

Greensboro Wastewater Advisory Committee

4/8/25 Meeting Minutes 7-8:15pm

Attendees:

WWAC: Stew Arnold, Blake Auchincloss, Jefferson Tolman, Dan Predpall, Davis Barnett (unavailable: Mary Parker)

From the public: Bill Hardy

Public Comment: None

Filling the 7-member committee:

Mike Metcalf resigned

John Mackin is considered to fill Mike Metcalf's seat. John will be busy through June-July with the build of the Habitat for Humanity house in the Bend. It would be good to have John on the committee because of his knowledge of the town's water system.

Stew will be meeting with Eric Hanson and will ask Eric if there were other people who expressed interest in the committee – Eric was in charge of placing people on the committee.

Discussion/Approval of Charter:

- Stew reviewed the charter. All agreed that Stew and Davis will fill in the blanks and send it to the Selectboard for approval and signoff.

Next Steps Discussion:

- The original wastewater working group's approach was to find sites and find funding.
- Dan spoke with Lynnette Claudon of ANR and H/T has \$100k available. The state would need to approve the spending by confirming any proposed scope of work is in line with original purpose. We would write a scope of work and submit it to the state for approval, and then provide this to H/T and ask them to draft a plan. Alternatively, we could start all over, write an RFP to solicit new engineers and then pursue a grant to get funding. Dan suggests using H/T, even though they were not successful – note that H/T's mission was to find a 40,000 gallon/day site – the church in the Bend was considered and that process was delayed and consumed the time available for using the ARPA funds, which have a schedule to use or lose funding – the church location was the only 40,000 g/d site found.

- The only other possible 40,000 g/d site in town is north of the well protection area in the Bend, which is too far away and piping cost would make it unfeasible, so we are better off pursuing multiple 6,000 g/d sites to serve the upper village.

Possible Sites:

- Golf course: Soils did not meet original criteria, however, they are not the worst. In the H/T report the hydrologist included the golf course and some other sites as possibilities. The original project did not have time to explore further. If the golf course was considered, the project would interfere with the golfers for a year. Blake is a member of the country club, and knows Rick Ely, who runs the club. Rick knows the golf course is a potential site and has said that he is willing to entertain the idea, however the proposal must be well thought out and must be beneficial to the town and beneficial to the country club. Jefferson thinks the golf course is either ledge or swamp, and not suitable for waste water.
- Perron property: Currently, absolutely no interest from the Perrons. The problem is that the selectboard did a poor job connecting with the Perrons.
- David Allen property for sale near the HCA
- Sites in the GB land trust - H/T avoided trust sites. Blake thinks there is room to explore the trust sites. The land behind Willey's store. The trusts have prohibitive language, however there is always room for a conversation.
 - Dan spoke with Clive Gray, who is speaking with people involved with the trusts. Dan is awaiting a response from Clive about whether the land trusts would be a possibility
 - Lise Armstrong reviews trust properties to confirm they are in compliance. Lise may have an understanding that will help us learn what is possible. Jasper Hill had pursued a trade-off with Circus Smirkus to place cows on the Breezy Ave property 9 years ago – this was agreed to and then it was not followed up on when JH acquired the Andersonville farm.
- Warren Hill, halfway down the Bend Road: A membrane or ultra filtration system that could easily be discharged into the stream/river.
- Town land near the ball field: Greensboro owns a small property near the ball field that may be considered as a place for a small system, about 3 acres.
- Rick Walsh's property on the Bend Road: Dan commented this land is very wet. Jefferson mentioned if you are building up a system, you just bring in gravel and build on it.
- Town garage land: Dan said the proposed project to relocate the town garage was halted when it was determined the cost of over \$1M.

- Stew: Where can't we site: Concern whether it is in the Caspian watershed. Wants to reserve the Caspian watershed area to only those properties in the watershed, and not bring in septic from areas outside of the Caspian watershed. Golf course and lots on Breezy are not in the Caspian watershed.
 - Blake feels there is a sentiment in the Bend that they are not interested in placing a wastewater system in the Bend, and that our priority should be a system for the Village. Blake created a document to help us think about: the lake, village and the Bend. Concern that systems around the lake may be failing and putting output into the lake. Offer to provide free testing, to allow the town to identify locations and then the town builds small systems in areas where the houses with failing systems could connect to. Another idea: septic testing when property sells – as done in other states. Blake also providing an EPA doc that explains the different technologies available.
- Blake said the conversation is never over, we need to figure out what compromises or benefits we could offer: tax rebates/incentives We need to bring a proposal that has benefits to these land owners, rather than just ask for access/land.
 - Dan commented that all of those locations do not contain the types of soils that work well with wastewater – Jefferson is speaking of different types of systems than what H/T planned to use.
 - Dan said that the State has restrictions for ground dispersion systems. Jefferson clarified the difference between ground discharge and discharge to water. Dan said that to make a 'discharge to water' system feasible, you would want to create a large capacity system to make it worth the costs for permitting. Dan's further concern is that water on the Bend road ends up in Lake Champlain and Champlain has tight restrictions. Jefferson mentioned there are many wastewater systems along the Lamoille River as well as on Lake Champlain, and it's all about how much we would be able to spend on a system to meet the Lake Champlain regulations. Cost is a big issue because the town will need to fund the project.
 - Jefferson: If we are tied to small septic systems, then we should find small lots. If we are considering a waste water facility, we will need to be able to discharge into receiving water.
 - Dan mentioned there are many challenges seen in the town of Montgomery in their wastewater pursuit. Dan says it is key to find a site in Greensboro that people are willing to part with.
 - Jefferson explained the small systems:

