

Sewer District Update

For almost three years, the Board of the Woodridge Lake Sewer District (WLS D), its Planning Committee and engineering consultants, Woodard and Curran (W&C), have been working to develop an affordable and environmentally sound new Facilities Plan for the WLS D, as required by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The new Facilities Plan will cost a total of \$870,000 of which DEEP is paying \$462,000 with the remainder paid by the WLS D.

Work on the new Facilities Plan has included:

1. A detailed analysis of the WLS D's service area to understand future wastewater flows and pollutant loadings to project conditions when Woodridge Lake is completely built out.
2. The entire collection system has been CCTV'd and flow isolation tested for Infiltration and Inflow (I/I) of water into the sewer system.
3. 55,000 gallons per day (gpd) of I/I has been identified in the system and 20,000-27,200 gpd has been targeted for removal with a \$529,000 construction project which will provide flow offset for additional connections.
4. Our disposal fields were tested in accordance with a DEEP approved plan.
5. A regionalization plan (the Torrington pipeline) was evaluated using 4 different routes to Torrington.
6. An on-site treatment plant option meeting all DEEP requirements was evaluated.

The WLS D's sewage system is now 40 years old and does not meet today's environmental standards. Upgrading it with either the on-site option or the Torrington pipeline will be expensive. We have been meeting with DEEP and Torrington to discuss the two options, estimate the cost of each and complete the new Plan.

On May 25, at the annual budget meeting of the taxpayers of the WLS D, Ken Green, Chairman of the Planning Committee reported on a meeting held earlier in the week with DEEP and attended by Ken, Jim Mersfelder, a Board member, and our outside environmental counsel, John Wertam. For the past year, John's firm, Shipman and Goodwin has been assisting us in the development of the new Plan.

We believe we have the commitment of DEEP management to be open-minded about an on-Site option, which we believe will be considerably less expensive than the Torrington option. Our next step will be for W&C to complete a summary of the Facilities Plan---a 40 to 50 page document---and deliver it to DEEP by the end of June. We plan to follow-up with a meeting with DEEP by mid-July.

In order for the WLS D to finally estimate the cost of the option to upgrade our plant and disposal fields, there will be at least, several key issues to be resolved with DEEP:

1. We will ask DEEP to approve the continued use of the WLS D's groundwater disposal fields consistent with human health and the environmental requirements. During the past year our consulting engineers have performed tests on our fields which we believe show that they can properly absorb the quantity of wastewater we will be generating. Our new-upgraded treatment plant will treat our wastewater to near drinking water quality and provide more treatment than DEEP's guidelines before it is discharged into our disposal fields.
2. We will also ask DEEP to approve a level of discharge to accommodate flow from an upgraded plant and disposal fields. Our test results show our disposal fields are capable of handling an average of 125,000 gpd of wastewater. We believe this is sufficient, together with the planned reductions in I/I to handle the conditions when Woodridge Lake is completely built out. There are currently 677 homes connected to the WLS D system, with the potential for 184 more. All of the new connections will connect to the existing sewer pipe. Our sewer pipe will not be extended.
3. We have concluded that an on-site option is viable, that it can meet the intent of DEEP's disposal guidelines by enhanced treatment from a new plant. While DEEP has not reviewed our plan, we are prepared to advocate and defend an on-site solution as the most reasonable and viable option. However, while we believe that the on-site option can meet DEEP's standards for water quality, we accomplish this by methods not fully in accordance with DEEP's Design Guidelines. These are policy decisions where we need DEEP cooperation and flexibility to get the permit limits to operate an on-site plant with our existing disposal fields.

It would be inappropriate at this time to present detailed costs until we get closer to an agreement with DEEP on our options. We are able to say that the solutions are expensive and remain broadly in the range of \$10 to \$20 million. We believe that a DEEP 20 year loan at 2% will be available to spread these costs over 20 years. We also hope for at least some grant funding from DEEP. It should however be noted that the President's recent budget has cut federal Clean Water Act funding by \$500 million.

Lastly, at the May 25 meeting, the taxpayers unanimously approved the WLSD's proposed budget and a new mil rate of 4.3 mils for the 2013-14 fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013.

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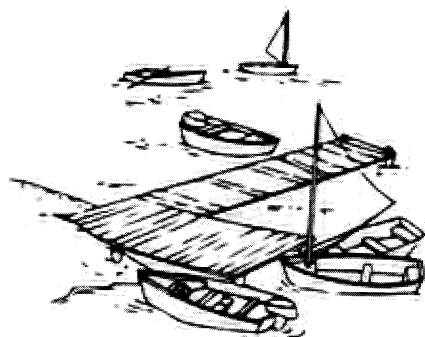
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