

Development grinds to halt in capital city, says Lantz

Chairman of planning committee says policy designed to protect city's water source from large developments is hurting all developers now

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Rob Lantz

Apparently the water taps are turned off for developers in Charlottetown.

Coun. Rob Lantz, chairman of the planning committee, says development has all but grounded to a halt because of a policy in the Water and Sewer Utility department not to allow new developments access to the city's water supply.

"Even if you wanted to subdivide a single lot and build a home, under the utility's current policy they would not be allowed to hook onto city water services," Lantz said.

"We've got several developers who do this for a living and they employ a lot of people, building homes and developing property, and they're a little alarmed that they can't get anything done right now."

There are concerns over demand on the Winter River-Tracadie Bay Watershed, the city's only supply of water. The five new wells in Miltonvale aren't expected to be online until 2016. Over the past couple of years, the city has been doing what it can to conserve water.

"I'm not sure if council really understood the consequences of accepting the utility's policy several months back."

Lantz said at the time there were a few very large development proposals for subdivisions that the utility felt the city's current water supply couldn't handle.

"Obviously there were very big developments but we're not at a point where there's developers looking to just subdivide a half dozen lots and build some homes and they're not able to."

Coun. Eddie Rice, chairman of the Water and Sewer Utility committee, says the city can't take on any major projects and is trying to be as careful as it can.

"As far as looking at these smaller subdivisions and working with (developers) we will look at that," Rice said. "We have to be cognizant and careful of what we use with new people coming on and what's fair and equitable to everybody that wants to develop."

Rice is confident by the time the bigger developments get going the city will have its second water source in Miltonvale online.