- Vermont and New Hampshire have shied away from the small/membrane systems. Jefferson only knows of one system in Vermont, located in Cabot built in 2002, and his company operates it. These systems are being operated in the Hudson Valley and in Massachusetts. Engineers do not like membrane systems because they are pre-engineered plug and play – delivered on a skid, so the engineers only get to do site work, so this limits the profit the engineers can make, and makes it hard to find engineers to install these systems.
 - A system that can handle 40,000 g/d is about the size of a small ranch house. Underground tanks. Odor is an issue – chemical/bio air scrubbers are used to collect odor. Jefferson thinks it would not be hard to get permits from the state of Vermont, however his company has not seen one since the Cabot system.
 - Small systems require 3-phase power – and there probably is 3-phase power available in town
 - Operational costs: electricity, labor, on-going maintenance
- Hoyle Tanner only pursued the drip dispersal system approach for the 40,000 g/d system because the technology was approved by the state 5-6 years ago.
 - Now, we need to be open to newer technologies, while we need to confirm the state will approve the newer technology systems.
 - Wolcott – we should contact them to understand 1) how they approached it, 2) how they funded it. (they were almost totally funded by ARPA) So now it is up to towns to finance these systems.) NRBC may be able to provide \$1MM in a grant, maybe other small grants.
 - Stew: Cheney Rd system for 7 houses, 3,300 g/d to fit in a tennis court-size area with drip dispersal – Stew will send us a write up on how he achieved this, from both the consensus with the neighbors as well as the engineers and the build process.
 - Dan: The proposed system at the church in the Bend was to handle 40,000 g/d, they only needed 2 acres.
 - Stew asked about building a system in the woods, with pathways for the dispersal. Asked about finding multiple smaller sites to reach the 40,000 capacity.
 - Dan: 5 systems would be more expensive and too costly for the town. Dan's approach is to not key on a 40,000 g/d system, and see what capacity we can create with multiple smaller systems. A 5,000 g/d system would cover 20 houses. 3-4 systems needed to cover the village.

- Greensboro Timeframe/Urgency for a WW solution: From the recent SB meeting - townspeople see this as an urgent need.

Plan:

- We need a comparative analysis report of the various technologies available and understand the site size requirements for the capacities provided
- Funding – how do we seek state/federal funding sources.
- We will all send Dan ideas for what we want in a scope of work. Dan will forward this list to Hoyle Tanner and ask them to create a scope of work.
- We will then use this scope of work to get approval from the state that we could spend the \$100K available for this work. Then we would get approval from the selectboard. Note: There is no time limit on the availability of the remaining \$100K.

Action Items:

- 1) Scope – each of us to send Dan ideas for what should be in a scope of work, and Dan will send those ideas to John Reilly at H/T, for H/T to create a scope of work. At this point we are just looking for a scope of work which we would then present to the selectboard. (Blake, Jefferson, Stew, Davis, Mary) Due 4/15/25
 - a. We expect this will cover:
 - Technology
 - Location/Site work
 - 2) Stew will speak with Eric Hanson to see if there were other people who offered to be on the WWAC
 - 3) Stew will send the WWAC a brief write up on the Cheney Road system
 - 4) Stew and Davis will fill in the blanks on the charter and provide to the selectboard for approval/signoff
 - 5) Dan to follow up with Clive Gray about use of land trust land for potential sites
 - 6) Davis will follow up with Lise Armstrong about the use of land trust land for potential sites
 - 7) Davis will contact a friend in Wolcott to find someone we may speak with regarding their approved WW system
- Next Meeting: Thursday May 15th 7pm. Will use the same zoom. Maybe in June we meet in-person.

Other:

- Blake provided two documents to the committee –

- Ideas on how to pursue a WW system in Greensboro
 - EPA document explaining the technology of WW systems
- Meeting adjourned.