

West Acton Sewer Action Advisory Committee
July 18, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Acton Town Hall, Room 126

Minutes

Present: Committee members David Martin, Chairman; Joanne Bissetta, J. D. Head, Ann Chang, David Wellinghoff, Town Engineer Paul Campbell

Absent: Committee members Jon Cappetta, Garry McCarthy, Samuel Rice, Peter Henry

Visitors: Jack Troidl & Jim Rivard, Woodard & Curran; Leo Fotchman; Cheryl Ryan; Mike Geis; Franny Osman; Janet Adachi; Terra Friedrichs; Ron Perenti; Curt Martin

Mr. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m to begin the meeting.

Regular Business

Agenda Item #1 - Public Comments/Questions

- Mr. Geis had questions on maps he brought to the meeting from the Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan showing septic replacements and soil limitations. Mr. Troidl responded with his understanding of the information used for the maps.
- Ms. Osmand stated that she was observing the meeting for other residents of Half Moon Hill and was recording the meeting.

Agenda Item #2 – Review of meeting minutes

Approval of 5/30/2019 minutes. Prior to taking public comments (Agenda Item #1) Ms. Bissetta moved to approve the minutes, Mr. Wellinghoff seconded and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Agenda Item #3 – Comments from the Chair

There were no comments from the Chair.

New/Special Business

Agenda Item #4 – WASAAC organization discussion

A reorganization of the committee was discussed. Ms. Chang volunteered for the vice-chair position. Mr. Head moved to nominate Ms. Chang as vice-chair of the WASAAC committee, Mr. Wellinghoff seconded and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Agenda Item #5 – Update on AB School District twin-school project

Mr. Head updated the committee on the progress of the project. The AB District and Town staff met and collaborated on a process for a wastewater option for the school. Test pits are scheduled for Monday with the Board of Health. The design is for a conventional septic system, which will provide the basis for the avoided cost fee to connect to sewer. It's expected that construction will begin May of 2020 and the project will require a wastewater option by August 2020. The current design flow is at 10,000 gallons per day which is at the level where the Board of Health and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) would require advanced treatment. The design assumes a lower design flow due to low-flow fixtures therefore the District will be seeking a variance with DEP.

Mr. Martin gave some additional background of the school project and discussed the avoided cost discussion. Ms. Chang had a question regarding the design flow of the school, which Ms. Bissetta answered. Ms. Friedrichs questioned what the actual flows for the current Gates & Douglas schools are, which was unknown by the committee. Mr. Perenti questioned what the design flows are based on, which Mr. Campbell answered that they are Title V requirements.

Mr. Campbell summarized a meeting that Town Staff had with the AB design team, Health Department and Town Manager June 24th. The AB District would need DEP approval to reduce size of system and design flow and they are using other school designs to justify lower design flow. It is not expected that the District will have DEP approval by Special Town Meeting.

Agenda Item #6 – Update on preliminary design & survey

Mr. Campbell updated the committee on the preliminary design & survey:

- Engineering Department notified West Acton area June 7th
- Ground survey began week of July 8th
- Some feedback from notification:
 - Some residents called the Department after receiving notification and asked to be kept updated.
 - There is mixed support at Half Moon Hill to be connected to sewer. There is some interest in Units 1-4 to connect (older units) and keeping others separate but it would be an all-or-nothing proposition since all the units are on one property.
 - Resident at 284 Arlington wants to connect to sewer.
 - Owners on West Road and Central Street had concerns about potential easements required.

Mr. Troidl updated the committee on the preliminary design & survey. It is expected that the survey draft will be completed in August and finalized in September. The design anticipates a phased design approach of which phase one will be on a timetable to service the school project and phase two would be the remainder of the sewer area.

Ms. Chang asked if the forcemain sewer for the school during phase one could be located under the sidewalk on Mass Ave and inquired about the depth of the main. Mr. Troidl responded saying it's possible to build it under the sidewalk but there may be a conflict with a utility bank. The expected depth will be 4 to 5-feet deep.

