

Minutes of Lost Lake Sewer Committee
November 20, 2008

Present: Carol Quinn, Tom Doyle, Jean Wright, and Angela Garger

Old Business

1. November 6 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.
2. Carol contacted Bill Carson and he will attend the December 4 meeting.
3. The Board of Health will need to be contacted to find out more information about the February 2 meeting. Tom was contacted by the Lowell Sun about what we were presenting at the February 2 meeting. He thinks that we should meet with the selectman before the meeting to let them know what where we are at in our planning. He is trying to get an appointment this week.
4. Tom was able to obtain information about the number of houses and number of bedrooms in the different areas on the lake from the assessors' office.

New Business

Tom and Carol attended the Sewer Commission Meeting on November 19, 2008. Bob Rafferty and George Wheatley were also in attendance. Below is a review of what was covered at that meeting.

1. Tom discussed plans to quantify bedrooms and the need for funds to move forward including help from Woodward and Curran to write a proposal for town meeting to fund pre-RFP work as well as write and analyze RFP submissions.
2. Bob Rafferty said that the Lost Lake Sewer Committee, (LLSC), was on step two of a seven step process. He presented a Woodward and Curran chart to explain the process. He said that the town, (or another source identified), must fund the initial steps because only the design and build can be charged to users. He also said that extensive testing of effluent site is required and that approval of the results and the proposed plan by DEP is needed before RFP can be submitted.
3. Initial funding sources for this phase need to be explored. It seems that Woodward and Curran could help the LLSC identify funding sources. Bob Rafferty explained that although money is tight right now state and local government may be looking for infrastructure projects to help with the economy and to help employ people currently out of work. If we are in a position where we have a plan developed and approved we will be in a good place if money does become available.
4. Bedroom count may not be needed but we may instead be able to use 330 gallons per day per house which is a standard. Newer technology enables more effluent to be treated for less money than in the past.
5. Changes were identified since the original Woodward and Curran Report was written.

*Vernal pools identified in Knops pond area make this site unsuitable for a leach bed.

*Soil testing is expensive and the more areas tested the larger the expense. It may be possible to combine all areas into one leach bed if the soil is right. Soil samples are needed and active testing will need to take place. This involves many gallons being pumped into an area to verify that ground water does not rise to touch leach bed water. This may be complicated for a large system which has greater than the capacity which Title 5 allows. Further testing will be required if there is greater than Title V effluent and the results must be approved by DEP.

* Bob Rafferty said that Ayer may be a possibility for waste which contradicts the 1983 report that says this is much more expensive than a local solution and not advisable because water will be taken from one watershed and put into another. (This may be a DEP issue.)

* Is it more costly to construct and maintain a number of smaller systems or one large system? Multiple sites are more complicated than a single site.

*The Grotonwood site may not be needed if effluent can be transported thru the water by the old dam. This is supposedly an approved method that has been done in the past; however, what is the implication if you are crossing over private property.

* It may not be necessary to charge all adjacent houses to the sewer line if a "checkerboard" usage is approved and used. This lowers the number of houses involved and increases the per house rate. However, it does not address the issue of failure of a system that would need connection later without having paid for the initial install. It also does not address the goal of getting all the effluent away from the lake. The checkerboard option would allow people to opt out and not pay for sewage hook up.

6. If houses are, in fact, charged based on the number of baths, deeds will need to be restricted to limit expansion. (This may cause an issue with current residents.)

There is a question of whether this is a desirable restriction or not.

*Any system that is constructed has a capacity and cannot take unlimited flow increases. We will need to address undeveloped land that some people may be able to build on once the system is in place.

7. There is a funding cycle that has applications submitted in April for approval in January. The benefit of this approach is that it is not a grant but a 0% interest loan the projected cost of developing a plan and getting it approved, (the pre-design phase) is \$300,000. This initial cost cannot be paid for by the people the system will serve. It must be paid for with town funds or state or federal loans. The town may have to borrow the money at 2% interest, ($300,000 * 2\% = \$6660$), since there is no guarantee that the project would be approved for a 0% loan. Residents can do a fundraiser for the money, also.

*Jean asked if Community Preservation Act, (CPA), money could be used as a funding source

8. Bob Rafferty estimated that the approval process could be completed by January 2010.
9. It will be important to gain the support for the project from other lake organizations such as the Groton Lakes Association, Grotonwoods, and Great Ponds Advisory Committee.

Action Items

1. Angela will review the Woodward and Curran report and try to identify other areas of the report that may be useful to the committee. On going.
2. Jean will continue to try and reach Lucy Wallace in Harvard. On going.
3. Angela will contact the Board of Health about the February 2, 2009 meeting. On going.
4. Carol will contact the Merrimack watershed to see what information they might have regarding sewer systems on lakes. Specifically what regulations might exist with regards to lakes and whether any grants would be available for initiatives in the Merrimack watershed? On going.
5. Angela will try to contact the Great Pond Management Advisory Committee to find out about funding sources. On going.
6. Carol will contact the water department about the possibility/feasibility of getting town water in the Lost Lake Area.
7. Tom will distribute regulatory process flowchart and define acronyms.
8. Tom will meet with the town manger.
9. Prepare for Board of Health Meeting in February. On going.
(Handouts? Contact Information? Our meeting dates?)
10. Prepare for Town Meeting in April. How do we get an article on Town Meeting Agenda for April? It will be important to gain the support of the Finance Committee, Planning Committee, Conservation Committee, etc. On going.