

BROOKFIELD WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

Wednesday, October 21, 2020 7:00 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

VIA ZOOM

1. Convene Meeting

Chairman N. Malwitz convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

WPCA:

Chair N. Malwitz

G. Giacobone

J. Murray

L. Donovan

M. Del Valle

Others:

R. Prinz, Maintenance Manager

J. Sienkiewicz, Attorney

C. Utschig, Langan Engineer

K. McPadden, Executive Administrator

P. Lombardo, Lombardo Associates

P. Avery, Town Sanitarian

A. Kennedy, Recording Secretary

Members of the public

2. Public Information Hearing Presentation:

Dean Road and Pocono Road Wastewater Management Plan

Chairman N. Malwitz presented the report prepared by Lombardo Associates Inc. for the public to review. He explained the area on the map which was the focus of the study. He noted informational public hearings are not required by law but are customary.

Chairman N. Malwitz reviewed the history of this project, including the Town Sanitarian voicing concern about challenging areas in 2010. Chairman N. Malwitz said it is not possible to put in a code compliant septic system in this area since that time. He said in 2011 they conducted a survey in this district regarding the interest of putting sewers in, and about one third of the responders said yes to sewers, one third said no to sewers and the other third did not respond. Chairman N. Malwitz said since then, the State has flagged this area as a challenge and therefore they embarked on a more extensive engineering study for options to apply to the situation. He said P. Lombardo looked at the environmental situation to determine the environmental, as well as health and safety, challenges in this area.

P. Lombardo introduced his firm, Lombardo Associates, Inc, and said they have been working with the wastewater issues of unsewered communities for over 45 years. He said they were tasked by the WPCA to examine in detail, the needs assessment to identify any problems. He said that the area needs to be sewered, in his professional opinion and said there are evident scientific and engineering reasons why.

P. Lombardo said there are 85 developed properties and 91 parcels in the area, and about 50% are in the Still River Flood Plain. He said the area is also laced with brooks and wetlands, which means that ground water elevation is going to be a challenge for septic systems to operate. He said the Still River has been classified as impaired by the State for a number of years due to e-coli contamination, and there is strong reason to believe that septic systems make a significant contribution. He explained that in areas with high ground water, septic systems are not good at removing nitrogen and phosphorus from the wastewater, which is then being discharged into the Still River. P. Lombardo showed a slide detailing where the wetlands are in this area. He said the soils in the area are classified as very limited for septic service.

P. Lombardo said they looked at the septic records of all of the properties and only 20% of the properties have records. He said virtually all of them had challenging and unfavorable conditions. P. Lombardo said they have examined a variety of solution techniques and all are under review by the WPCA. He said their recommendation is based in large part on a least cost solution. He said they recommend the septic tanks remain on the individual properties and the liquid would flow by gravity or with a pump to a common line in the street. He said the goal was to maximize the number of properties that could use a gravity system. He said due to the topography of the area, 8 of the 85 properties would require the use of an individual pump. P. Lombardo said the wastewater collection system would be a hybrid combination of gravity and low pressure that would discharge to two pump stations, which would then discharge to the connection point to the existing Brookfield Sewer System.

Chairman N. Malwitz said the total cost of the project is between \$1.5 million and \$3 million, depending on the approach taken. He said if no grants were awarded, the assessments would range between 8-16% of the grand list value of the properties. He said there are some options that would include Town of Brookfield properties and they would add to the total grand list value, reducing the cost to the homeowners. The Town of Brookfield would need to approve these options. The sewer connection and the sewer assessments would be paid by the property owners, whatever is not covered by a grant, and is generally always financed by a long-term bond or loan. He said the WPCA will aggressively pursue Federal and State grant funding. He also said they have a deferment program to assist qualified property owners who are unable to pay their assessments.

P. Avery, Town Sanitarian, said in 2010/2011 he approached the WPCA with concerns about this area, due to difficulty in repairing septic systems. He explained the issues with the systems in this area, noting the details of the problems and solutions. He said he often has to issue variances in order to repair these systems. P. Avery said he shares a lot of P. Lombardo's environmental concerns.

Chairman N. Malwitz explained where people can find information on the WPCA website regarding how assessments are calculated, the steps required to approve a project as well as the project overview and the report from Lombardo Associates.

The following members of the public were present with questions and/or comments on the project, which were answered by P. Lombardo, P. Avery, Attorney J. Sienkiewicz and Chairman N. Malwitz:

A. Gomez, 132 Pocono Road
B. Salvato, 158 Pocono Road
J. Salvato, 158 Pocono Road
J. and B. Watters, 36 Dean Road
T. Wall, 165 Pocono Road
A. Scalzo, 14 Dean Road
K. Kruzansky, 116 Pocono Road
B. Kolf, 5 Dean Road
E. & C. Burke, 6 Dean Road
T. Hamilton, 135 Pocono Road

3. Adjournment: L. Donovan made a motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. M. DelValle seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

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Wednesday, October 21, 2020 7:00 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING - Q&A Section

The following members of the public were present with questions and/or comments on the project, which were answered by P. Lombardo, P. Avery, Attorney J. Sienkiewicz and Chairman N. Malwitz.

