

West Cornwall Water/Septic Study Group

November 7, 2017 at 5PM at  
Ian Ingersoll's in West Cornwall

Members Present: Richard Griggs (RG), Ian Ingersoll (II), Libby Mitchell (LM), Priscilla Pavel (PP), Todd Piker (TP) and Joanne Wojtusiak (JW). Also present Ex Officio Members: Gordon Ridgway (GR) and Richard Bramley (RB). Also attending: Stephen McDonnell and John Wengell from WMC Consulting Engineers . Public and press were also present.

TP called the meeting to order promptly at 5PM.

Motion made by PP and seconded by DD to accept the October minutes as submitted; passed unanimously.

TP read list of 4 pieces of correspondence that had been received including a letter dated 10/12/17 from Judy Herkimer which he read aloud. A copy of all correspondence is attached to these minutes.

All attendees were welcomed and were invited to introduce themselves if they so chose.

TP asked Jocelyn Ayers from the Northwest Hills Council of Governments to introduce the "visioning" exercise that had been undertaken by the 111 Group to show what West Cornwall might look like if it were completely built out. She turned the presentation over to Janet Carlson Sanders who showed a series of colored illustrations that showed present limitations and potential uses of the Railroad Square area; Sanders said she also had material showing build-outs for other parts of the community . She offered to have larger scale illustrations prepared for Friday's meeting. Sanders noted that this work was done with Goman & York and that even though her illustrations showed WC as "culinary destination" that any theme could be chosen and the marketing plan built around that theme. DD asked whether the proposal from WMC was sized to accommodate such an extensive build-out and was assured by Steve McDonnell that it was. It was noted that this work by the 111 Group had been paid for out of the grant that the WC Septic Study Group had been operating under.

GR suggested that hard copies of the final WMC report be available for distribution at the town-wide Information Meeting on Friday night. It was agreed that 25 copies of the whole report will be available as well as a larger number of copies of the Executive Summary.

There was a far-reaching discussion of the scope of the proposed project, the economic vitality and viability of WC and the health of the Housatonic River. Afterwards it was decided that the initial motion to put this report before the BOS should be limited in scope:

MOTION made by II and seconded by LM that The West Cornwall Septic Study Group present the WMC prepared proposal titled West Cornwall Wastewater Management Study to the Board of Selectmen. Passed unanimously.

MOTION made by LM and seconded by PP that the Study Group endorses, at a minimum, the implementation of a system in the Base Service Area outlined on Sheet 2-7 in the proposal. Passed unanimously.

II said that The Salisbury School has invited all Study Group members to visit their installation which is basically what is proposed for WC. Those who want to go will make arrangements with Ian. Steve McDonnell noted that the Salisbury School installation is quite noisy and that sound deadening improvements have been made since its installation there.

TP outlined the format for Friday's meeting: he will introduce, hand over to Gordon and WMC will give a 15 minute presentation; TP reiterated his feeling that the "visioning" segment is a critical part of the Friday meeting. He reminded everyone that there will be no vote at Friday's meeting .

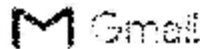
There was a discussion of whether or not the Study Group had completed its work and should disband. After a review of the original charge we had been given by the BOS, it was finally agreed that our existing charge is sufficient to continue into 2018.

TP asked for any audience input and Judy Herkimer suggested that a key missing part of the Friday program was the absence of a speaker from a regulatory entity such as DEEP and/or Torrington Area Health. TP said he will extend an invitation to both groups.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanne Wojtusiak



Todd Piker &lt;tpiker@gmail.com&gt;

---

**Waste Water West Cornwall Progress**

---

Streut, Ann <Ann.Streut@ct.gov>  
To: Todd Piker <tpiker@gmail.com>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 2:40 PM

Good to hear from you Todd!

I've browsed through the report and have only 2 comments which I'll add below. As for the Plan of C&D, if you are thinking of having sewerred areas, you need to make sure that the Plan of C&D supports that. All state money requires an environmental review and one of the things we look at is if the proposal is consistent with the Plan (both state and city/town).

