

## **Public Water and Sewer Advisory Board**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**September 16, 2016**

**In attendance:** Chairman, Joe Van Houten, Jim Dowling, Joseph Krumenacker, John Canterbury, Gary Munkelt, Board of Supervisor Liaison, Rick Colello, Manager, Stephanie Mason, Special Projects Coordinator, Autumn Canfield, Guest, Sean Sablosky

Meeting called to order at 5:34pm.

**Minutes Approval:** June 16, 2016

Mr. Krumenacker moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Canterbury seconded the motion. 1 abstention, Mr. Dowling, all else in favor.

#### **Phase 1 Update:**

There are a couple outstanding easements. There will be a meeting with a lawyer on Monday and one other propeliy owner will be signing.

After meeting with John Butler of the Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority, once easements are in, the Township will be able to finalize drawings for the project, get proper permits and go to the Zoning Hearing Board for a variance due to location of the pump station in a flood plain. The project will hopefully go to bid and construction will be underway in a year from now.

Mr. Butler indicated that the cost has increased to the number of houses in relation to the linear foot of space in the area. Previous estimates were generalized for an average development but the Pebble Ridge/ Woodridge and vicinity project has less houses that are on larger lots. This creates an increase in the amount of piping needed to hook into a public sewer line and therefore an increase in cost.

Mr. Van Houten asked if there would be any other potential obstacles that would push the project out further?

Mrs. Mason indicated that there is always a chance for resident opposition but the Township was directed to perform the 3M of the area by the DEP and after the review were directed to move the project forward.

In response to the conversation at the previous meeting regarding c01mecting to a forced main, it was instructed that direct connection into a forced main cannot be done. Mr. Krumenacker asked what would happen if a project were to be done in the area of a forced main. Mrs. Mason

indicated that there are specifics in construction that would have to be done to make it possible including proper piping to hook into a forced main system.

**Discussion of Mr. Munkelt's Summary:**

At the previous meeting, Mr. Munkelt sent a summary of facts about septic systems to be reviewed in his absence. The matter was tabled at the last meeting to give the Board time to review. In response to Mr. Munkelt's hand out, Mr. Canterbury brought a hand out of his comments. Mr. Munkelt's handout will be designated as Attachment A and Mr. Canterbury's handout will be designated as Attachment B.

Mr. Krumenacker suggested going through each point individually for comment. It was decided that no action was to be taken so it would be an open discussion about the points with questions for clarification. Mr. Munkelt indicated that he wanted to put the ideas to the committee for the future. His concern is going to the Board of Supervisors to make suggestions when no need is present. He would like to get the public's view on whether or not sewers are needed.

Mr. Van Houten pointed out that the Board of Supervisors appointed each member of the Board. They trust them to make appropriate recommendations and the Board represents the public.

The concern about bringing in information from the public is that there is hesitancy towards sewers due to financial aspect. The need for sewers in certain area has been proven for public health needs. Before suggestions are made to the Board of Supervisors, ample research is done to create an educated recommendation. It is then the responsibility of the Board of Supervisors to take action on the recommendation or not.

There is no question in the Pebble Ridge/ Woodridge and vicinity project that there is a need for sewers. The process to reach this determination included research with the Health Department, internal research within the Township, collection of information from Township programs, work with water sampling companies and an analysis of the information once collected.

In regards to Phases 2 and 3, the committee is at the point that a "hot zone" has been identified where an issue may be present. This led to the discussion of having a 3M done in the area after the DEP instructed a full 537 update was not needed at this time.

**Review CKS Engineers proposal:**

Joe Nolan from CKS Engineering attended a meeting with Mrs. Canfield and Mrs. Mason. He suggested budgeting \$25,000 for the Chestnut Valley Dr. are 3M study but the actual cost would depend on the requirements of the 3M placed by the DEP. Mrs. Mason prepared the proper paperwork for the budget meeting for the requested money. If approved and the whole amount is not used, the remainder can be used for 3M studies in the Phases 2 and 3 area. The estimated time to complete the study is 18 months. A meeting is needed with DEP to outline the requirements of the 3M study for the area. The process of moving forward in this matter is Mrs.

Mason will go to the Board of Supervisors for authorization for the funds and then a meeting with DEP will be set.

Mr. Dowling moved to make a formal recommendation to conduct and move forward with a 3M study in the Chestnut Valley Dr. area per the DEP requirement. Mr. Canterbury seconded and all present in favor.

**Feedback regarding creating an ordinance:**

The recommendation of the ordinance to require new development to factor in septic system replacement in plans for building was sent to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission agreed that it was a good idea to investigate an ordinance. The recommendation will go to the Board of Supervisors on September 20th. At the moment, the Board needs to do nothing further.

