

An Informational Meeting for the proposed Hickory Grove Sewer District was held by the Town Board of the Town of Otsego, on the 7th day of June at the Town Building, Fly Creek, and NY at 9:00 AM.

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Board Members present were:
 Thomas Breiten Chairman
 Anne Geddes-Atwell Councilperson
 Meg Kiernan Councilperson
 Bill Michaels Councilperson

Others present:
 Martin Tillapaugh Town Attorney
 Shawn Mulligan Highway Superintendent
 Pamela Deane Town Clerk

Chairman Breiten called the meeting to order. Breiten introduced engineer Tim Wales who presented a map plan and report.

Wales explained that the proposed Hickory Grove Sewer District would extend from the Springfield Otsego Town line along St. Hwy 80 on the west side of Otsego Lake, to the Lake View Motel. The map showed all the failed or predicted-to-fail septic systems colored in red and all the septic systems that have passed inspection were noted in green. Wales stated that the proposed system is fairly simple. Each camp would be supplied with a 1000 gallon septic tank with a pump inside. The solids would settle out and the effluent would be pumped to a common pipe and from there to the treatment system behind the Hickory Grove Inn. There the effluent goes through a subsurface textile media filter and then on to sand filter before being discharged. Residents that do not have enough room for a 1000 gallon septic tank will be given a grinder pump which grinds the solids, then sends the effluent to the common pipe. The grinder pumps would be approximately the size of two large garbage cans. Wales stated that the system won't be seen, heard or smelled.

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Project Manager Win McIntyre discussed the cost of the project:

Factor	Best Case	Worst Case
No. of Properties	53	53
Initial Users	29	29
Percent Initial Users	55%	55%

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Proposed System:	Septic Tank Force main Shared Secondary Treatment – Media Filters Sub- surface Disposal via Sand Filter	(Same system)
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Location of Secondary System	2-acre site behind Hickory Grove Inn	(Same)
Estimated Total Cost	\$740,000.00	\$740,000.00
Hook – up Cost / User	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Total Hook –up Cost	\$140,000.00	\$140,000.00
Total Cost less Hook-up	\$600,000.00	\$600,000.00
Grant Support	\$330,000.00	\$200,000.00
Net Cost Less Grants	\$270,000.00	\$400,000.00
Net Cost / user	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 13,000.00
Net cost +Hook-up/user	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
Operation & Maintenance (per yr)	\$ 8,220.00	\$ 8,220.00
O&M Cost/year/EDU	\$ 274.00	\$ 274.00
Debt Payment/year/EDU	\$ 610.00	\$ 904.00
Financed over 30 yrs.		
TOTAL COST/year/EDU	\$ 884.00	\$ 1,178.0

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Town Attorney Tillapaugh outlined the procedure in establishing a Sewer District.

- A map and plan are prepared at the Town's expense. If a district is created, then all costs are charged back to the district. The map and plan are submitted to the State Department of Environmental Conservation and County Health Department for review.
- The Board then will adopt a plan that describes the details about the district. The following details must be described:
 - Boundaries
 - Improvements
 - Maximum amount that will be expended
 - How it will be financed
 - Estimated Hook Up cost/fees and Annual Cost.
- The Board then Schedules a Public Hearing.

Notices must be placed in the paper, displayed at the Town Building and mailed to each owner of property in the proposed district. The map and plan of the proposed Sewer District must be made available for the public. The project is filed, reviewed, and approved by NYS Comptrollers Office. The Public Hearing is then scheduled.

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- A Resolution is then adopted by the Town Board, after giving 10 days notice. The Resolution must state it is subject to a Permissive Referendum.
- SEQRA hearing is then conducted to determine that this proposed Sewer District is not going to adversely impact the area.
- A Referendum can occur one of two ways. The Town Board can require one or there could be a request for a referendum, signed and submitted within 30 days of the passing of the resolution by 5% of the property owners in the district. The referendum must be held at least 60 days after but no more than 75 days after the adoption of the resolution. It would require a majority vote of the deeded property owners.
- If the district is voted down there will be no district. If the majority of property owners are in favor of a Sewer District then the map is filed with the County Clerk and NYS Comptrollers Office.

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Questions asked:

1. What is the life span of the proposed system?

Answer: Wales estimated 20 yrs.

2. What if chemicals are introduced into the system that kill the system.

Answer: Wales stated that there would have to be restrictions on what could and could not be allowed into the system.

3. What amount of the treated effluent will end up in Otsego Lake?

Answer: Wales stated less than what is currently going into Otsego Lake.

4. What happens when a beaver dam breaks? There is one above the Hickory Grove than breaks quite often.

There was concern was the surge of water from the dam break will expose or wash out sewer pipes.

