fought in my prior neighborhood against excessively large homes I believe that we should work within the existing county guidelines unless there is strong evidence that they are not working properly. As a new member of the community I have limited experience with these issues but am skeptical of going beyond existing limitations.

Question 3. No limit on house size. Maintain existing parcels, allow parcels to be combined and allow at most one division within county requirements. This protects residents while dividing more than once is a speculative behavior. The \$60,000- 100,000 septic cost is, in my opinion, inflated and creates a perception of crafting the data to achieve a specific goal. Allow in-law units as a means to maintain affordable rentals for the young, artists, and non-professionals. A key aspect of feedback from prior surveys and community meetings has been a requirement to defer the cost until adoption by each home owner. The MWPCA Specific Plan Group should have included a statement and question related to this issue. If the position is not set it should be a question. If the group is pushing an agenda having taken a position it must be stated. It is not clear how \$25,000 comes out to \$150 per month for 30 years which simple math equals \$54,000. I am not sure how this was computed.

Question 2. current allowable. Question 3. Should be based on above criteria, current allowable, lot size %.

Would rather see utility lines underground as this is our winter problem.

Question 4. #1 choice - septic; #2 choice - both. Question 7. Maybe; Can't get far without one. Favor septic systems because: They keep the moisture right here in the ground, slightly increasing defensability in case of fire. They limit development and house size by adding to the expense of building or at least slow it down. They fail individually, not area-wide, minimizing environmental impact. They threaten no-one's water supply. They use no caustic chemicals; indeed they discourage the use of harsh, caustic cleaning products. They encourage water conservation, which in turn limits the mosquito breeding problem. Mosquitoes tolerate brackish water, but a nice stiff manure tea is a bit much for them. I am unhappy about sewers because: they all lead to one overworked oldish treatment plant located way too close to the middle school, the Redwoods senior house, playing fields, major evacuation routes, stores and housing. Chemical accidents scare me. Initial hook-up costs may be lower per household than septic systems work, but costs are never going to end. They are only going to rise. A failed septic system is a major expense and embarrassment for the home owner and a nuisance for the neighbors, but a break on a major sewer main or a failure at the treatment plant has far more impact on many more households and on the environment. I have the advantage of owning a lot with a viable leach field site, so my replacement expense isn't likely to be as horrifying as that of many of my neighbors, which also minimizes the financial benefit of hooking up to sewer.

Question 6. But I don't fully understand this idea pros & cons. I don't mean to be negative because I understand only bits and pieces of sewer vs septic - what I do know is I was a member of the original TAM MAST PLAN committee in the late 70's and the prime protection was: The environment of our unique gateway - Ridgeland area to MWNM -MT. TAM & GGNRA. Limit size and # of houses to lot.

Protect native growth, Suggest positive growth - sewers, I believe have very negative - mega-housing potential that would destroy the spirit and feel - let alone substructive fragility of this area.

Question 3. Depends on lot size

Question 2. Per county reg = ok Question 3. No limit.

Question 3. Depends on lot size.

Question 7 and 8 - but how many years will this take?? How to get process moving - everything moves @ snail's pace.

Question 7. Find a cheaper way to do it! That's too much. Can the mountain geology and botany withstand the construction of sewer lines? It will be quite a ripping apart.

I am afraid that a sewer system would encourage build-out of small, non-conforming, vacant parcels. If they are within 400 feet of a sewer, under state law you have to let them connect.

Question 2, depends on lot! Question 3. No limit - depends on lot! Question 5. Already have sewer. The community should not have any authority to control housing sizes. Existing homeowners have rights that are dependent on size of lots & other conditions. Property owners with large areas should not be constrained by you. Additionally, property owners should not be required to help fund others' sewer hook-ups. We already paid for ours.

Question 3. Smaller sq. ft.

Question 8. Maybe

Question 3. No maximum

Question 3. Smaller