

COMPREHENSIVE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

August 24, 2006 – 4:00 pm
Town Hall Meeting Room
Main Street, Chatham, Massachusetts

PRESENT:

CAC: Fred Jensen, Chuck Pollard, Scott Tappan, Phil Christophe, John Payson and Herb Bernard

CAC members not present: David MacAdam, John Randall, Burt Segall, Bob DePatie, Didi Lovett,

TAG: Bob Duncanson

Others Present: Al Haven, Chuck Bartlett, William Schweizer

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm.

Item 1: Minutes

Minutes of the July 20, 2006 meeting were approved as submitted. Review of the minutes initiated several questions which were discussed:

- Fred Jensen asked if the CWMP will include information regarding the “fiscal fairness” issue? Bob Duncanson noted that this is a political issue and may or may not be included in the plan. This will depend on the policy makers and the influence of the public review and input process.
- Fred Jensen asked about the inclusion of “bioactive” nitrogen vs. total nitrogen in the Pleasant Bay technical report. Bob Duncanson explained that the Pleasant Bay report has differentiated between several forms of nitrogen some of which are not easily taken up by plants. {Note: the 0.16 mg/L bioactive nitrogen proposed for the upper Pleasant Bay sentinel station equates to a Total Nitrogen (TN) level of 0.723 mg/L; the 0.16 mg/L bioactive N level in Ryder’s Cove equates to a TN level of 0.523 mg/L TN; the differences are the result of different levels of Dissolved Organic Nitrogen (DON); the TN level equivalents for the 8 benthic infauna sentinel stations are presented in Table VIII-2 [page 209] of the Pleasant Bay Technical Report (May 2006)}

Item 2: Status of DEP’s project to develop TMDL’s based on MEP’s report on critical nitrogen loading thresholds for Pleasant Bay and the next steps for developing nitrogen removal targets for the North Chatham area.

Bob Duncanson provided copies of a letter from DEP announcing that the Draft Pleasant Bay TMDL report had been released yesterday. A public hearing is scheduled for Thursday, September 21 at 7:00 pm at the Nauset Regional Middle School, 70 Route 28, Orleans. A draft of the TMDL report is now available on-line on the state website (<http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/resources/esttmdls.htm>) and on the Pleasant Bay Alliance website (www.pleasantbay.org).

Fred Jensen noted that another letter was included in the committee packets which indicated that the TMDL Report entitled "*Stage Harbor, Sulphur Springs, Taylors Pond, Bassing Harbor, and Muddy Creek Total Maximum Daily Loads for Total Nitrogen*" has been approved by EPA.

Fred Jensen asked about the letter's mention of "not impaired" water bodies. Bob Duncanson explained that the state prepares a list every two years which identifies water bodies which do not meet certain standards or have not been assessed. Not all of Chatham's waterbodies are on the list for nutrient impairment. {the list from the *Massachusetts Year 2004 Integrated List of Waters* is attached}.

Bob Duncanson indicated that now that the Pleasant Bay Report has been released, we will be able to develop appropriate wastewater treatment plans for the northern area of the town. Ideally this would be done in conjunction with other towns adjoining Pleasant Bay, however, all of those towns are at different stages in their wastewater-treatment planning, so we will need to proceed with our plans and await input from Harwich, Brewster and Orleans. He noted that implementation of the CWMP will likely begin on the south side of Chatham, so there will be time for our neighboring towns to develop similar plans and to coordinate efforts. We are participating in ongoing discussions with representatives of the Pleasant Bay Alliance Watershed Workgroup.

Item 3: Comments on the Town of Falmouth's Wastewater Facilities Plan of 2001 as an appropriate model for Chatham's CWMP.

Fred Jensen invited committee members to offer their reactions regarding the Falmouth Wastewater Facilities Plan which had been provided to members for review.

Phil Christophe commented that the plan appeared to be an extensive review of alternatives and plans and also contained some contrary opinions. He expressed his belief that the recommendations provided were too general and that Chatham should seek to provide more specific information in its CWMP. He also noted that there were extreme variations in the possible cost figures included in the report.

Chuck Pollard noted that the plan was very easy to understand and avoided over-use of statistics and technical information. He added that the Falmouth planning process had apparently proceeded quite quickly.

Bob Duncanson reminded the committee that the Falmouth plan focuses only on small portions of that town while we are attempting to develop a plan for the entire town. He stated that there is now considerable debate in Falmouth regarding the wisdom of a piecemeal approach as opposed to a more comprehensive town-wide approach.

There was brief discussion of the merits and problems of attempting to include cost figures and specific property information in the CWMP. Bob Duncanson noted that the political/policy discussion that may occur could cause delay in the development of the final plan if we attempt to include that information as part of the plan. He suggested that it may be more effective to complete the plan and seek plan approval at Town Meeting without including cost-sharing alternatives and to debate those options separately.

