

DRAFT
TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
302 MAIN STREET
OLD SAYBROOK, CT 06475-2369
Saybrook Point and Cornfield Park Public Education Session
Wednesday, May 20, 2009

The Town of Old Saybrook Water Pollution Control Authority met on Wednesday, May 20, 2009, in the Old Saybrook Middle School, 60 Sheffield Street, Old Saybrook, CT to conduct a Public Education Session on the Decentralized Wastewater Management District program for the neighborhoods of Saybrook Point and Cornfield Park.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pavel Wilson at 7:00PM.

II. Introduction of WPCA and Staff

Chairman Pavel Wilson, George Gwizd, Mike Evangelisti, Chuck Wehrly, Don Lucas, WPCA Coordinator, Robbie Marshall, WPCA Info. Specialist, and members of the public were in attendance.

III. Public Information Session for Cornfield Point.

IV. Questions and Answers

Q: What determines the leaching area? A: The records will tell us what you have in the ground. That will give us an effective leaching area. From that we match it to the Public Health Code (PHC). For a 3-bedroom house you would need an effective leaching area of 495 feet.

Q: How will you resolve the gray areas? A: Under the PHC we will be able to go on the lot and do an exploratory test hole to determine what the soil conditions are and some exploratory work to determine what you do have in the ground. If you have records from your installer or pumper we can use those to find out what you have.

Q: Does the town have any records from the Sanitarian? A: Yes. There is supposed to be an "As Built" on file, but some of the records are missing in Town Hall or the installer never filed it. You might be able to get a copy from your pumper or have them send it to Town Hall.

Q: What is remote monitoring? A: An AT system has to be monitored to make sure it is working properly. A telemetry system works through a phone line and lets us know if the electricity is running and if the system is working.

WPCA Public Education Session for Saybrook Point and Cornfield Park: May 20, 2009

Q: With 1900 homes what protects us from predatory companies that want to install systems? A: We have a 7-year implementation program, so we're not going to rush into it. To save money, we are going to group properties together and have contractors bid on them. Putting in several tanks at once will provide economy of scale.

Q: Do they have to have a license? A: Yes. They must have a subsurface sewage installer license from the State. We discussed the criteria with the DEP for AT system installers and they will be registered as well.

Q: There are some lots which are across from Cornfield Point Beach which are flooded totally. They are not on there. A: We haven't done the Plum Bank map yet. We know which properties they are. We (and the DEP) have noticed they were missing and will take care of it.

Q: On a previous map my property met the Public Health Codes standards. It no longer meets the PHC standards. A: The PHC reads that a system is adequate until a repair is done to the system or if there is an extension to the house. The Upgrade Standards require that you have to meet additional separation to groundwater and 2-compartment tank for example. You may not meet the Upgrade Standards because the Upgrade Standards are a higher standard.

Q: Why isn't Knollwood included? A: There is a lot of history in the selection of the focus areas beginning in the 1970's with the Malcolm Pirnie and Hayden Wegman reports. One of the criteria was the number of septic repairs/failures at the time. We have gone back and forth with the DEP refining the areas. This is the best solution and boundaries we could come up with.

Q: What happens when the DEP says these don't work? A: The DEP has told us this is the solution they will accept, just like other areas where they have implemented sewer plant solutions.

Q: I voted for the sewer plant in 1989. It was barely defeated. Why is the regional district not considered? A: Old Saybrook was given the opportunity to develop a solution for its problem. It did not have to look at a regional solution. The Town has expressed a preference for onsite septic through other forums and the Plan of Conservation and Development rather than the "Big Pipe."

Q: It's not fair that 1900 families will bear the \$45 million. A: That is not an accurate representation. 25% will be provided by the Clean Water Fund and another 25% by the Town. There was continued discussion on the Three Town Solution.

Q: Is there an income requirement on the 2% loan? A: No. Everyone is eligible for 2% for 20 years. There is a Small Cities Grant that is available that has income guidelines. It is no interest, but becomes a lien on the house; repayable upon sale or transfer of the deed. It is available to anyone in Town and is available now.

Q: When does Saybrook Point begin? A: Saybrook Point is in the second group. So we would begin coming up with property sketches in the Fall of 2010.

Q: What if the power fails? A: The telemetry system will notify the town. Q: What if the system gets flooded? A: That will be a design determination; to keep the system out of the flood zone.

Q: Why do we have to anything if the system is working? A: The DEP says we are polluting. According to the CT General Statutes, if the DEP Commissioner believes a municipality is polluting they can order a town to abate the pollution. It doesn't have to be a failing system to be polluting. The effluent is getting into the groundwater before it is fully renovated.

Q: Is the Clean Water Fund subject to a shortfall? And how it is made up? A: The DEP has some of the CWF set aside. It will be available for 2 years after that we have to reapply. It comes from the EPA and is allocated by the State.

Q: Will the \$28,000 go up towards the end of the 7-years? A: The unit cost and construction will go down and we envision negotiating with the vendors with bulk rates. This goes for the conventional components as well.

Q: What is the total number of households related to the number of registered voters? A: There are 1900 parcels in the WWMD and 6600 in the entire Town. I don't know the number of voters. Q: How much is required for the referendum to pass? A: Just a simple majority.

Q: What happens if it doesn't pass? A: DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy has made it clear in her letter that they can go back to court and force us to put in "the Pipe." In 1989 90% of the sewer plant would have been paid by the Clean Water Funds. That money is no longer available.

There was a discussion about sewer discharge into the Sound and the CT River. If it is put into the River it is going to flow into the sound.

Comment: If you put the plant on the River there will be raw sewage flowing into the Sound.

Q: Is there a distance the leaching needs to be away from the tank? A: There are different leaching components; for example 18 inch high teepees or 4 feet high galleys. Depending on the size of the leaching unit you get different ratings per running foot of the system. You can do a 3-bedroom house with 54 feet of 4x4 galleys or it would take 8 feet of 18 inch teepees. It depends on distance to groundwater, soil conditions, and topography of the lot.

The meeting ended at 8:30PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Old Saybrook Water Pollution Control Authority

Robbie A. Marshall
WPCA Recording Clerk

WPCA Public Education Session for Saybrook Point and Cornfield Park: May 20, 2009