A. Gomez, 132 Pocono Road, asked if there was a plan to address the existing waste water contamination that is already present. Chairman N. Malwitz said once the sewers are put in, the contamination should disappear in a short time. P. Lombardo agreed. A. Gomez asked if there was a timeline associated with returning to normal levels or acceptable levels of E-coli? P. Lombardo said in this location, they would expect the contamination would be eliminated in a very short time, depending on the time of year, he thinks a year at most. A. Gomez asked about the inspection process for a property, and if there are no negative impacts on the public health concern, could that property be exempt from the assessment. Chairman N. Malwitz said probably not, because once the sewer is put in, the property is improved because sewer is available, according to State Law, and that is when the assessment happens. He said they would encourage everyone to hook up due for reasons of improved sanitation along the Still River.

B. Salvato, 158 Pocono Road, said the cost factor is a very large one for them as they are both retired and have no issues with their septic system. She said they are not happy about the process and how it is going.

J. Salvato, 158 Pocono Road, said he thinks the assessment is way off, and he thinks they are doing this assessment using old paperwork and not on what is really going on. He said every time they have their septic cleaned out they have it tested by the sewer company and they had the letter sent to the Town that there is nothing wrong with their septic, and yet they are shown on the map in Red. P. Lombardo said just because the septic tank is pumped out and the pumper indicates it is ok, that does not mean that the system is not causing ground water contamination. He said those are very separate issues.

J. and B. Watters, 36 Dean Road, asked if there was a power failure, would the septic system fail with the new pump. Chairman N. Malwitz said if they had a pump going up, the WPCA would monitor that and probably assist in pumping it out every other day while the power is out. J. Watters asked about the indication of “excessive pumping” on the chart. P. Avery said “excessive pumping” is in reference to a septic system that is pumped more frequently than you would expect. He said they received reports of tank pumpings at Town Hall and they put those receipts into a database, which is accessible to residents, and if they notice a tank is being pumped several times a year, that may be a sign that there may be a problem with a system. J. Watters said he has his tank pumped once every other year and did not think that was excessive. P. Avery agreed that is not

excessive. Chairman N. Malwitz said they will have to look at that chart to see why this property was labeled as “excessive pumping”.

T. Wall, 165 Pocono Road, said J. Salvato spoke for him and he has nothing to add at this point.

A. Scalzo, 14 Dean Road, said her property is one that is designated as needing a pump and asked if the pump will be a cost to the homeowner or worked into the project cost. Chairman N. Malwitz said more than likely it will be worked into the project cost. She asked if hooking up to the sewer will be a requirement or an option if the septic system is working fine at the time. Chairman N. Malwitz said chances are she would want to hook up. A. Scalzo said if her septic is not failing, she will not want to hook up. Chairman N. Malwitz said they will have to look into it. A. Scalzo said the cost issue is something that must be discussed. Chairman N. Malwitz said generally the environmental health and safety issues trump the cost issues according to the environmental health and safety people and CT DEEP, so chances are, they will be required to hook up. A. Scalzo said what if they have a newer septic system put in, as hers was re-done in 2001. Chairman N. Malwitz said they will continue to look at it property by property and will hear any appeals.

K. Kruzansky, 116 Pocono Road, asked about the timing, for the installation to be done. He said he looked up his assessment and it is really high, and they would have to dig up his driveway. He said the 25-year financing for this is a big issue for someone who is going to be retired in 4-5 years. Chairman N. Malwitz said if you pay at the scheduled payoff rate. When the property is sold, the new owner picks it up. K. Kruzansky said he doesn't think they would get the value of the assessment added to the value of their property. Chairman N. Malwitz explained the issues with a lot of the septic systems in the area. K. Kruzansky asked if it would be installed around 2024 or 2025. Chairman N. Malwitz said it could be 2023 or even 2022, saying things move at the speed of government. K. Kruzansky asked about the likelihood of receiving a grant. Chairman N. Malwitz said it is a possibility and their representatives in the State are doing a very good job in representing them. He said they will keep everyone informed.

B. Kolf, 5 Dean Road, asked if one of these plans is approved, and a septic system starts to fail, will a new system be approved at this time. P. Avery said if it was clear to his office that they were moving forward with this project he would look at each case individually. He said all things are open to discussion. He said sometimes they can find components of systems that can be replaced to keep things working at a minimal cost before they have septic discharge at the ground surface or a person is experiencing regular back ups in the home.

E. & C. Burke, 6 Dean Road, said they have done a great job surveying this and cost is obviously everyone's concern. He asked what the typical hook up costs would be. Chairman N. Malwitz said that is included in the cost of the project. E. Burke asked if this project is being shopped to different contractors to get the best price. Chairman N. Malwitz said right now there are only engineering estimates. He said they don't really

know what the numbers will be until the bids come in. Attorney J. Sienkiewicz said this plan is different than anything the Town has done in the past. He said they are going to need some cooperation from the property owners to go on to the property to make the connections. E. Burke asked how big the sewer main will be. Chairman N. Malwitz said it will be 4-6 inch main and displayed the different options on the screen for everyone to review.

T. Hamilton, 135 Pocono Road, said they are really excited for things to move forward and is hoping his septic system lasts until this is completed. Chairman N. Malwitz said P. Avery will work with everyone.