Answer: McIntyre stated that they are aware of the beaver dams and have received funding to install man made berms to hold the dams. Regardless, the designed system will continue to work under water.

5. Some people stated that they do not live in the area and found information about the project hard to get. They had received most of the information from neighbors.

Answer: Breiten stated the Town website is now being revamped and promised that more information about the project will be available in the near future. He also encouraged anyone who had questions to feel free to call him.

6. Residents residing on Badger Lane, which is a private road, wanted to know if sewer lines were going in, then would the Town claim eminent domain and declare Badger Lane a Town road.

Answer: Tillapaugh stated that the Board could do that, however another option to the Town Board would be to form an easement.

7. If a property owner can repair their system, they should not be mandated to hook onto the sewer line.

Answer: Tillapaugh explained that there is a difference between repair and replace. NYS law mandates that if you are in a sewer district and you need to *replace* your system then you must tie in with the sewer line.

8. If there is a referendum, will provisions be made for an absentee ballot?

Answer: Tillapaugh indicated YES.

9. What constitutes a FAILED SYSTEM. What if your system is obsolete but still works?

Answer: Win stated that as long as the system works the way it was intended it is not considered a failed system.

10. How many in the district have been replaced?

Answer: Win indicated 20%.

11. What if the area becomes more developed and the Sewer System needs to be increased. Can it be increased and do the property owners in the original district have to pay for the expansion.

Answer: Wales stated that this proposed system could easily be increased. Tillapaugh stated that the new property owners would bear the burden of paying for the expansion.

12. How accurate is the map? Some properties show that their systems have failed and they have not.

Answer: Win stated that the map needs to be updated. The cost estimates are generated from data not the map.

13. D.O.T. now has a moratorium on anyone building in their right-of-way. Is the Town going to help with getting D.O.T. permission to put a septic system in their right-of-way? There are many camps along the lake that that is the only place to put them.

Answer: Wales stated that in those instances grinder pumps would be the answer. They are only the size of two garbage cans.

14. Only see small property owners in the district. Why are property owners closer to 5 mile point and who have more money not included?

Answer: Wales: Due to bedrock, the conditions in laying the common pipe would be more costly. To reduce the cost of the project it was decided to stop at Lake View Motel.

15. Had Springfield been approached?

Answer: Wales stated that, yes, Springfield had been approached and had decided to wait and see how Otsego's project goes.

16. Wouldn't it be cheaper to run the common pipe line in Otsego Lake?

Answer: McIntyre replied NO. The piping would need to be double wall.

17. What happens if there is a power outage?

Answer: Wales stated that each system has a 2 day storage capacity. There would be the same problem with a conventional system.

18. Who will own the system? The property owner or the municipality?

Answer: Wales stated that that has not yet been determined.

19. Can operating costs change from year to year?

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Answer: Tillapaugh stated that, YES, operating costs can change year to year but the cost of the project can not exceed the limit specified.

20. Who is responsible if the system breaks?

Answer: Tillapaugh stated that the Town is responsible.

21. What is the proposed time frame?

Answer: Win indicated next year.

22. How accurate are the cost estimates with the cost of everything going up.

Answer: Tillapaugh stated that the cost of the project can not exceed what was proposed without a vote.

23. Not everyone has \$5,000 to pay for hook-up fee. Can that be included in the capital cost?

Answer: Win answered YES.

24. For those who decided to tie into the system at a later date would they be responsible for paying for the ditch and pipe line from the house to the road.

Answer: Tillapaugh stated that that has not yet been determined by the Board.

25. How long would construction take and would it be done during the off season? How far under ground is the pipeline going to be.

Answer: Wales stated that construction would take approximately 2 – 3 months and would be done during the off season. The common pipe would be placed approximately 5-6' underground.

26. Would there be any impact to his (Cliff Foreman) spring fed water supply line when installing the common pipe.

Answer: Wales replied NO.

27. What happens with law suits or fines due to a break in the sewer line. Will those in the district be obligated to pay them or will it be the responsibility of the Town?

Answer: Tillapaugh hoped the Town will have insurance to cover such claims. Anything the insurance company does not cover, the district would be expected to pay.

28. The systems that are now considered "failed", how many of those are polluting the lake?

Answer: McIntyre answered ALL.

29. If referendum fails, what is the timeline to replace one's system.

Answer: Win stated that property owners will have until the fall of 2009.

Kathleen Chase informed the Board that she has a petition signed by 35 property owners who are requesting that their properties be removed from the district.

Cliff Forman asked if the Board "If you already know the results of the referendum why not stop the process now?"

Answer: Breiten stated that he is not convinced that all those that have signed the petition received all the information about the proposal before signing.

Chairman Breiten thanked everyone for coming. The meeting ended at 11:40 AM. Approximately 40 residents were in attendance.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Deane
Town Clerk

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