So if the area to be sewerred is in a conservation area, you may get pushback from the state, even if you are removing pollution. So long term that may require local sewer ordinances and a change in the C&D plan. But it is too early to worry about the minutiae as Plans of C&D are changed all the time. Just give it a 200-foot look to make sure you aren't boxing yourself into a corner with the Plan of C&D.

So, comments on the report:

On page 7, WWC writes: "Permeability tests are required by DEEP for design of a subsurface disposal system, which

involve deep test pits and testing samples at different strata of the underlying soil. When a treatment facility site is determined, soil permeability testing will be conducted and any subsurface disposal system will be designed in accordance with DEFP requirements."

That is not entirely true. It depends on the size and type of the system. See this page for more information: [http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2721&q=325708&deepNav\\_GID=1654%20](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2721&q=325708&deepNav_GID=1654%20) When talking about individual septic systems, that is really up to local health. Further on they discuss DEEP requirements correctly, so it is not a big deal but local health may take issue.

On Pg. 22 WWC writes: "WWC recommends a preliminary CWF Application for this project in order to gain acceptance to the priority list as soon as possible." We do not accept preliminary CWF applications to get on the priority list. We have a call for projects which just happened. Hopefully you sent in a Call for Project Memo. If not, once there is a state budget, there will be a priority list hearing and you can submit your memo there. The applications and instructions are available here: [http://www.ct.gov/doc/cwp/view.asp?a=2719&q=325576&deepNav\\_GID=1654](http://www.ct.gov/doc/cwp/view.asp?a=2719&q=325576&deepNav_GID=1654)<http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2719&>



Todd Piker &lt;tpiker@gmail.com&gt;

---

**(no subject)**

---

J Herkimer <jherkimer@snet.net>  
Reply-To: J Herkimer <jherkimer@snet.net>  
To: Todd Piker <tpiker@gmail.com>

Thu, Oct 12, 2017 at 3:30 PM

<<The Study Group is seeking input and questions from the entire Cornwall community and urges you to read the draft report and come to their next scheduled meeting on Tuesday, October 10th at 5pm at Town Hall>> ...from the (unofficial) Cornwall website

Hello Todd,

Kim and I attended the 10/10 meeting. I read the original, and then the subsequently revised draft and had a some questions and comments. The notice on the Cornwall website seemed to indicate your committee and the engineering firm's purpose for calling the meeting was for public interaction and input.

It was most confusing when you said there would be limited public comment, rather devoting most of the time to the committee members to pose questions. There was no opportunity or offer to open a public comment period during that chaotic and unproductive meeting.

I will contact the engineers myself and pose my questions. We are trying our utmost to support this project in some form, but we need more information currently not in the report in order for us to make an informed decision. Hopefully, the PE's will assist us.

I thought you might want to know that it is highly irregular to ask the names of attendees at a public governmental meeting. From the CT FOIA, Section 1-225 <http://www.ct.gov/foi/cwp/view.asp?a=4163&Q=507660>;

***(e) No member of the public shall be required, as a condition to attendance at a meeting of any such body, to register the member's name, or furnish other information, or complete a questionnaire or otherwise fulfill any condition precedent to the member's attendance.***

Thank you.  
Judy Herkimer  
860 672 6867



Todd Piker &lt;tpiker@gmail.com&gt;

---

**Waste Water West Cornwall Progress**

---

Straut, Ann &lt;Ann.Straut@ct.gov&gt;

Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 3:17 PM

To: Todd Piker &lt;tpiker@gmail.com&gt;

Cc: "smcdonnell@wmcengineers.com" &lt;smcdonnell@wmcengineers.com&gt;, Gordon Ridgway &lt;wvselectmen@optonline.net&gt;

Todd,

You asked a number of questions throughout the e-mail. I have put them in red and tried to group them.

the potential value of community septic beyond the very important issues you have addressed

With small lot sizes, it allows for a second well, home expansion, paved areas, and saves on pumping and repair of existing septic systems. With a "shared" advanced treatment system or a WW treatment facility, the cost for use and repair is shared, location may be shared (such as the system being on the corner of 4 housing lots), a professional operator is overseeing the running of system catching needed repairs sooner and preventing soil s, down time, and cost for repairs, and it runs without you having to worry about it overflowing in your yard. I could probably think of more answers, but I wanted to at least get back to you today with something.

