

West Cornwall Water/Septic Study Group

Minutes of the Meeting of April 9, 2019

at Town Hall at 5:00 P.M.

Present: Todd Piker (TP), chairman, Dave Dolinsky (DD), Betsy Preston (BP), Priscilla Pavel (PP), Ian Ingersoll (II), Joanne Wojtusiak (JW), Richard Griggs (RG). Don Bachman (DB) arrived late due to a doctor's appointment. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway (GR). Engineer Steve McDonald (SM) was absent due to a family emergency.

The meeting convened at 5:05.

BP moved and DD seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the March 12 meeting. The vote to approve was unanimous.

TP thanked Judy Herkimer for filming the March 12 meeting, which he was able to watch from Puerto Rico. Communications from Roland Denny, supervising environmental analyst for municipal waste water for the DEEP, and from Jim Fishman, citizen, were briefly discussed.

A. Sites: The committee reviewed SM's cost estimates for three sites for the proposed treatment facility: the Susan Hellman property on Sharon Goshen Turnpike; the land at the Bend of the Housatonic; and the northern property owned by the power company. The estimates appeared to differ because of the necessity of pumping units for uphill sites and the distance from the center of town in the case of the power company land.

The discussion ranged widely among the site choices and the cost structure provided by SM. TP asked if the committee should pass along three recommendations to the Board of Selectmen (BOS). GR replied that the BOS would prefer to receive one proposal approved by the study committee.

B. Financing: GR said he had talked with Roland Denny of CT DEEP and to Norman St. John of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) about how financing for waste water project could be structured. Denny said that it was typical in CT that the town as a whole pay for both capital and maintenance costs of a project like the one proposed. The USDA financing usually comes in the form of an outright grant of between 20 and 40 percent of the total cost; the remainder can be paid for with a USDA loan. The next step,

according to GR, is to authorize \$10,000 for SM to prepare application documents for the USDA financing.

C. Survey: The letter sent to the property owners in West Cornwall Village produced mixed results: of the 54 letters sent out, there were 17 yes responses; 13 noes; six maybes; and 18 who did not reply. GR said this result was sufficient to begin work on the proposed treatment facility. DD said that the results were "not a positive picture" to prove need to the rest of Cornwall's taxpayers. GR responded that the whole "town has an interest in not letting one of its town centers collapse"

D. Scope of Project: The present plan is to construct the backbone of the system up and down both sides of Sharon Goshen Turnpike, allowing for extensions down side streets as appropriate. There was discussion of forming an economic development corporation, like the one in Norfolk, to lead this effort to revive the village. Could households in the Village be required to hook into the system? GR said no because the area is not under a remediation order from the state or Torrington Area Health.

E. Referendum, Town Meeting and Town Vote: Gordon repeated his request that the study committee present the BOS with one recommendation to take to the town for approval. JW stressed the need for a town-wide information meeting. PP suggested that the May meeting of the study committee might be turned into an opportunity for townspeople to ask questions and get information. GR said that in his view the time for such a meeting will come after the study committee makes its recommendation to the BOS.

F. Future Role of the Committee: There was brief discussion of future roles, perhaps as a building committee or a project management group.

G. Public comment. Judy Herkimer asked whether it would be possible to install a smaller system to serve only businesses and households on the Route 128. A similar system serve Bonney Brook Senior Housing in Cornwall Bridge.

Il moved and TP seconded a motion to adjourn. The vote to approve was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 P.M.

Lisa Simont
Clerk, pro tem