

BROOKFIELD WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

Thursday, August 22, 2019

Brookfield Town Hall Room 133 7:00 PM

Special Informational Meeting Minutes

1. **Convene Meeting:** Chair N. Malwitz convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**WPCA:**

N. Malwitz, Chair

L. Trojanowski-Marconi, Vice Chair

M. Brown

T. E. Lopez

**Others:**

R. Prinz, Maintenance Manager

D. Will, Inspector

C. Utschig, Langan Engineer

J. Sienkiewicz, Attorney

J. Siclari, Director

A. Kennedy, Recording Secretary

2. **Review Background**

Chair N. Malwitz explained the initiative being discussed tonight is partly funded by a Clean Water Fund Study Grant from CT DEEP, which means 55% of the total costs will be picked up by the State, and the rest is local matching funds, being picked up by the WPCA. He said part of what CT DEEP is looking for, as part of the study, is public participation. He said this initiative was noticed in the Brookfield Matters newsletter from the Town, and they have also been in touch with the Candlewood Shore Homeowners Association, the Arrowhead Point Homeowners Association, First Light and Candlewood Lake Authority.

Chair N. Malwitz read the public notice published regarding the special meeting and noted all of the documents from this study are located on the WPCA website. He introduced the members of the Authority present, as well as the employees of the WPCA who were present.

Chair N. Malwitz said it is the responsibility of the WPCA to monitor pollution in CT by State Statute. He said Candlewood Lake is the largest lake in Connecticut and has a large economic impact. He went on to discuss Lake Hopatcong in NJ, and the fact that it was shut down for the summer (no boating, no fishing, no swimming). He said it was an economic disaster for businesses in the area and house values in the area are going down. He explained that the hope is that Brookfield can avoid this kind of disaster with some forward thinking. He said Brookfield is one of five towns on the lake, and they have alerted the other towns regarding the study.

Chair N. Malwitz said the WPCA board members unanimously endorsed the plan and approved it. He explained where the WPCA's portion of the funding is coming from. He explained the focus of the study, specifically septic flows, and nitrogen and phosphorus

levels in the ground water. He then introduced Pio Lombardo, the consultant conducting the study.

**3. Candlewood Lake Brookfield Area Wastewater Study: Task 1 Report**

P. Lombardo said the focus is wastewater management and the impacts on the lake. He said this is not a study of the lake. He explained the project consists of 10 tasks, including evaluating the existing conditions, determining wastewater systems public health and environmental impacts on Candlewood Lake, developing cost effective, technically reliable solutions and developing an implementation plan for those solutions. He said the first task that they will be speaking about tonight is the community profile and data review report. P. Lombardo gave a brief overview and description of his company and introduced Gary Rubinstein, who is working with him on this project and said Professor William Robertson, who is from the University of Waterloo in Canada, will be leading the field work to be started in mid-September.

P. Lombardo gave a summary and explanation of their findings and data, citing information presented in his slide show. He noted he met with First Light today, and First Light shared their data. He said the Draft Report is available for the public to review.

**4. Receive comments from the public with respect to Study & Report**

*Deirdre Coury, 57 Skyline Drive-D.* Coury asked about the data being referenced, and if it was the age of the septic systems or the age of the residences. P. Lombardo said he referenced the age of the septic systems.

*Nancy Galer, 24 Berkshire Drive-N.* Galer asked if water was still being pumped in and out of the lake every day. P. Lombardo said according to what they were told today, they don't do that during the summer.

P. Lombardo noted that Larry Marciano was here tonight and said Larry has done decades of work on the lake and has provided photos of the blue green algae. P. Lombardo described the next phase of the project, including testing the drain fields and ground water monitoring wells.

*Deirdre Coury, 57 Skyline Drive-D.* Coury asked how old the septic systems are and asked how many are they testing. P. Lombardo said it will be three houses and there will be three down gradient wells. D. Coury asked if they will also test an undeveloped lot. P. Lombardo said no, there is no need. D. Coury said if the theory is the septic systems are creating these issues, wouldn't it be interesting to see what a vacant lot with no septic is doing. P. Lombardo said they are budget constrained and field samples are expensive.

*Denise O'Connor 28 Skyline Drive-D.* O'Connor asked about how failing septic systems are being identified. P. Lombardo described the difference between functional failures and performance failures. He said they are looking at it as best as possible.

*James Miner 18 South Lakeshore Drive-J.* Miner asked about storm water drainage. P. Lombardo said storm water issues are a concern and discussed possible issues.

