

**Town of Londonderry, Vermont
Village Wastewater Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 10, 2022 – 9:00 AM
Twitchell Building, 100 School Street
South Londonderry, VT**

Village Wastewater Committee (VWC) Members Present: Sharon Crossman, Larry Gubb, Gary Hedman, Gail Mann (Committee Chair), Shane O’Keefe (Town Administrator)

Others in Attendance: Chrissy Haskins (Dufresne Group – Project Engineers), Patricia Gagnon (Londonderry Resident, Property abutter to Pingree Park), Chad Stoddard (Londonderry Resident), Rich Gagnon (Londonderry Resident)

1. **Call meeting to order** - Gail, called the meeting to order at 9:06 AM

2. **Additions or deletions to the agenda:**

No additions or deletions.

3. **WW Site Selection/Evaluation Plan Updates and Next Steps**

South Village:

Gail said that she and Shane had a good conversation with the Library Board in consideration of moving forward with their Library property as a potential site. There was a question as to whether there was any money in the first \$125,000 for each village, that could be used for the purchase of property. Chrissy Haskins said those dollars could not be used for purchase, but the funds could be used from the \$3.9 million per village to purchase property for sites. Gail said the Library is looking for some manner of commitment from the Town (as the would be purchaser of the site) so that they can cover expenses they have incurred with for repairs to the library building. The Library would like to have the Committee get back to them in February with some manner of agreement package. There are several steps than need to be performed before this can be achieved. One is to verify the potential location of the system sites with test pits. In order to have the test pit work paid for by the ARPA grant funds, an archeological review and report must be done prior to this. Because of a backlog, it would not be possible to have the archeological review and reports done until March 2023. Gail also said she and Shane met with only 3 members of the Library Board and those three wished to take the discussion to the entire Library Board.

Shane mentioned that the Committee should brief the Selectboard regarding the meeting with the Library and joined Gary in asking if there might be a way to do the test pits now, so that we would not have to wait until next spring to do them. Gary asked about a ballpark figure for doing the test pits. \$1000 - \$1,500 per pit? This would save a great deal of time and with the ground becoming more solid with freezing, there would likely be less water and mud to contend with.

Sharon made a motion ***“to seek approval from the Selectboard to pay for the test pits to expedite their completion and as a necessary step to verify site suitability in order to move forward with arrangements for property options of purchase.”***

Larry seconded – Motion **passed** unanimously

Gary asked about other potential options to purchase of the property, such as a purchase of an easement, an option to purchase an easement or and the purchase of an option to buy, for the purpose of reserving the property for a wastewater system site and have some sort of agreement with the Library.

Chrissy showed a proposed mound system for the Library property with a 2,500 gal./day capacity that with pre-treatment, could have a capacity of 5,100 gal./day. The proposed site showed the isolation area around it. Preliminary siting shows no impact to trail and is away from assumed wetlands (prior to wetlands delineation that would take place at the beginning of the next growing season -May). Class 3 wetlands will need no buffer around them, Class 2 wetlands will need a 50 ft. buffer.

A search for existing springs and springhouses will be done to see if any lie within the planned system isolation zone and 1,000 ft. downgrade of system. Chrissy believes that the proposed system now designed is the maximum capacity for the Library property site. Soil test pits are required to observe the soil horizon and identify seasonally high groundwater and/or ledge depths.

North Village:

Gail briefly discussed meeting the Parks Board on Monday, November 28. It was a good discussion and Chrissy’s presentation and presence helped answer a lot of questions the Parks Board had regarding potential siting of a system. Those present at the meeting included Shane, who believed the meeting was helpful in at minimum, answering some questions the Parks Board had and having them consider, after taking the question of allowing further investigation, such as test pits, to their entire board, whether Pingree Park

can accommodate a system and recreation at the same time, which preliminarily seems very feasible.

Patricia Gagnon who owns the property adjacent to Pingree Park to the west and is also the owner of the land the entry to Pingree Park sits upon, asked questions regarding where the funding for the initial study and then additional funds came from. The original funding of \$32,000 was wrapped into an advanced planning grant to discover the feasibility of wastewater in the Town of Londonderry. The initial overview involved using USGS soil survey maps to establish the sites in the entire town of Londonderry to see which locations had the best suitable soils. Pingree Park showed up as one of those sites in the North Village with close proximity to the village center. Town owned property with access from Middletown Road, adjacent to the Londonderry Arts and Historical Society, deemed the town owned Custer/Sharp property was another suitable site and a third which became a FEMA buyout property was another. The FEMA buyout property, was discovered to not be eligible for locating a system upon. Following the use of soils maps for the potential suitability of sites, further investigation is needed to verify maps and locate other features of the land on potential sites that might impact the suitability. For this process, the Town of Londonderry received a grant of \$125,000 ARPA funds for each of the two villages. This is now the process that is being undertaken, which is a part of the VWC seeking permission to do the verification work to see if Pingree Park may serve as a potential site.

