

**Town of Londonderry, Vermont
Village Wastewater Committee (VWC)
Meeting Minutes
Friday, October 4, 2024 – 9:00 AM**

**Neighborhood Connections, 5700 VT Rte. 100
Londonderry, VT**

Village Wastewater Committee (VWC) Members Present: Sharon Crossman, Tom Metcalfe, Larry Gubb, Gary Hedman (Online)

Others in Attendance: Pamela Spaulding (Londonderry Planning Commission/Londonderry Resident)

Online:

Chrissy Haskins (Dufresne Group – Project Engineers, Shane O’Keefe (Londonderry Town Administrator), Emily Hackett (EI - Environmental Engineer – VT DEC)

1. Call Meeting to Order:

Sharon Crossman called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM

2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda:

None

3. Approve Minutes:

Minutes of the September 13, 2024 meeting were deferred to the next meeting.

4. Project Status Updates:

a. Review of Schedule for Design and Submissions

b. Status of State Review of 60% Design Plans

c. Status of Design Elements of Concern

i. VT Sole Source Approval of Disposal Field System Designs for bidding

ii. N & S easement survey/description/Appraisals

iii. Service Connection N & S Plot Plans

iv. Supplemental borings/probes for ledge along pipeline routes

Tom began the meeting by reiterating reports from the last meeting on September 24, regarding the receipt of comments on the 30% design from Emily. As of the last meeting, she had received them from Achouak but had not yet received comments from Emily. He asked if in proceeding with the 60% Design submittal she had incorporated actions on all of those comments or were some not yet incorporated. Chrissy responded that some were incorporated and that she

received comments a day or two prior to submitting the 60% Design for review. She said some were incorporated while others were not in order prevent delay of the submittal of the 60% Design. She added that all that was not incorporated at the time of the 60% Design submittal would be incorporated in the 90% Design and commented that the comments addressed minor considerations that did not make any significant changes. The 60% Design was submitted on September 20, 2024. Tom asked if there was a 30-day turnaround once the 60% Design is submitted. Chrissy responded that there is no set time limit for turnaround, but Achouak is usually a little faster since her duties are strictly to ARPA projects. She added that Emily has additional concerns.

Shane said Emily will be joining us and the VWC could ask here if there is any change in status at that point.

Tom asked about the status for the sole source approval for the dispersal system design. Chrissy responded that she had been in discussions with the construction section, and they said they did not believe these projects warrant doing a pre-bid or any pre-qualification for the drip dispersal system. She said they were not intending to sole source them as the spec is written with an “or equal” qualification. She added that there is only one company that provides these systems in New England, saying the intent is not to sole source, but unless another company sold them in New England, the circumstances are such that there is only one company that sells them in this region. She has sent a request in writing, asking them to provide guidance on how to proceed. She has listed her concerns in researching how the town of Montgomery proceeded, she found that the drip dispersal system construction work was contracted directly with the town, as was the rest of their project, leading to a potential problem of one contractor blaming the other if something goes wrong. She provided the example that if there were a delay in the drip dispersal system by the contractor providing the system, the other contractor would be justified in charging more for the time delay to their work. If all parts of the project are under a single contractor, there would be no justification for the project contractor to charge more for the delay.

She had additional concerns with the request by Lynnette Claudon that any pre-bidding or pre-qualification be done prior to permitting. Chrissy had concerns with this as the permitting may present comments that may change what has already been bid, requiring a change order for something that had already been bid. She said this would tend to make things more complicated and the construction division agreed and that hopefully a definitive decision would be made that would allow Chrissy’s and the construction division’s recommendations to be used.

Tom asked if Chrissy has reached out to the drip dispersal company to get price estimates to avoid potential price gouging during bidding. Chrissy responded that she does have price estimates. Tom thought that it may be a good idea to have the drip dispersal system as a line item in the bid. Chrissy said that the plan was to do show it separate from other costs in the bid.

Tom asked for clarification on why there would be any discussion about sole sourcing with his understanding being that there are other companies that provide this sort of system, but they

are outside of the “service area” (New England). Chrissy said that is correct and added that there was one other drip dispersal company in New England, but their system will only work with filtrate which means pretreatment is required. Using pretreatment in Phase I for the south village would eliminate Phase II and the doubling of the south village system with the completion of Phase II pretreatment at that time.

