



Chair/James Gmeiner
Vice Chair/Michael Bouchard
Clerk/Thomas Orcutt

Town of Groton Sewer Department

173 Main Street
Groton MA 01450

Date: September 13th, 2023

Time: 2:00 PM

Members Present: Chair/James Gmeiner
Vice Chair/Michael Bouchard
Clerk/Thomas Orcutt

Others Present: Don Black/Construction Supervisor, Kevin Lindemer/Resident, Ann Livezey/Assistant and Judy Anderson/Resident

The Meeting was called to order by James Gmeiner at 2:00 PM

201 Boston Road

Mr. Black said he is the construction supervisor for 201 Boston Road and he told the BOSC he has completed the sewer application as requested and he has also reached out to Pepperell to have the pressure test done. He said Mr. Brinkman responded and said they do not do the actual test. Mr. Orcutt said the contractor is the one responsible to do the pressure test and Pepperell will witness it.

Mr. Lindemer said the application he received with a letter about the bylaws referenced 227 Boston Road. Mr. Gmeiner said we need the application filled out for 201 Boston Road and in the town bylaws it says the other house must abandon the septic and that BOH is the enforcer of that.

Mr. Lindemer said the reason they are here is because they had a provisional occupancy from the building inspector in May and they moved in on June 10th and on June 12th he heard a noise and it was the grinder pump alarm going off. Mr. Lindemer and Mr. Black said they tried to turn the alarm off and during that time the copper solder pipe blew out and showered the utility room, himself and Mr. Black with raw sewerage. He told the BOSC that the reason this happened was because the valve that the system was connected to was never opened. This failure caused damage to the plumbing and the grinder pump.

Mr. Black said he called Pepperell Sewer Department and they pumped out the manhole and turned on the valve. Mr. Lindemer said he got the utility room cleaned up and the grinder pump repaired/rebuilt. Mr. Lindemer said there was several interactions along the way and that it was clear they could move in and had no knowledge that the pressure test had to be done.

Mr. Black said as far as the as-built drawing he cannot provide because the driveway has not been paved, but he will provide a letter it is in the works. Mr. Gmeiner told Mr. Black he is interested in where the sewer line is and the grinder pump location for the as built drawings. Mr. Black asked if it had to be an engineered drawing and Mr. Gmeiner said a tie card would be fine. Mr. Gmeiner stated that the original approval was a plan with a grinder pump outside and we will need a tie card for any future work being done on the property. Mr. Black said they will

provide that information from the manhole to the shut off to the house and he did tell the BOSC that there is a tracer wire from the golf course and the final as built will show all this information.

Mr. Lindemer said the main reason they asked to meet with the BOSC is that he was under the impression that he could move into the house and when they did the valve was not open and they suffered a catastrophic failure and he would like to discuss that. Mr. Black told the BOSC that he went to the Water Department and asked about the water meter installation and Mr. Orcutt said we were all set, so I took that as a green light we could move forward. Mr. Gmeiner said Mr. Orcutt approved the water meter installation and he does not approve sewer work.

Mr. Lindemer said that when Pepperell came out and he asked why the valve was not open and their response was we do not do anything unless Groton asks. Mr. Lindemer said they paid \$10K for the connection and he said he was not told he needed an application for 201 Boston Road, but did receive one for 227 Boston Road. He also said there was no communication about a pressure test or about someone witnessing the valve opening. Mr. Black said when Pepperell came out during the failure, they pumped out manhole and turned the valve on. Mr. Gmeiner said they turned the valve on to relieve pressure and for them to be able to go test inside the house. Mr. Lindemer said they were not given any information and the line was not open, he said the Building Inspector and Mr. Orcutt said they were good to go and those are the facts he brings.

Mr. Lindemer said given the severity of this situation he said they suffered damaged materials and belongings in the basement had to be disinfected and deodorized. He is also concerned that the grinder pump may not last due to this situation. Mr. Gmeiner said he does not want to minimize the experience with the exploding valve, but the application does state what needs to be done. Mr. Gmeiner said he spoke with the building inspector and he said no occupancy was issued. Mr. Gmeiner asked Mr. Lindemer the amount he is seeking and that he may just turn over to insurance company to handle. Mr. Lindemer said he spent \$816.00 in plumbing and \$1,00.00 to reconstruct the pump and would like the BOSC to compensate Mr. Black for pain/suffering. Mr. Lindemer told the BOSC that he has (3) more potential residences that he will be connecting and was hoping those costs could come into play. Mr. Lindemer said that would be \$30K for the new connections and damages \$2K, so his ask would be \$32K. He feels this whole process was opaque and miscommunicated.

Mr. Gmeiner asked the board about the connection fee waiver and Mr. Bouchard said he supports what Mr. Lindemer is saying, but in terms of the connection fee he would maybe be in favor of waiving one connection fee not three. Mr. Orcutt said he would not be in favor of waiving connection fees and he would suggest going through insurance. Mr. Gmeiner said he would be ok with the \$2K for damages, but not in favor of waiving fees. He said this is rate payers' future money and has a hard time taking responsibility for this. He told Mr. Lindemer for the whole amount in question he would send it over to the insurance company.

Abatement - 217 Main Street

No Discussion

Pepperell IMA

Mr. Gmeiner said Mr. Rafferty will submit and discuss

Discuss regulations regarding change of use

No Discussion

Review sewer application

Mr. Bouchard will continue editing and will work on some steps for the process.

Indoor Grinder Pumps

Mr. Orcutt suggested that we create a policy that grinder pumps be installed outside.

Mr. Orcutt made a motion that The Groton Sewer Commission adopt a policy that we only allow exterior low pressure grinder pumps in the Center Sewer District/Four Corners District unless there is any reasonable circumstance that would warrant it being installed indoors Mr. Bouchard seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Roll Call: Gmeiner – Aye, Orcutt-Aye and Bouchard -nay

500 Main Street – Groton Farms

No Discussion

Review I&I

No Discussion

Review Nod Road Pump Station and Flow evaluation

No Discussion

Expansion Limits

No Discussion

FY23 & FY24 Budget

No Discussion

Other Business: Bills, Minutes, etc.

Next Meeting – September 20th, 2023

BILLS SIGNED – No bills signed

MINUTES:

ADJOURN – Mr. Bouchard made a motion to adjourn at 3:30 P.M. Mr. Orcutt seconded the motion. Roll Call Gmeiner – Aye, Orcutt – Aye and Bouchard - Aye

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Livezey
Water & Sewer Assistant