

COMPREHENSIVE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

April 21, 2005
Town Hall Meeting Room
Main Street, Chatham, Massachusetts - 4:00 pm

PRESENT:

CAC: Fred Jensen, Bob DePatie, Herb Bernard, John Payson, David MacAdam, Burt Segall,
Didi Lovett, Phil Christophe, and John Randall

CAC members not present: Scott Tappan, Kevin Mikita, and Chuck Pollard

TAG: Bob Duncanson, Bill Redfield,

Others: Tim Wood, Chuck Bartlett, Jeff Gregg (Stearns & Wheeler), Paul Kelley, Judith Giorgio,
S. van der Burg, Pat Siewert

Agenda items were taken out of order to allow Jeff Gregg of Stearns & Wheeler to begin the meeting with a presentation regarding the Build Out Analysis.

Item 4: Update on Build-Out Analysis for Wastewater Management Plan

Jeff Gregg provided information about the build-out analysis including the following:

- The analysis included GIS data, parcel analyses, and current zoning restrictions.
- Vacant parcels were viewed as developable or undevelopable
- Developed parcels were categorized by use: residential, commercial, institutional, industrial
- Existing Zoning regulations were applied
- The MEP Build-out scenario did not consider redevelopment of developed parcels

Criteria used in developing the build-out scenario

Existing zoning

Vacant parcels developed to the maximum extent possible

Subdivision of residential parcels

Application of a 10% reduction factor in sub-dividable parcels (for infrastructure)

Assumption that existing non-residential uses will remain in current use

After the initial analysis was done, results were reviewed with the TAG and adjustments were made based on the following:

- Conservation lands
- Conservation easements
- Proximity to wetlands
- TAG and Town staff knowledge of specific sites
- Parcel configuration

Conservation Land Summary:

- 231 parcels; 1,353 acres (total town area = 7,568 acres) = 18% of town
- 21 parcels have conservation easements

Summary of Build-Out Analysis

- Total existing town parcels = 7,546 (6,020 existing developed residential; 573 developable vacant parcels)
- Net increase of new parcels gained through subdivision = 595
- Total new residential parcels = 1,168 for a total of 7,188 at build-out, an increase of 20%.

Maps were also provided showing locations of conservation lands and build-out.

Fred Jensen solicited questions from the committee.

David MacAdam asked about the redevelopment of commercial properties for residential uses, i.e., the motels becoming condominiums. Jeff Gregg responded that they had not addressed these conversions in the build-out analysis, including these properties in the commercial category. Bob Duncanson noted that they needed to pick a point in time for the basis of the build-out analysis and had decided not to address these conversions as they do not represent a significant percentage for build-out purposes.

The MEP will translate the build-out analysis figures and wastewater flow data to determine nitrogen-loads. Stearns & Wheler will do a similar analysis as an independent check of the data.

Bob Duncanson noted that the MEP had used current water consumption data (per property) and had not increased the average figure. With new water data available, the TAG will discuss the possible need/desire to run a new scenario.

Fred Jensen asked if there is any indication how the new build-out figures might affect nitrogen loading. Bob Duncanson explained that the MEP model is designed to produce information about nitrogen loading and it is difficult to assess information outside of the model.

Item 1: Minutes of Previous Meetings: January 20, 2005 and March 17, 2005

Minutes of the January 20, 2005 meeting were approved as presented.

Minutes of the March 17, 2005 meeting were approved with the following change to clarify the third bullet in the “Findings” section on page 4. The sentence to read: “Sewering three watersheds (Cockle Cove Creek, Buck’s Creek, and Sulfur Springs) would sewer an additional 14% of the unsewered flows under existing conditions.” (The words underlined have been added.)

Item 2: Discussion of Stearns & Wheler’s presentation on evaluations to treat more wastewater flow at Chatham’s sewage treatment plant and the implications of these evaluations.

There was discussion and clarification of information presented at the March 17, 2005 meeting. Bob Duncanson noted that the allocation used in the Future 1 and Future 2 scenarios was based on a set of parameters that did not use bedroom figures.

John Payson asked how much increase in capacity at the treatment plant would be needed to handle these added flows. Bob Duncanson explained that we can't determine this yet as we do not know if we will be reconfiguring the plant or new construction.

David MacAdam offered the following motion:

That the CAC recommend to the Board of Selectmen and the Wastewater Management Study Project Team (TAG) that the TAG proceed immediately and as expeditiously as possible to develop a comprehensive wastewater management plan for all of Chatham. This plan should be based on the assumption that the nitrogen loading into Cackle Cove Creek may not exceed the current nitrogen loading into that watershed and on any other assumptions which the TAG deems necessary and appropriate.