Ms. Friedrichs asked what would be occurring at Special Town Meeting in December. Mr. Martin responded that the sewer project will very likely be voted on, pending the creation of the warrant. Mr. Head asked if all phases of the project would be required to be fully designed by Special Town Meeting. Mr. Troidl responded that they would not all be fully designed, or are required to be. Phase 1 will be designed with a coordinated design with the school project for later phases. Mr. Geis asked if the project can incorporate only gravity sewers instead of low pressure sewers. Mr. Troidl stated that additional gravity sewer along Mass Ave would increase the cost of the project and the use of low pressure sewers will be limited.

Agenda Item #7 – Timeline for sewer permitting process & Special Town Meeting

Mr. Troidl provided a conceptual draft schedule to the committee and summarized it. Mr. Head asked if there was a schedule for the project post-Special Town Meeting. Mr. Troidl referenced a more detailed schedule from which the conceptual schedule provided was created from. Mr. Troidl stated that he will provide the school design team with a more detailed schedule for post-special town meeting for their use to coordinate both projects.

Agenda Item #8 – Public outreach

Mr. Martin stated that the format used by the Town Manager for outreach of the Kelly's Corner project at Town Hall was successful and that he would recommend the committee use a similar format. Ms. Bissetta recommended that the committee present the project at the upcoming farmers market in West Acton in the fall.

Mr. Campbell stated that he had spoken with Mathias Rosenfeld of West Acton about public outreach. Mr. Rosenfeld offered the committee use of the Gallery space in West Acton for a meeting. Mr. Martin suggested holding the October WASAAC meeting there if it were accessible to the public. Mr. Campbell will reach out to Mr. Rosenfeld to make arrangements.

Mr. Campbell recommended the following public outreach schedule:

- September 12 – Hold WASAAC meeting in room 204 of town hall for the first public forum meeting.
- October 10 – Hold WASAAC meeting in West Acton (The Gallery) allowing the business community to discuss sewers with the public.
- November 14 – Hold WASAAC meeting in room 204 of town hall for the final public forum meeting prior to Special Town Meeting
- December 10 – Special Town Meeting date

Agenda Item #9 – Sewer capacity

Mr. Campbell provided an updated graph shown previously to the committee regarding sewer capacity. There is approximately 60,000 GPD of available capacity in the sewer system: West Acton is anticipated to account for 23K GPD and Spencer-Tuttle-Flint = 20K GPD. There is sufficient capacity in the system to account for both projects. Mr. Troidl stated that the West Acton estimate would be updated to reflect the current design of the new school. The Town is finalizing a plan that incorporates future sewer areas in and outside of planned areas of the sewer district and expanding capacity limit to 500K.

Mr. Martin had a question regarding sewer capacity and the capacity of the existing sewer pipes. Mr. Troidl explained the supersizing process of the existing sewer district and stated that the pipes/collection system has sufficient capacity for West Acton. Mr. Perenti had a question about infiltration and inflow (I&I) of the sewer system. Mr. Troidl stated that the system as some I&I but compared to other communities, the effect is limited. Mr. Martin asked if the Town is planning for future sewer needs. Mr. Campbell referenced the Town plan, to be presented to the sewer commissioners at an upcoming meeting, which plans for these needs. He also stated that the West Acton project was much further in the process and closer to connecting to sewer than any future potential area. Ms. Osman asked if there is consideration given for relief on the sewer betterment for seniors or low-income households. Mr. Fotchman outlined the process of the low-interest loan payments and the 30-year payment options. Mr. Campbell stated that he will research it.

Agenda Item #10 – Potential future schedule & topics

The committee determined August 15th to be the next meeting date. The focus of the August meeting will be public outreach and a potential update on the school project.

Information on the sewer project may be found on the Town's website here: <http://www.acton-ma.gov/645/West-Acton-Sewer>

After discussing the agenda items, a motion to end the meeting was made by Ms. Bisstta, seconded by Mr. Head and approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Paul Campbell, clerk for meeting

Documents Discussed

- Draft minutes, 5/30/2019
- West Acton Sewer Extents – Updated July 8, 2019
- Concept Schedule (DRAFT)
- GRAPH – NEWEA Flows – March 2019

Discussed documents and other material for the 7/18/2019 meeting available on Town of Acton website at:

<http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-9473>