

Comprehensive Wastewater Management Study Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

March 1, 2007

Present:

CAC; Chairman Fred Jensen, John Payson, Bob DePatie, John Randall, Scott Tappan, David McAdam, Bert Segall

TAG; Bob Duncanson, Bill Redfield

Not Present: Herb Bernard, Phil Christophe, Chuck Pollard, Didi Lovett

Also Present: Nate Weeks, Chuck Bartlett, Al Haven and other interested Chatham residents

Call to Order – Chairman Fred Jensen called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM in the Town Hall meeting room.

Mr. Jensen said that the main agenda item was a presentation by Nate Weeks of Stearns and Wheler. The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) members introduced themselves.

Minutes: After review, Mr. Payson moved that the minutes of December 7, 2006 be approved. Mr. Segall seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting took a break to set up for the presentation.

Stearns and Wheler Presentation - Mr. Weeks presented “Summary of Wastewater and Nitrogen Management Evaluations”. See Handout 1 attached.

Upon completion of the presentation, after a brief break, Mr. Weeks led a question and answer discussion:

1. This presentation will be made to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) on March 27, 2007.
2. Two important questions to consider: When to start design of the new WWTF? What role will Town Meeting have in plan completion, e.g. “approval”, “adoption”? Suggested that Town Meeting will “adopt” the plan, similar to South Coast harbor Plan and Pleasant Bay Plan.
3. Muddy Creek dike was originally constructed in the late 1880s or early 1890s. It was a Ch. 90 licensed structure designed to benefit the cranberry bogs.
 - a. SMAST is advocating a strong look at other means for nitrogen removal besides centralized wastewater infrastructure.
 - b. State of Massachusetts places higher value on saltwater wetlands than on fresh water wetlands.
 - c. Next step will be a wetland delineation to determine impacts to saltwater and freshwater wetlands
 - d. While removing nitrogen, we don't want to create a phosphorous problem.
 - e. Use of MEP model to determine whether trade off of nitrogen improvement is worth affecting the wetlands.

- f. Want to maintain flow through fresh water system – among other benefits, this helps control mosquitoes.
4. Year to year, month to month and seasonal variations in water usage – this is why averages are computed.
5. A lot of study is needed to answer questions – don't need to be answered today – more presentations will help with all considerations.
 - a. One question is should we go forward with design of the WWTF before final approvals (DEP, CCC) of the Comprehensive Wastewater management Plan (CWMP)?
 - b. CAC can be thinking about this issue this month. Presentation to the BOS on the 27th – can discuss with them at that time. Perhaps CAC might like to meet before that meeting to discuss further.
 - c. Fiscal considerations are critical; will be the subject of a future presentation.
6. CWMP could be complete in time for the May 2008 Town Meeting; DEP and CCC will probably not be finalized by then.
7. Concern with having streets torn up if doing sewer work year-round.
8. Some CAC members don't feel there is a need to sewer the whole Town.
 - a. Two scenarios evaluated; minimal area of town sewered to meet the TMDLs and whole town sewered. Under the minimum to meet the TMDLs approximately 2/3 of the town is sewered based on flow. Question about how many properties that translates into, to be determined.
9. How to handle new homes in an area to be sewered. Have to consider alternatives.
10. What is recommended for parts of Town not sewered in Phase 1? Keep in mind TMDLs – use adaptive management – sewerage will be done in phases, if TMDLs can be met without all phases then will not have to extend sewers further.
11. Parts of Town not sewered will be paying for their own wastewater disposal and also for WWTF through tax rate and possibly some portion of collection system if it is also put on tax rate. There are a number of ways to handle financing – CAC, BOS and Town need to decide.
12. Mr. McAdam presented information regarding the new sewer use regulations and his concerns about costs associated with the proposed changes in the regulations (handout 2). Individual homeowners will have costs associated with this. Regulations don't say how much it will cost each home to hook up – probably between \$5,000.00 and \$15,000.00
 - a. At Town Meeting only the changes to the regulations will be discussed – not the existing regulations.
 - b. Biggest cost is not pipe itself – cost is in excavation – using high quality pipe pays off in the long run – having pipes with longer life expectancy saves money by not having constructions costs as frequently.
 - c. Grinder pump will cost between \$7,000.00 and \$15,000.00. Gravity system will be about \$5,000.00 to \$7,000.00. Costs have been provided in a range – best we can do until we know individual construction costs.
 - d. Maps will show which properties need grinder pumps and which will not.
 - e. Maps are in Mr. Redfield's office where they can be reviewed.
 - f. Mr. Redfield said that Mr. McAdam should bring up his concerns at the March 27th meeting with the Water & Sewer Commissioners where the proposed changes will be discussed.

Updates – Dr. Duncanson provided updates on several issues:

- The DEP has hired Woods Hole Group in Falmouth to review the MEP process and develop protocols for MEP model use by towns/consultants. Project is to be completed by June 30, 2007.
- Cockle Cove study – available on Town web site and at library. Cockle Cove is not adversely impacted by nitrogen and as long as the WWTF affluent is at a TN level of 3 mg/L or less nitrogen should not be a future problem also depends on creek hydrodynamics remaining comparable to current conditions. This may be problematic as the mouth of Buck's Creek has been changing – it has shoaled in and may change again. A coastal processes firm has been hired to look at this. There is also an issue of increased fresh water in the saltwater portion of the creek.
- The revised MEP water quality report for the south side embayments just came in this afternoon. Dr. Duncanson will send out copies after he gets them back from the printer or members can stop by his office to pick them up.
- Lovers Lake – the first meeting has been held – the presentation is on the Town web site. The first phase of the study will be done in the late summer or early fall.

How to pay for the cost of restoring water to its clean state? John Payson stated that his analysis indicates that 40% of wastewater comes from just 10% of the properties. It was decided to postpone this discussion until the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, April 19, 2007.

Adjournment – Mr. McAdam moved to adjourn; Mr. Randall seconded and the meeting adjourned at 6:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Genie H. Griffin, Secretary pro tem