



**Suffolk County Department of Public Works
CP 8189 Sewer Capacity Study
Mastic Shirley Stakeholder Meeting (9/27/2012)**

To: Boris Rukovets, P.E., Special Projects Supervisor, Suffolk County Department of Public Works

From: Mary Anne Taylor, P.E.

Date: October 1, 2012

Subject: Sewer Capacity Study – Summary of Mastic Shirley September Stakeholder Meeting

On September 27, 2012, Legislator Kate Browning convened an informational meeting with Mastic-Shirley residents, property owners and civic leaders at the Mastic Firehouse. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Present the expanded study area,
- Introduce the County’s project to evaluate the feasibility of implementing a sanitary sewer system to residents of the expanded area,
- Explain the schedule for sewer system implementation and
- Obtain community feedback.

The meeting was advertised by the Legislator’s direct mailing to properties within the proposed study area, as well as by the County’s website and by signs placed along Montauk Highway.

Legislator Kate Browning welcomed the stakeholders to the meeting and began with the Pledge of Allegiance. She explained the purpose of the meeting; to introduce the project and the process by which sewers could be implemented. The Legislator described the environmental and potential economic and social benefits of sanitary sewerage, and that the meeting was just one step in a years-long process to provide sanitary sewers. She explained how implementation of sewers was just one part of the approach to improve water quality in the Forge River, and informed the community that the County was expected to begin dredging within a couple of weeks. The Legislator emphasized that sewerage would not proceed unless the stakeholders approved the program and unless funding was provided; she advised moving forward so that there was a shovel-ready project if funding were to become available.

Mastic Shirley Stakeholder Meeting

October 1, 2012

Page 2

Boris Rukovets, Suffolk County Department of Public Works (SCDPW) Special Projects Supervisor, the County's Project Manager for all of their Sewer District Capacity Studies, explained that at the request of local communities, the County was evaluating the feasibility of providing sanitary sewerage infrastructure in a number of areas throughout the County. These areas had been identified as having a potential "critical need" for sewers based on economic, social and/or water quality benefits. He introduced Mary Anne Taylor from CDM Smith, and promised that there would be opportunities for questions and answers after a brief presentation.

Mary Anne Taylor explained that the meeting objective was to introduce the project, present the revised study area and obtain stakeholder feedback, and explain the schedule for sewer system implementation. She presented a summary of the project objectives, the project scope, and introduced the seven study areas and the project website (<http://suffolksewerstudy.cdmims.com>) where project information, documents, and upcoming activities will be posted periodically, and where comments and questions to the County or project team can be directed. She also described how a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) was being prepared in accordance with State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) requirements.

She explained that preliminary plans for the original study area, the Montauk Highway Corridor had been presented to property owners at a May, 2012 meeting. At that meeting, the community expressed two main concerns:

- The project would not do enough to improve water quality in the Forge River, and
- The project would be too costly.

In response to the community input, Legislator Browning requested that the Phase I study area be expanded to include more of the densely developed residential area. This would result in more significant water quality improvement because much more of the nitrogen contributed by cesspools/septic tanks would be removed from the aquifer. In addition, the increased water quality benefit would result in a better opportunity to receive funding from the state. The County and their consultant team met with Legislator Browning in mid-September and developed a new proposed Phase I study area. The area identified included the original Montauk Highway business corridor, and a residential area that encompassed the "0 to 2 year" travel time to the Forge River. Freshwater flow to the Forge River is primarily derived from groundwater baseflow. This groundwater originates as precipitation recharging the ground surface. The "0 to 2 year" travel time contributing area was identified by the Suffolk County Groundwater Model as the area where recharging precipitation would take less than two years to travel down through the aquifer system to discharge to the Forge River. This groundwater carries the dissolved nitrogen released from the on-site wastewater treatment systems with it - sewerage the area with the shortest travel time would result in the most rapid observed improvement to the River water quality.

Given the study area's location within the contributing area to significant surface water features, it was acknowledged that a technology capable of reducing effluent nitrogen levels to the lowest possible levels would be recommended.

Finally, she provided an overview of the steps necessary to establish a sewer district and construct the sewerage facilities. The entire process, which includes several milestones where public participation is essential (including a referendum as to whether or not the sewer district should be established) is anticipated to take up to seven to eight years.

Due to the size of the audience, she explained that several stations with study area maps would be set up around the room. Ben Wright and Boris Rukovets from SCDPW would be at the first station, answering questions about Sewer District Establishment and the project schedule, Nick Bono from H2M would be at the second station to answer questions about collection system and treatment technology and Mary Anne Taylor would be at the third to address concerns about water quality.

Several questions and concerns were identified before the conversations broke into the smaller groups.

Group Questions

One stakeholder questioned whether sewerage Mastic Beach had been considered. Legislator Browning and Ben Wright explained that the County had completed a study in 2009 for a larger area that included Mastic Beach and the estimated capital cost was on the order of \$700M. It is possible that Mastic Beach could be included in a subsequent phase of the project.

One stakeholder expressed dismay at the length of time that sewerage will take; he believed there should be greater urgency in moving forward to clean up the River. Ben Wright explained the legislative and regulatory requirements associated with moving forward. While the County will do its best to expedite the process and may be able to reduce the schedule, several of the steps are out of County control.

Several stakeholders wondered where the sewage treatment plant would be located. Legislator Browning replied that while no decisions had been made, initial plans were to site the sewage treatment plant at the airport, where sufficient property was available. The County's Tallmadge Woods STP, located in a Miller Place neighborhood was identified as an example of one unobtrusive STP. The Legislator mentioned that a visit to the STP could be arranged.

One stakeholder asked about the cost; Legislator Browning explained that costs had not yet been developed and would not be available for several months. She repeated that without funding, the project would not be viable.

One stakeholder asked whether pipes had been placed beneath Montauk Highway before it was repaved. The Legislator replied that the County was not permitted to do so, as the sewer district had not been formed. It was possible that sewers could be located behind the buildings on Montauk Highway; Nick Bono explained that construction of low pressure sewers caused less disruption than conventional gravity sewers.

Another stakeholder asked about the groundwater that was already contaminated. Commissioner Anderson explained that the graphics used to depict time-of-travel from the water table through the aquifer to the Forge River were not illustrating plumes but travel times. The stakeholder expressed further concern that contaminants from BNL could be contaminating area water quality.

Small Group Discussions

Concerns/questions raised during the small group discussions included:

- Could the Neighborhood Road corridor in Mastic Beach be included in the study area?
- Could the Town of Brookhaven owned site at the former Links at Shirley golf course be one of the options for the wastewater treatment plant location?
- How are nitrogen sources on the east side of the River (including cesspools/septic tanks in Moriches, and the Waterways STP) being addressed?
- Will the project include the workforce housing identified in the Mastic-Mastic Beach-Shirley Sewering Feasibility Study prepared by SCDPW in 2009?
- How soon will the residents have to connect to the new system, what will be the cost and will they be penalized for not hooking up?

The Legislator thanked all of the stakeholders who attended the meeting for their valuable input and assured them that she would continue to provide updates on the program as they become available.

Please advise M. Taylor of any oversights or errors to these minutes.

cc: G. Anderson
C. Bartha
N. Bono
K. Browning
J. Donovan
K. Kelly
C. Kobos
B. Rukovets
F. Russo
J. Slaughter
N. Vignola-Henry
B. Wright