Chuck Pollard expressed agreement with this idea and suggested that the CAC should be able to offer guidance and suggestions to the Board of Selectmen who are the ultimate decision makers regarding the sharing of costs for implementation of the CWMP.

Bill Schweizer stated that it is important to complete the plan and agreed that some of the “fiscal fairness” debates (i.e., betterment percentages) could delay completion of the plan. He suggested that the plan and its financial ramifications could be considered in two separate articles at Town Meeting.

Fred Jensen stated that the citizens seem to be aware of what is needed and agreed that decisions regarding the cost/”fiscal fairness” issues are likely to be more difficult than the plan itself.

There was a question regarding the possible creation of a wastewater management district. Bob Duncanson indicated that we already have a Water & Sewer Department which may be able to handle the administrative needs related to wastewater management; a final decision will depend on the recommendations of the CWMP. Bill Schweizer added that much of the work could be contracted to outside agencies.

Fred Jensen stated that the Falmouth plan will be discussed further at a future meeting when the absent CAC members are present to give them an opportunity to ask questions and provide input based on their reading of the plan.

Item 4: Updates on work-in-progress

a. Cockle cove Creek salt marsh study:

Bob Duncanson reported that the report to DEP is still be revised. Specific timelines for completion are not available. DEP had indicated that the initial report did not contain enough detail so requested clarification and increased specificity. There are many “players” involved in this process including scientists, regulators and lawyers, thus complicating the process of finalizing the report.

b. Re-runs of MEP’s water quality model for Chatham

Bob Duncanson reported that Brian Howes is moving toward completion of the re-runs and expects to have revised information for us in a few weeks. In response to a question from John Payson about the difference in the data from the 2003 and 2006 reports, Bob Duncanson indicated that the new modeling is based on updated data which includes the four quarter water data; correction of a previous unit-of-measurement error, two additional years of water quality monitoring data and a revised buildout scenario.

Bob Duncanson also stated that an additional scenario had been requested to address the Cockle Cove Creek issue, i.e., the impact on Bucks’ Creek and Sulphur Springs area of total sewerage of the town, treatment to a level of 3 mg/L TN and recharge at the existing site.

c. RFP for analysis of nutrient sources in Lovers Lake and Stillwater Pond

This RFP has been issued and proposals are due tomorrow (Friday, August 25) at 3 pm. Final decision regarding a consultant to do this work will depend upon the number of proposals received and the speed with which they can be reviewed.

d. Pleasant Bay TMDL public hearing

Scheduled for Thursday, September 21 at 7 pm at the Nauset Middle School in Orleans.

Item 5: TAG's schedule for completing wastewater and nitrogen management recommendations for Chatham's remaining areas and for completing a draft of the CWMP for Chatham.

The analysis by Stearns & Wheeler presented to the CAC at the last meeting will be presented to the Board of Selectmen on Tuesday, August 29 at 4 pm.

It is expected that information about the northern part of town will be presented to the CAC in October and to the Board of Selectmen in November.

Bob Duncanson indicated that once all the parts of the plan are in place, Stearns & Wheeler will need 3 to 4 months to compile the information and develop a draft CWMP. We are still awaiting the final report on the model re-runs and have not yet received the final information about the Cackle Cove Creek salt marsh. With this information still outstanding, Fred Jensen indicated it appears that it may be difficult to finalize the plan in time for the May, 2007 Town Meeting.

Item 6: Comments on the annual meeting of the Chatham Summer Residents Association on August 1, 2006.

It was reported that 40 to 50 non-voting taxpayers were in attendance at the meeting and that they voted unanimously to recommend sewerage for the entire town.

John Payson questioned the figure of 3.4 million gallon (peak hour design flow, Phase 1) capacity for the proposed treatment plant. Bob Duncanson explained that the capacity calculations are based on hourly, daily and monthly "peaking" factors. The engineers use these figures to ensure that all lines are of adequate size to handle peak flows.

John Payson asked about the expenditure of funds authorized at the last Town Meeting for the design of an expanded treatment facility. Bob Duncanson indicated that the funds allocated in May 2006 have not been expended. The preliminary design work approved in May 2005 is ongoing.

Item 7: Other Business

Fred Jensen asked about the role of the Executive Director of the Cape Cod Wastewater Collaborative. Bob Duncanson explained that the "coordinating" function involves facilitating activities in between towns but does not carry any planning authority.

Item 8: Next Meeting Date

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, September 14 at 4 pm. If re-run data and/or Cackle Cove Creek salt marsh study results have not been received at that time, the meeting will likely be postponed until October.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 pm.

Marie Williams
Recorder