

Attending: Melissa Manka; Gordon Gebauer; Seth Jensen; Pat Haller; Eric Ford; Wendy Doane;
Consultant team Amy Macrellis, JB Hinds

Gordon Gebauer called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

1. No citizen participation, changes to agenda, or other business.
2. Approval of Minutes of 6/7/2022, 7/7/2022, 9/20/2022, 10/18/2022

Eric moved and Pat seconded approval of all of the minutes without change. Motion carried

3. Project Status and Timeline

The public comment period for the FONSI ended on November 14th. The team is expecting Vermont DEC to issue the FONSI, approve the PER, and issue the Facilities Plan within the next two weeks.

Next is Vermont DEC's completion of review of the Engineering Services Agreement. It is hoped this can be returned to the select board and approved by the end of December 2022. VT DEC has assured that all necessary approvals will be done by the end of this fiscal year. Contracts for consultants and going through the bond bank process to get the step II loan in place will then follow in early 2023.

The project schedule will need to be shifted. Amy noted the new Indirect Discharge Rules (IDR) are on to the full board for approval, which is good for this project because the new rule will include more flexibility in design criteria for drip dispersal (mostly how much redundancy is required). This would have good implications for cost and design.

The group discussed the possible timelines for a bond vote. The opinion of probable cost is essential; so is active engagement by the Select Board, who will have to 'own' the decision on connections and how to structure the cost language in the bond vote. At this point, an early fall bond vote is likely. There are no state, town, or federal votes next November, so this will be a special election regardless.

Gordon drafted a memo to the select board to re-engage them, starting with the basics of the problem and what a wastewater system will provide. The second memo (drafted) outlines what the proposed system design is and how it works. A third memo will detail the funding picture. The Planning Commission approved the first memo last week – the memo can go to the Select Board now. The general idea is a memo per month going to Select Board through the winter. JB suggested accelerating the schedule and asking for time on the agenda so that the ESA is not a new topic when it is presented to them for approval in early 2023. Melissa will send the 1st memo today.

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The 2nd one will be send-able after review by this group. That will then go to the PC for approval at its Monday 11/21 meeting. Group please review the 2nd memo today, especially Amy on drip irrigation. The objective is for the 2nd memo to get to the PC for its 11/28 meeting and then on to the Select Board.

The 3rd memo needs to be ready for December 5th to go to the Select Board for its December 8th meeting. This will weave in all information on the ESA and its costs.

Seth reminded the team that the select board HAS seen the ESA, but much has changed with the drip irrigation (and time); it is suggested that the consultant team attend the select board meeting in December to review the 3rd memo and offer to answer questions on the ESA in advance of a January-February approval date. JB is not available for 12/8; Amy and Peter are more important.

JB suggested that a 4th memo is likely to concern the ordinance and other decisions the select board will need to make.

4. FAQs.

Seth and Wendy want to ensure that there is communication to residents over the winter. Wendy is getting questions that include (1) are systems really non-compliant and (2) why haven't other sites been evaluated. Wendy emphasized communicating basics to people who are likely to support the effort but simply need clarifications.

The team has made many comments, edits, and editions. The PC looked at these last week and has approved the FAQs, pending comments from the outreach team and consultants.

One question is "at whose direction is this project undertaken?" Pat recommended that rather than the select board's direction, the FAQ language point to the Town Plan which has unequivocally called for this and which has been reapproved consistently with the Town Plan's support language within it. Pat added language on this.

Another is language on "failing;" JB noted that it's important not to imply that systems are or could be failing, but that the future condition if a system does not work properly is very difficult for anyone with an onsite system.

Wendy emphasized and all agreed that a basic 8 ½ x 11 with her added bullets is going to be needed. JB has started some infographics that will be put in the google drive. Simplicity is going to need to be emphasized moving forward. Amy noted a map will be needed (once a budget for outreach is approved). Wendy suggested an "Essential Fact Sheet." (December agenda item).

Key elements of the revised FAQs were reviewed. The estimated cost to the voters (i.e., amount that must be bonded) will be revised to \$600,000 to \$900,000. Amy needs to have the Forest

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Bird Habitat Assessment study of the Maple Shade Town Forest accessible. Amy and JB's comments will be incorporated. Gordon and Melissa will finalize the FAQs from here. **The objective is to post the FAQs before Thanksgiving.

5. Newsletter Article

The group reviewed a draft newsletter article that had been set up for December issuance. Eric will work on the draft with support from JB and Amy. A draft will be readied for the PC meeting on November 21st.

Seth suggested that for reinforcement the important points are:

- Independent reviewers at the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources have found that there are no significant negative environmental impacts and many positive impacts.
- The project provides essential protection for groundwater
- 1/3 of the flow serves the Town's civic buildings

The consistent negatives tend to state that unbridled development will occur; only 5 people in the Town center will benefit; and there will be negative environmental impacts from blasting.

Eric asked whether the PC's budget will include a budget for outreach. Some needs might include mailing, printing, photography, or video services. \$5,000 is suggested as an outreach budget.

6. Next meeting

This committee will meet on Tuesday, December 12th at 10:00 AM. The agenda will include a report on the December 8th select board meeting, the newsletter for January, the project timeline, and upcoming outreach.

Respectfully submitted,

Juli Beth Hinds