In regards to Phase 2 and 3, nothing further can be done until the Board knows how much money can be allotted to 3M studies in the area. This information will not be available until after the 3M study on the Chestnut Valley Dr. area.

Another area to look at is the Edison Furlong area. A 3M is needed. The area is small enough to potentially make its own project. The specific need is around St. Lawrence Way. This area should be looked at as the next potential priority for the Board.

**Adjournment:**

With no other business, meeting adjourned at 6:28pm on MOTION of Mr. Dowling, Mr. Canterbury seconded, MOTION carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Autumn Canfield

Summary of facts about Septic Tank Sewer Systems  
In Doylestown Township as of August, 2016  
by Gary K. Munkelt

- Fact No. 1 - The current project to install public sewers in Phase I includes Approximate 200 homes. In that area conditions (type of soil, size of lots etc.) were such that there was a "need". It took 10 years for this committee to supply enough arguments for the Board of Supervisors to approve the project.
- Fact No. 2 - Phase II and Phase III consist of approximately 1800 onsite Septic Tank systems. Data this committee has collected supports the fact that these systems are functioning properly. A small percentage of the systems have been repaired (in some cases replaced) which is what is necessary to maintain a healthy system. A large percentage of systems never required repairs and are still functioning properly. The data supports the fact that there is not a "need" for public sewers at this time.
- Fact No. 3 - The 3 year cycle pumping system employed by the township many years ago is probably responsible for the success of use of septic tanks. The pumping cycle reduces the amount of fine material leaving the septic tank and clogging the drainage field.
- Fact No. 4 - Several homes in the area have systems that have been completely replaced. It seems that this happens at the time of sale when a bank is needed for mortgage funds. The bank requires an inspection report on the condition of the systems and makes demands for upgrading depending on the condition of the system. THIS IS AN ON GOING MAINTENANCE PROCESS THAT HELPS TO KEEP SEPTIC SYSTEMS FUNCTIONING. Brendan O'Boyle at a recent meeting indicated that inspectors certified by the "Pennsylvania Septage Management Association" are more restrictive than what the county requires. This association provides an inspector with certification after attending a two day seminar and passing an exam. The second day of the seminar includes -Site Visits for firsthand experience.
- Fact No. 5 - Twelve or more years ago, the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution to provide public sewers in the entire township. Public opinion against the resolution encouraged the supervisors to rescind the resolution. This committee then spent 10 years trying to establish a "need" for public sewers in Phase I where there was a definite "need". Since there is not a "need" (as serious as Phase I) for Phase II or Phase III it will be difficult to supply an argument for the supervisors to encourage the public to spend many millions of dollars to replace an infrastructure that is all paid for and currently functioning. The future may see a change in public opinion and the supervisors can pass the resolution without being embarrassed but to ask the public to spend a large sum of money at this time with no immediate "need" will be hard to sell.

Fact No. 6- Our septic tank infrastructure is supporting "green technology" which is popular with new construction.

Water from septic tanks is put back in the aquifer to support our wells unlike the gravity sewers where water from a sewer plant is discharged to the ocean.

Many of the septic systems in use flow by gravity and require no electricity. Gravity sewers require electricity to pump sewage and treat it at the sewer plant. The "green" concept promotes saving electricity to reduce burning of fossil fuels. But the electric utilities are currently promoting conservatism to prevent "brown outs" caused when demand for electricity exceeds supply.

John Canterbury's Comments  
Concerning  
"Summary of Facts about Septic Tank Sewer Systems"  
Submitted By Gary Munkelt  
August 2016

1. I believe most of the listed "facts" are Opinions, not facts supported by data.
2. I believe "Fact 2", "A large percentage of the systems never require repairs and are still functioning properly" is in conflict with "Fact #4", "several homes in the area have systems that have been completely replaced."
3. "Fact #4" Why are the banks requiring inspection reports and have concerns for the condition of the septic systems and why are they making demands for upgrading? Is "upgrading" another word for "Replacement with another system? I suggest the loaning institutions are concerned that the septic system will fail in the near future or foreseeable future and the loans then cannot be supported by the value of the house and property. If loaning institutions are concerned with failure, should we and the home owners also be concerned?
4. "Fact 6", I suggest septic tanks are not supporting "Green Technology" to any significant extent.
  - a. If it is a wet season, marginal septic systems, especially in marginal soil conditions, may discharge untreated septic system effluent to the surface.
  - b. Any septic system effluent discharged to aquifer that supports wells nearby is not disinfected, unlike a municipal treatment system.
  - c. The solids pumped from a septic tank must be discharged into a municipal treatment system, thus requiring the same pumping and electricity.
  - d. The solids pumped from a septic tank must be transported by trucks requiring fuel, roads, and exhaust pollutants into the air.
  - e. Municipal waste water treatment systems monitor the discharge from the plants on a regular basis. No such monitoring is done with septic tank systems.