"Was Ann unaware that this was a PFA or was she speaking to perhaps an override by the Town should an area of 'conservation' be so designated locally?" and "Village Priority Funding Areas: Growth-related projects may proceed without an exception, if the sponsoring agency documents how it will help sustain village character"

I was not aware of the C&D designation either at the state or town level. It would be part of a review if any state funds are involved (such as CWF monies). I would honestly have to look up what the Village Priority Funding Area - Growth related project meant. It does not sound like it is in the section DEEP usually looks at for projects as CWF money is not usually related to "growth" projects. What we're making sure is that there is no conservation areas and that the area's question has the same designation on both maps. I think your consultant answered this better than I can at the moment without actually doing the review.

"For example- she refers "environmental review" to receive state monies. Have we done that review? Is it addressed in your Plan?" and "Could you address his comments re: the requirement for an 'environmental review/report' for funding from the State and the requirements as to detail and scope?"

Again it looks like your consultant answered this. Anytime state or federal money is used to pay for part or all of a project (even in the form of a loan), an environmental review must be performed. There are a number of items that must be researched and reviewed regarding wildlife, archeological finds, historical areas, noise pollution, air pollution, water pollution, the list is fairly long. If CWF money is used, we will also have to do a scoping notice before the environmental review so that the public can weigh in on the subject.

Our next Meeting will be Nov 7 at 5pm in west Cornwall and then a Final Town-wide meeting Nov 10 at 7pm to present the report to the Selectmen as we embark on our 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development. If you can attend either meeting or weigh-in in any way I think it might be helpful.

I have forwarded a request to my supervisor to be able to attend at least one of the meetings. I will let you know if I am granted time to do so.

November 7, 2017

RE: WEST CORNWALL WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT STUDY ("THE STUDY"), VERSION 2,  
WMC CONSULTING ENGINEERS, SEPTEMBER 2017

Comments to the Town of Cornwall's West Cornwall Water/Septic Study Group:

My appreciation is extended to all members of this appointed municipal committee for their work to date. Of particular note is their detail-oriented adherence during the RFP/bidding process that, in my opinion, resulted in contracting with one the most qualified and appropriate engineering firms to conduct this preliminary overview and evaluation of the West Cornwall Village subsurface sanitation issues.

Unquestionably, action needs to be taken to protect human and environmental health as it relates to the West Cornwall Village inadequate attention to subsurface sanitation wastewater flows, collection, and treatment. I generally support the initial goals identified in the WMC Study, however with some caveats to the final community sewer system being placed immediately adjacent to the Housatonic River.

Please accept the following comments into consideration for the final iteration of The Study before it is presented for a Town Meeting vote:

- Page 4, paragraph 6, line 2: remove "s" before "*a both a gravity and low pressure sanitary sewer.*";
- Throughout the document, "Mill Creek" and "Mill Brook" are used interchangeably; "Mill Brook" is correct;
- "Mill Brook Track Down Survey Report, November 2008, Northwest Conservation District": [http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/water/watershed\\_management/wm\\_plans/mill\\_brook.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/water/watershed_management/wm_plans/mill_brook.pdf) : Mill Brook is on the US Environmental Protection Agency, Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Impaired Waters List; any community sewer system should be placed exclusively on the south side of Mill Brook; if sewer pipes are ever approved to cross Mill Brook, additional engineering should be mandated to protect this already compromised waterway from further degradation as a result of potential raw sewage spills;
- The Study based the final location of a treatment facility utilizing the pre-existing FEMA flood maps, apparently, unknown to WMC or to the Committee, the FEMA maps are currently being updated and revised; the possibility exists that with the updated maps, the location choice for the treatment facility will be now designated and identified by FEMA as floodway; to support the safest and most resilient treatment facility, a sufficiently large parcel should be acquired upland, outside the 100-year FEMA flood zone to install a traditional subsurface sanitation system sized to the needs of the community; <https://www.ct.gov/2013/cor/2013-R-0278.htm> ;
- I found no mention in The Study of the sewer sludge that results in all such systems; <http://www.bradl.org/pdf/FAQ-sludge.pdf> ; sewer sludge is euphemistically referred to as "biosolids", contain a litany of toxic components, and should never be allowed to be spread on