

Chapter 9

Public Participation Program

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An extensive public participation program has been initiated for the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Study (Study) to insure that the Town's residents, Town leaders and regulatory community are informed about the Study, and can provide needed input. The last Wastewater Management Plan (July 1988) was not accepted at Town Meeting even though much effort was expended to develop a recommended plan. The current planning effort has been designed with an active public participation program to create a recommended plan that can be accepted at Town Meeting. The purpose of this Chapter is to describe the public participation program planned for the study; describe the public participation steps taken during the Needs Assessment; and document the decisions made by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to date.

The public participation program is made up of the following main components.

- Formation of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
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- Distribution of public education material
- Participation in a formal environmental review process

Each of these components is briefly described below.

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was established at the beginning of the Study, composed of four members of the Town's professional staff, to develop a scope of work for the Study and provide technical oversight of the project. The following staff comprise the TAC.

- William G. Redfield, P.E., Water and Sewer Departments Manager, Project Manager
- Robert A. Duncanson, Ph.D., Chatham Water Quality Laboratory Director
- Margaret Swanson, Town Planner
- Terence M. Hayes, Town Health Agent

A Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was also established early in the Study to help select a project consultant, provide representation for all geographic areas of Chatham, provide representation of various groups in Chatham (ex officio members), oversee the public education efforts, and provide needed decisions during the course of the Study. The CAC members are:

- Herbert Bernard representing Morris Island, Stage Island, and Little Beach
- Philip Christophe representing West Chatham
- Robert Depatie, At-Large
- Fred Jensen, CAC Chairman representing Central Chatham
- Dede Lovett representing Sears Point
- David MacAdam representing the Old Village
- Kevin Mikita representing Chatham port
- John Payson, At-Large
- Charles Pollard representing South Chatham
- John Randall, At-Large
- Scott Tappan representing Stage Neck

The ex-officio members are:

- Chris Diego representing the Chamber of Commerce
- Tim Linnell representing the Chatham Shellfish Advisory Committee
- William Schweizer representing Chatham Conservation Foundation
- James Scott representing the Chatham Water and Sewer Advisory Committee
- Patricia Siewert representing Friends of Chatham Waterways

The CAC and TAC have met regularly (typically once per month) during the preparation of the Needs Assessment Report, and have been actively involved in the project. The TAC reviewed preliminary draft text as well as the final draft of the Needs Assessment Report, and provided comments and clarifications as needed. The CAC reviewed the final draft of the Needs Assessment Report and provided many comments, clarifications, and needed decisions on the direction of the Study. Written comments received from CAC and the public have been addressed in written memos which are attached in Appendix M.

Many public education efforts were undertaken during the Needs Assessment portion of the Study (several with the assistance of Regina Villa Associates which is a public education specialist and part of the Project Team). These efforts include the following:

- Development of a four-page flier describing the Study (January 1999) which was mailed to all Town property owners (Attached in Appendix M).
- Development of a two-page flier (June 1999) describing the Study and the main findings of the Needs Assessment Report (Attached in Appendix M).
- Development of an up-to-date list of all Town organizations (25) that need to be informed of the Study. A letter (with a copy of the Needs Assessment Report Executive Summary and the April flier) was sent to each organization describing the Study and offering a CAC and/or TAC member as a speaker at a future meeting of their organization.
- Coordination with a local newspaper editor to produce the numerous articles that have appeared in the Cape Cod Chronicle.
- Discussions with many organizations and individuals in Town.
- Participation in a panel discussion at a Friends of Chatham Waterways meeting/presentation held on June 28, 1999.
- Distribution of the June 1999 flier to two meetings of the non-voting Taxpayers Association of Chatham.

The CAC has become very knowledgeable regarding the wastewater and nitrogen loading problems of the Town. Nitrogen loading (from wastewater and non-wastewater sources) to the Town's coastal embayments has been a major focus of the Needs Assessment Report and is a difficult subject to understand. Much discussion has occurred about nitrogen loading, its sources, methods to quantify the loadings, and methods to determine the nitrogen assimilative capacity of the embayments. The CAC has reviewed the data, calculations and water quality standards presented in the draft Needs Assessment Report, and has made the following decisions on how nitrogen removal alternatives will be evaluated in future portions of the Study. These decisions are listed below.

- Little Mill Pond will be evaluated using both the ORW-N and the BBP-ORW standards.
- Taylor Pond will be evaluated using the SA-N, BBP-ORW, and the ORW-N standards.
- Mill Creek will be evaluated using the BBP-ORW and the ORW-N standards.
- Sulfur Springs/Bucks Creek will be evaluated as one system using the ORW-N, BBP-ORW, and SA-N standards.
- Sulfur Springs will be evaluated using the SA-N, BBP-ORW, and the ORW-N standards
- Muddy Creek will be unable to meet any standard and other options of increased flushing or conversion to a fresh water system will be evaluated.
- Ryder Cove needs to be evaluated further using the ORW-N standard, based on the additional flushing information which has been requested. (Discussed in Section 8.9, Data Gaps).

- All other watersheds will be evaluated based on the ORW-N standard which is the most stringent standard used.

The water quality standards ORW-N, BBP-ORW, and ORW-N are described in detail in Chapters 4 and 6. These standards are particularly important for this Study because they set the water quality goals of the nitrogen mitigation alternatives that will be identified, screened and evaluated in following phases of the Study. It is noted that multiple standards will be evaluated for several of the embayments and embayment watersheds. The CAC and TAC decided on evaluating multiple standards to ensure that the monetary costs and environmental impact for each standard are known before a recommended plan is prepared.

The environmental review process was briefly described in Section 1.4. It is performed jointly between the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs MEPA Unit and the Cape Cod Commission. The project has been authorized to follow special procedures which require that public reviews are performed after each phase of the Study. Copies of the Environmental Notification Form and this Final Needs Assessment Report have been sent to all appropriate regulatory agencies (see the distribution list at the beginning of the Report) for their review and comment. As part of this process, many meetings and telephone conversations have been held with the Cape Cod Commission and Massachusetts DEP to coordinate information and streamline the regulatory process.

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