The motion was seconded by John Payson.

David MacAdam provided the rationale for making this motion:

- The plan is a work in progress and can be adjusted later if it is determined that the Cackle Cove Creek Watershed can handle a greater load
- The citizens of Chatham are growing impatient for a solution, so it is time to begin

Phil Christophe spoke in favor of the motion adding that this will help clarify our current position.

John Payson asked Bob Duncanson for his opinions regarding the motion.

Bob Duncanson noted that DEP has not indicated that there can be no additional increase in the load to the Cackle Cove Creek Watershed, but rather that there was no data to indicate that an increase would not be harmful. He questioned the logic of moving forward without that data and said that the TAG has asked DEP if they would approve a 17% increase in that area (per the presentation for the March 20 meeting). There has been no response from DEP to date. He added that he would be more comfortable knowing the percentage increase that DEP determines acceptable.

David MacAdam asked if it would be possible to start with the basic work and adjust as more information is obtained. Bob Duncanson responded that the Town is currently involved in many of the activities needed to create a comprehensive plan:

- Working with Falmouth re. fertilizer plan
- Working with Stearns & Wheeler on a variety of fronts
- Completing the update of four-quarter water data
- Working on the analysis of hydrodynamic cut-throughs in Stage Harbor and Cackle Cove Creek
- Seeking DEP approval to connect existing properties that are adjacent to existing gravity sewer lines.

Bob Duncanson also noted that funding for the design of treatment plant upgrade and expansion is part of the upcoming Town Warrant. The TAG will approach DEP to begin engineering and design phases once the money has been appropriated. He also noted that the likely technology to

be used would be modular in nature so that additional modules can be added as needed at a later date. The treatment plant capacity needs to be at 500,000 gpd to add the Cockle Cove Creek, Buck's Creek and Sulfur Springs watersheds to the existing sewer area. He encouraged the CAC to support the \$350,000 design article at Town Meeting.

David MacAdam stated that the TAG efforts reflect much of the work suggested in the proposed motion on a comprehensive plan. There is agreement that the priority need is to address the Cockle Cove Creek problem.

Bill Redfield suggested that passage of the motion would divert time and energy which is already being directed in the areas of interest.

Fred Jensen asked about the difficulty of changing a plan based on a zero-increase criteria. Bob Duncanson said that it would not necessarily be difficult to change, but expressed frustration with ongoing changes in data and difficulties in allocating resources to accomplish the necessary work. He stressed the importance of obtaining DEP approval before spending time and money on developing a plan. The money being requested at Town Meeting will enable us to fast track engineering design of treatment plant expansion.

David MacAdam re-read the pending motion and noted that it does not contain specific directives.

Phil Christophe stated that much has been accomplished, but it is important to prioritize and move forward, focusing on the high probability that the initial work will need to be done in the Cockle Cove Creek Watershed.

Bob DePatie expressed agreement, citing the reasonableness of this approach.

Burt Segall said that he would like to see how DEP responds to our request for connection of existing properties to the sewer system, and then consider the motion.

Bob Duncanson said that a formal request would be made in the next few weeks, but cautioned that there may not be a quick response from DEP.

Didi Lovett suggested that information summarizing activities to date be placed in the Chronicle.

Fred Jensen called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5 to 4.

Item 3: Update on TAG's efforts to accelerate progress on completing the wastewater management study.

This information was included in discussion under Item 2.

Item 5: Update on task of incorporating four quarters of water use data in the linked water model

This information was included in discussion under Item 2.

Item 6: Update on the Board of Selectmen's decision to approve the proposed changes to the Town of Chatham Sewer Use Rules and Regulations.

The Board of Selectmen, meeting as the Water and Sewer Commission, will hold a hearing on this issue (Article 21) at 4 pm, Tuesday, May 3.

Item 7: Discussion of Board of Health's latest revision to its nitrogen loading regulation to require deed restrictions for the use of a room as a non-bedroom.

The Board of Health will be discussing the comments received at the public hearing as part of their regular agenda on May 2, 2005 beginning at 7 pm.

Item 8: Other Business

Chuck Bartlett announced that the Chatham Alliance is sponsoring a meeting at the Eldredge Public Library on Saturday from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. Maggie Geist will be a featured speaker.

The Barnstable County Collaborative will make a presentation to the Board of Selectmen on Tuesday, April 26 at their regular meeting.

David MacAdam asked about the email packet which contained information about the uncertainty in the septic loading value used in the MEP analysis. Bob Duncanson explained that no new information is yet available. DEP will be meeting on Monday with the MEP Tech team to discuss this issue.

Item 9: Proposed Next Meeting Date: TBA

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Recorder: Marie Williams