Wolcott Village Wastewater Committee Meeting

Wolcott Town Office and Zoom

August 20, 2024

In Person: Linda Martin, Allen Carpenter, Bruce Wheeler, Jim Ryan, Seth Jensen, Victoria Hellwig, Amy Macrellis, Leeland Roberts

On Zoom: Bradley Horstman, Peter Lazorchak, Emily Hackett, Achouak Arfaoui, Mike Thomas, Keith Cochran, Monica Cross

1. **Introduction; Review and Approve last Committee meeting minutes**
   Reviewed previous July meeting summary. Linda motioned to approve, Bruce second. Jim abstained. Minutes approved.

2. **Update from Stone Environmental**
   Topographic surveying was completed by the subcontractor on the school property down through the Town Forest. Next will be the right-of-way along School Street. Stone engineers are also working with landowners who have responded to their letters. They are reviewing questionnaires and surveying basements with those landowners. The hydrogeologist surveyed the school water system and is monitoring drawdown at the school well.

   The next step is for the Stone engineers to connect with the surveyor and review what properties have responded to letters and authorized entry. They will visit properties based on responses. The goal is to wrap up surveying by snowfall and focus on aspects of design over the winter. The engineers will also continue to coordinate with VTrans on the School Street Bridge replacement. Stone also summarized the updates from the results of the test pits dug earlier this summer. They were consistent with original borings from last year. Stone will circle back with the principal of the school to make sure the site conditions are still meeting expectations.

   A question was asked about the timeline to construction. The timeline was updated since the PER was completed in 2023. Construction is expected to start in 2025 and be completed by end of 2026. A question was also asked about the funding stack for the project. The most up to date cost estimate from the engineers was completed in the spring of 2024 and includes a 30% construction

contingency. That estimated cost with a 30% construction contingency is $4,718,000 (which was shared at the first bond vote hearing back in June). The total funding amount secured for the project exceeds that amount. Stone also believes the estimate will be high for the region, and Emily from DEC added that the state CWSRF program has seen cost increases for these types of projects which is why they asked Stone to include a 30% contingency. This project cost is unheard of in Vermont but carrying a 30% contingency will help account for unexpected cost increases.

3. **Informational Session presentation development**
   The Committee reviewed the revised presentation from the June bond vote hearing for the September revote. The Informational Session for the revote will be September 4 during the regular Selectboard meeting, starting at 6pm. The Committee would like to clarify the timeline of the votes that have already taken place and passed, starting with the School Board vote in December, then School floor vote and Town Bond Vote on June 11. It was clarified that there is no debt associated with the design phase so no approval is needed for design work. The Committee would also like to clarify some of the details on other slides. Slides will be added to elaborate on flood resiliency. LCPC will invite the consultant to participate in the upcoming informational session that helped create the Lamoille Flood Model. It will help explain how this project helps improve flood resilience in the Village.

   Emily from DEC also answered why this project is a high priority for the State. They are interested in making communities more flood resilient while also supporting local economies and housing. The state is making strong efforts to fund flood resiliency measures for new infrastructure. This project helps do all those things. At some point in the future the state might step in and say "you need to do something about septic." A question was asked about whether the state asks local residents their views about the project. Although the project has been identified as a high priority by the state for supporting flood resilience and water quality, local community engagement is up to the Town. The Wastewater Committee has reached out to the community through several newspaper articles, a Roundtable event, regular Front Porch Forum posts, and invited folks to open and public committee meetings in order to connect with folks about the project.

Stone also elaborated on all of the elements that make this a flood resilient system. Individual tanks and risers will be water-tight, ballasted, and have emergency storage built in. The disposal field will be 60' above the 500-year floodplain. Backflow preventers will be built into the system as well. All of this will be much safer than the current septic situation in the Village.

The Committee continued to review and make suggested edits to the presentation. Stone and LCPC took notes on suggested edits throughout the meeting. The presentation will be revised in advance of September 4.

Next meeting: Tuesday September 17 at 5pm