

Village Wastewater Committee Meeting Minutes

Wolcott Town Office and Zoom

Tuesday, December 5, 2023

5:00PM

In Person: Jim Ryan, Linda Martin, Allen Carpenter, Bruce Wheeler, Dominic LaPorte, Kurt Klein, Peter Lazorchak, Seth Jensen, Tori Hellwig

On Zoom: Tricia Follert, Emily Hackett, Lynnette Claudon, Jim Robert

1. Welcome & Introductions; Public Comment (5:06)

No changes to the agenda. Changes were made to the spelling of names on the attendance list. Tricia motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Bruce seconded. All in favor.

2. Funding Update

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Priority Project List application is due January 16. Applications are submitted to help the State keep a list of ongoing projects and prioritize funding awards. Towns need to keep their name on the list to keep funding received under the CWSRF, and to make additional funding requests. LCPC can work with Stone Environmental and Linda to put together the application for Wolcott.

The ARPA Agreement is signed and executed. Final conversations are under way with the VT Bond Bank. Stone is revisiting the Environmental Services Agreement a bit to be more compatible with all funding sources. Then move forward with additional clarity in design work. No local funds will need to be expended before a town vote.

3. Update - CRRP Grant Application

Linda and LCPC attended a meeting with ACCD. Support letters needed to be revised to reflect additional job creation. A wastewater system is needed before jobs can be created. There will be a presentation on 12/14 to the CRRP Board. Linda, Seth, and Tori met to prepare a presentation. Jim will also Zoom into the meeting. Folks are gathering pictures to show Wolcott, the proximity to the river, and the former Buck's furniture complex. LCPC will connect with Bruce and Bradley to get drone footage and images.

4. Update - School Board meeting & draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Bruce, Jim, J.B. from Birchline Planning, Peter from Stone Environmental, and LCPC attended the School Board meeting with a technical presentation to answer the School Board's questions and concerns. The presentation shared with the School Board is now up on the town website wastewater committee page. The Board was interested to hear more about how the project will minimize construction impacts, odors, and likelihood of a system failure. The school O&M operator will be vetting safety concerns of the system for students and faculty.

LCPC's legal team reviewed the latest draft of the MOU with the school and sent it back to the School Board chair to read and review in advance of the 12/20 vote. The updates will reflect coordination of design, security/screening of the operator that's hired, and well monitoring. Some of the School Board's initial concerns stem from anecdotes about Lamoille Union. That system predates the current Indirect Discharge Rules, and uses different technology which tends to be more odorous. The School Board expressed legitimate concerns and prompted good discussion about the project. If the School Board votes no, there will be no vote, the project will lose out on federal funding, and all of the progress made to date could be lost.

5. Public Outreach Plan & Timeline

There was a Zoom meeting with some folks last week to begin reviewing goals for outreach if the 12/20 School Board vote passes. A proposed timeline for outreach activities was presented by LCPC. There will be a focus on why the project is needed early in the year. A subcommittee was formed to focus on outreach, led by Bruce and Tricia.

The outreach team will need to confirm with the Town Clerk about availability for a town vote on June 11, 2024. The Selectboard will need to warn 30-40 days beforehand. DEC septic social could occur May 2024. Other milestones that need to happen between January and May:

- Cost refinement (ongoing)
- Survey (not likely before early April)
- Environmental Review (spring)
- Update from engineers anticipated late march/early April

6. Act 250

Someone from the State reached out about an Act 250 jurisdictional opinion. This needs to be kept on the radar but is premature at this point. Best to wait until after the School Board vote on 12/20 to move forward with environmental review. Late summer is the goal. Hearings may add time to this but not expected to be longer than other permitting processes.

7. Ordinance Development

The committee will consider whether to base hook ups by the 100 or 500-year floodplain as a policy decision. The three criteria currently being considered are whether a property is in the 100-year floodplain, river corridor, and fully compliant for an on-site system. Questions arose about how to demonstrate full compliance - permit on hand? Lot characteristics? "Opt out" connections were discussed. The cost to connect could be \$15,000 per property, which could be covered if they choose to connect at the time of construction. It was suggested to keep "connection for public health reasons" in the opt out section of the future ordinance.

The committee then reviewed the map presented in the Preliminary Engineering Report/School Board presentation. The service area map will be revisited in the January meeting. The Selectboard will ultimately need to review the ordinance, have a public hearing, town vote, and a 45-day petition period after a town vote.

Meeting Adjourned (7:02)

Next meeting date: January 2, 2024 at 5:00PM