Patricia Gagnon brought up another concern she had regarding the deed to the Pingree Park property, which sits on property given to the town, by Rex Doane. Her concern was related to the deed stating that the property was to not serve any “commercial use” and it was her belief that a wastewater system would be considered a “commercial use”. This question had been brought previously and included research and overview by the Town attorney. In his opinion, what would likely be a municipal wastewater system would not be considered a “commercial use” of the property. There was further discussion about whether that held true in consideration of it serving a commercial zoning district. Since residences may also be located and served in a commercial zone and a municipal wastewater system being a publicly owned not-for-profit operation, it is believed this would not fall into the “commercial use” category. Patricia Gagnon and Chad Stoddard mentioned that they would do further research into the question.

Sharon Crossman made the following motion for approval by the Village Wastewater Committee (VWC):

“We move to recommend to the Selectboard that it vote to reverse its 2/1/2021 decision to take Pingree Park off the table as a potential location for a community wastewater system, and to now allow for exploratory analysis to determine its suitability. Other than

one site already under consideration, namely the Town-owned Custer Sharp property on Middletown Road, there are no other suitable sites in the north village area, and the Committee believes that establishing community wastewater treatment facilities in the villages is critical to the existing and future environmental and economic health of the community.”

Larry Seconded – Motion passed unanimously

Sharon asked if same motion should be sent to the Parks Board. Shane recommended doing so.

Chrissy Haskins presented the potential siting for a system at Pingree Park that was shown in the meeting with the Parks Board. The potential area is located in what is now a wooded area outside the flood zone which would have a capacity of 6,400 gal./day with pre-treatment. Permission is needed from the Parks Board and ultimately the Selectboard, as part of the verification of the suitability of the site for the potential system.

Chrissy then showed the potential system and siting for the Town owned Custer-Sharp property off of Middletown Road. This system would accommodate 6,500 gal./day without pretreatment and could accommodate 13,000 gal./day with pretreatment. The site has some challenges with slope and seasonal wet areas. This system would be built on a pre-construction grade of 20-25%. Systems are allowed to be designed on slopes up to 30% grade.

Chad Stoddard had a question about the use of “Edgehill Road” vs. “Middletown Road” as the location for the property since access would be from Middletown Road. The VWC decided the location would be better described as the Town Custer-Sharp property, located off of Middletown Road. Chad had a further question about the property falling into the “conservation” zone. It was clarified that it is not currently in the conservation zone, but has been proposed to be placed in the conservation zone by the proposed zoning by-law changes. It was further clarified that the proposed zoning by-law is still being reviewed and revised and several properties proposed to fall into the conservation zone, are under further review regarding that designation.

Gary Hedman, who is also a member of the Londonderry Conservation Commission mentioned that the Conservation Commission, which has oversight on that Town property, will review what Dufresne Group has designed for a potential system. Gary said access to property will be off of Middletown Road. Chad asked about access road and specs. Design will be forthcoming.

4. Project Management and Coordination:

Sharon mentioned that Chris Campany is working up a proposal for project management.

5. Public Outreach - Online information and Future Presentations:

Gary recommended using the Town website and creating separate Village Wastewater Committee page on the website, similar to what other “public bodies” have. Hopefully, Shane can help with having such a page set up on the Town website, with an easy way to identify and locate the page from the main Town website page.

Chrissy suggested working with Chris Campany to do more public outreach, use a public space like Neighborhood Connections, town office building, Friends of the West River Trail Depot for further discussions and education. Use storyboards and more. Gary recommended a townwide mailing and researching ways to reach everyone that can possibly be reached. Sharon thought the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) or the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) might help in this regard. She also mentioned Marie Caduto at the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) as being able to help.

Gary asked about abutting property notification. Chrissy said this is required at the permitting stage, but might be a good idea to do it as early as possible, as potential sites are still being verified for establishment. Sharon asked who would do the notification. Chrissy said Dufresne would handle individual notifications and WRC could do more general notification.

Gail mentioned the importance of being able to discuss ranges of cost to users and if we might be able to do an analysis of fees to find systems in other towns that are close in size and design to what has preliminarily been done for Londonderry. Emily Hackett has some information regarding that and Chris Campany of the WRC also suggested the VWC defer to Emily for that information. Cost ranges should try to include current and future capacity and needs.

6. Grant Agreement – DEC’s Grant Writing Process

Gail mentioned that Emily Hackett has fallen behind on completing further grant writing as there is currently a three month backlog.

7. New Business and Considerations:

Patricia Gagnon asked about the availability of minutes of the meeting and the wording of Sharon’s motion to the Selectboard and the Parks Board regarding permission to further investigate Pingree Park as a potential site for a wastewater system. Shane responded that they would be available reasonably soon. The names of VWC members are shown on minutes available through the Town and meetings are warned within the appropriate number of days ahead. Patricia said she had concerns about notifications.

Sharon brought up the difficulty of not being able to have a working session without the formalities of a public meeting each time. Chrissy Haskins mentioned that all the water and wastewater committees she has worked with under Dufresne Group have not been considered “public bodies” for expediency and being able to discuss specific properties without exposing those properties to privacy concerns. It was suggested that there needs to be further discussion. Gary said that at some point we may be able to transition.

8. Adjourn:

The next meeting of the VWC would be Tuesday, December 13, at 6:00PM

Gail **moved to adjourn the meeting**, seconded by Larry, **passed** unanimously.
The meeting adjourned at **10:38 AM**

Respectfully Submitted,
Larry Gubb
Secretary, Village Wastewater Committee

Approved_____.

Village Wastewater Committee
Gail Mann, Chair

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