

West Acton Sewer Action Advisory Committee
November 9, 2017, 7:00 p.m.
Acton Town Hall, Room 9

Meeting Minutes

Present: Committee members Janet Adachi, Chairman; Ann Chang, J.D. Head, Peter Henry, Garry McCarthy, Samuel Rice, David Wellinghoff; Town Engineer Paul Campbell; Jack Troidl, Project Manager, and Amanda Sparks, Woodard & Curran.

Absent: Committee members Joanne Bissetta, Bharat Shah

Chairman called meeting to order shortly after 7:00 p.m.

Minutes of 10/12/2017 approved.

Options for Sewering in West Acton

Mr. Troidl and Ms. Sparks reviewed maps showing existing sewer district and potential West Acton expansion, and constraints, septic system failures/replacements and environmental resource areas in West Acton.

Map 1 (sewer district and potential West Acton expansion): connect via Mass. Ave. east to Kelley's Corner. Alternative: Central Street. But that route would entail 4 stream crossings and additional railroad crossing. So Mass. Ave. is preferred route.

Map 2 (constraints overview): black arrows indicate gravity going away, more difficult to sewer.

Map 4 (septic failure/replacement): number is reason for selection of Area 12/West Acton for sewerage. Ms. Chang noted that Ms. Bissetta had mentioned lots of variances past 10-20 years, about which Health Department was not happy. Mr. McCarthy said it would be helpful to know reasons for variances. Ms. Chang said lots of wet areas, near streams. Mr. McCarthy asked if there were testing for leakage. Ms. Chang said that was done behind Flint Road. Mr. Rice asked how needs areas were identified. Mr. Troidl explained that it was based on septic-failure numbers; picking up those properties was cost-effective.

The original idea was to avoid crossing railroad tracks if property could be served by package plant. Potential expansion extends to Wright Terrace but not farther west due to steep slope.

Pump station proposed near fire station. Look for public property for pump station location. Not big building, could be grinder station. If don't have grinder pump, need 4" pipe.

Could go down Central and maybe Willow, though would need to do survey. Nothing proposed for Windsor Ave. Ms. Chang said it would be good to cover Acton Housing Authority senior housing units.

Map 5 (environmental resource areas): Floodplain extends far. Pump station needs to be above.

School District campus: West Road pump station. Stream crossing to east is issue. Will need Army Corps of Engineers permit, and involve MA Department of Environmental Protection.

Piping: Gravity line down, pump to push up force main. Low-pressure better for small, limited number of pumps; comes with grinder pumps for each residence. Limited capacity, whereas gravity line doesn't have that limit.

East of Fort Pond Brook, low-pressure line serving just those properties on Mass. Ave. Normally don't hook up individual properties. Could hook up Minuteman Ridge but is not needs area. Mr. McCarthy said that a gravity line would be good to have on Mass. Ave. Ms. Chang noted that Spencer-Tuttle-Flint neighborhood would be unhappy if Minuteman Ridge neighborhood were connected. Mr. McCarthy said low-pressure would be okay if no intent to connect Minuteman Ridge. Mr. Troidl said low-pressure was proposed only for STF neighborhood to cut cost.

Would Windsor have to be pressurized? Maybe not. What about Kinsley? Slopes down after first few properties. Could make up slope underground? Yes.

Geotech survey is about \$1M. No state funding. State revolving fund (SRF) loans are only for construction, not design.

AB School District campus: Mr. Rice asked if new building would be at Gates or not. Mr. Head said feasibility study would be voted at Special Town Meeting on 12/4; team would be together as of 5/2018. So could talk during summer of how new building might fit in sewer expansion; perhaps AB could work with Woodard & Curran about how to manage; Mr. Head can set up meeting of AB team and WASAAC. Roughly 600 kids per school, so 1000 kids combined; Gates about 12K gpd. Mr. Troidl said that sounds right.

Mr. Troidl said aerial survey could provide preliminary information for committee when doing design. Mr. McCarthy would like aerial survey if that would help move project forward. Mr. Campbell has aerial data as of last year and will share with Mr. Troidl.

Acton Water District office building to west some distance away. AWD was concerned about proximity of sewer expansion.

Half Moon Hill? Could be an option for gravity-flow. Mr. McCarthy asked about Indian Village, which has lots of red dots. Mr. Troidl said streams could be a challenge. Could have proposed pump station by schools.

Map of failed/replaced septic systems might underestimate failure if only shows official failed/replaced systems, and not failing systems. Mr. Campbell will get updated information from Health Department as to exactly what data Health is collecting.

Sewer betterment charge calculation: Depends on what is bettered, can include engineering, etc. Town fronts funding, gets SRF loan, then get repaid via betterments paid over 30 years. User fees every year, based on flows. Betterments \$20-25K, total project cost \$10-12M with some escalation costs.

Next meeting: Thursday, 12/14/2017 – Financial issues

Adjourn 8:45 p.m.

- Janet Adachi, clerk for meeting