P. Lombardo said they anticipate the next public meeting will happen in February 2020.

*James Miner 18 South Lakeshore Drive-J.* Miner asked about what will be in store for the other towns on the lake. He asked if we are able to fix the issues in Brookfield, can that fix the problem with the lake if the other towns aren't able to do the same. Chair N. Malwitz said he has spoken with CT DEEP on this topic and they feel the best way to handle this is to look at one town to see what is typical and then address the other towns. He said there may be different solutions that will help in each town, and Brookfield is the starting point. P. Lombardo said there are other solutions than conventional sewer and they are looking to find the right mixture of solutions.

*Sue Slater, 12 White Pine Drive-S.* Slater said she commended the Authority for getting ahead of all the other towns.

*Gail Miner, 18 South Lakeshore Drive-G.* Miner discussed the small island called Pine Island and explained that it is made up of camp sites which contain human raw waste, and how that affects the study. P. Lombardo said because it is in the Town of New Fairfield, they cannot address that area.

*Deirdre Coury, 57 Skyline Drive-D.* Coury asked about the different solutions referenced by P. Lombardo and asked about a previously conducted engineering study regarding extending the sewer line to Candlewood Shores. Chair N. Malwitz said a study was done in 1988 when the state offered to put sewers in Candlewood Shores and to pay for it, but the Town declined. He said there was some work done back then but they can't find it because the engineering company is no longer in business. D. Coury also asked about storm water management being an area of concern and how that will be worked into the parameters of the study. P. Lombardo said the study is a work in progress, but storm water is a concern because it is a conduit to failing septic systems. He said they will be examining the storm water systems in certain areas to determine the extent that they are conduits to failing septic systems. D. Coury asked why the study is only focused on septic systems. Chair N. Malwitz said fertilizers for lawns are now regulated and there are indicators that the phosphorus is coming mainly from the septic systems.

*Larry Marsicano, New Milford-L.* Marsicano discussed Lake Hopatcong in NJ and their issue with the blue green algae. He noted historical data regarding phosphorus in dishwashing detergent and laundry detergent. He said anything they can do to remove more phosphorus would be a benefit.

*Denise O'Connor 28 Skyline Drive-D.* O'Connor asked about the time frame of the study. P. Lombardo and Chair N. Malwitz said the next public meeting will be in February and the study should be complete by June-September. P. Lombardo said the study will

develop a plan, which the WPCA could adopt and implement, and that will have its own timeline.

*Rich Saluga, 32 Great Heron Lane-R.* Saluga said he was distressed to see what happened at Lake Hopatcong. He asked if there were any efforts being made to have the other towns contribute to the cost of the study. He said the study is being financed by people who have paid to be on the sewer line and the study is not helping them directly. He asked why all of Brookfield isn't paying for this. He said it seems unfair that the cost is not being shared by all of Brookfield and the other towns on the lake. Chair N.

Malwitz said the WPCA is tasked to deal with pollution problems and the fact that they were able to get a 55% grant from the state helps. He explained that the other 45% is being paid for by infrastructure fees, which is a charge permitted by state statute to fund infrastructure projects, including studies. Attorney J. Sienkiewicz responded as well, stating that unless the town was able to fund the project, it is up to the WPCA to move forward. R. Saluga asked about the WPCA asking the lake front properties to chip into the costs. Attorney J. Sienkiewicz said this study would not happen if the WPCA was to write letters to property owners asking for donations. He said the WPCA is a public authority with public responsibility set by statute and delegated to it by the town.

*Deirdre Coury, 57 Skyline Drive-D.* Coury asked if public comment will be accepted throughout all of the phases of the study. Chair N. Malwitz said CT DEEP really wants public participation in the study and at the end of the program there will be a formal public hearing.

*D. Santoliquido, 15 Skyline Drive-D.* Santoliquido asked how they will determine which properties they will put the wells onto. P. Lombardo said they used the water use records to identify properties and letters will go out soliciting their participation.

*Jeff Stein, 96 North Lake Shore Drive-J.* Stein asked about the number of houses affecting the lake. Chair N. Malwitz said there are about 6,000 houses around the lake in all five towns and 1,500 are in the watershed here in Brookfield.

*James Miner 18 South Lakeshore Drive-J.* Miner asked about storm water recharge systems and if that would be part of what they are analyzing. G. Rubenstein said ultimately it is the soils in the drain field that will determine the phosphorus removal. He said when they talk about storm water having an influence it's usually a functional failure when people are using a storm water system to drain a failing septic system.

*Deirdre Coury, 57 Skyline Drive-D.* Coury asked about someone previously mentioning that Candlewood Shores and Arrowhead Point being areas of concern. P. Lombardo said in those areas the drinking water is exhibiting signs of septic influence, which is approaching a public health issue.

**5. Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.