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Expert: Forks project threat to water supply

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By **JD MALONE**
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FORKS TWP. | A Bethlehem planning expert testified the 3,000-home Kings Mill development proposed by KMRD LP could degrade the quantity and quality of the region's water supply.

Charlie Schmehl of the Urban Renewal Development Corp. said covering a large portion of the farmland preservation area – where KMRD wants to build the 545-acre development – could affect the Delaware River, which is replenished in part by groundwater filtered through the mostly undeveloped area.

Schmehl also said Forks grew at a faster clip from 2000 to 2006 than all but one municipality in the state with a population of at least 3,000. The township population grew 56 percent.

The hearing was the 20th on the substantive challenge filed by the developer in 2006. Township Solicitor Karl Kline declined to say whether Schmehl was the township's final witness but admitted the township's defense is winding down.

"If not the last, he is certainly one of the last," Kline said.

A procedural challenge filed by KMRD was tossed last week by the board but KMRD attorney John Van Luvanee said he would file an appeal in Northampton County Court.

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