Tom asked about the appraisal work for the north and south villages. Chrissy responded that since the land for the south village system is on town property there would be no appraisal needed for that property. She said she believed the site for the north village has been finalized enough to identify that easement area. She added that access to that site had been changed so that no easement across another private property would be needed after getting confirmation that grade lines, piping size and pumps would be the same as the prior piping route. It is about an additional 300 feet and higher in elevation.

Shane asked Chrissy about whether the town could claim the value of the south village site area as part of the Town’s local match. Chrissy said that she remembered Emily saying that because the Town owned the property, there would be no additional value provided from the grant to the Town.

Tom asked if the descriptions had been made for the north wastewater site. Chrissy said that they had not yet been drawn and what will be done is to create a “figure” with northing and easting points on it that can be used by the attorney to create the easement description. She explained that this process has been used for projects where they have done work for VTrans (Vermont Agency of Transportation) and this is what VTrans asks for to create easements.

Tom asked if the northing and easting points in the Vermont State Plane Coordinate System was enough for surveyors to use to create easement descriptions. Chrissy said it is something that can be discussed with the Town attorney to see what their preference would be.

Shane asked what the timing in completing what is needed for the attorney to create the descriptions would be. Chrissy said nothing was planned, asked if getting them done within the next two weeks would be acceptable. Shane said that would be fine and added that he is in touch with the appraisers on a regular basis. He asked if an appraisal could be done before having the easement deed? Chrissy believed this could happen as the appraisers are looking for the area of the property.

Toma asked if Chrissy would be doing all that is required to hand to Shane so the appraisal work can be done. She said yes, Shane asked to confirm that this would be done within the next two weeks and Chrissy said yes.

Tom asked about north and south service connection plot plans whether any work on those plans have been started. He also asked about what will be included with regard to the piping, where the reused or new septic tanks will be and he had an additional question about the electrical and how that will run from electrical panels out to the system. Chrissy said the service

connections for all of the properties surveyed to now, are all shown on the 60% Design plans. She added that several more have been surveyed and added to the 60% plans after the submittal of the 60% plans. All the properties surveyed that are in the plans show the service pipeline location and the tank locations. She said the electrical would be left up to the contractors as to how they will bring the electrical line to the building. She said that when the surveys are done, photos are also taken of the properties electrical panels to confirm there is space for circuit breakers for the pumps. An area will be shown for archeological review.

Tom asked if there was a standard plan for how the electrical work should be done with consideration to conduit, floodplain and other specification. Chrissy said there will be a local disconnect on a pedestal that is required to be within a certain number of feet of the septic tank and this will all be included in the spec for the tanks. She said there will also be an electrical work spec, which will include that all the work be done according to code.

Tom asked if his earlier meeting question about a means to measure runtime hours for pumps might be possible and if Chrissy may have found an answer to that from manufacturers of related equipment. Chrissy said she did find that there is a means to measure the pump runtimes and it is a standard item on their panels which will be a part of the local disconnects. She said they will all have an OIT (operator interface terminal) on them which will allow a quick readout of information about the pumps, including runtime. The information would not be sent to a central location meaning periodic checks would have to be made and recorded for tracking.

Shane said there were radar feedback signs that the Town has that provide feedback, that are able to be adjusted as well as query all from a website and wondered if there may be something like that for the pumps. Chrissy said this would require a cell service for every tank which would become quite expensive. Shane said that was the case for the radar signs, but didn't believe it was terribly expensive. Chrissy said she had worked with another town where this was done for all the pumps and it was fairly expensive and she did not believe the capacity to do so standard with the pump equipment.

Tom asked Shane if he thought, relative to the radar signs, if there would be good enough cell reception for all the property locations that would be connected. Shane said the reception was good for all the radar feedback signs, but the Town cut back monitoring all signs to just one sign, because of the cost. Tom's concern was based on being able to locate a problem should there be too much flow trying to get to the dispersal field based on a malfunctioning plumbing situation, like a toilet stuck and running, which might create problems overall. Chrissy said she was proposing a master meter which would measure flow at the disposal field. She said this could be tracked and if there were a problem with abnormal flows, the individual systems could then be checked. She said the time period for monitoring would be up to the town. They could be tracked monthly quarterly or any time period. Tom said that a master meter would be the place it would make sense to monitor perhaps with a cell service which would allow the operations manager to notice any problems with some sort of alarm. Tom asked if there would be any other sorts of alarms besides the master meter. Chrissy said that each tank at each property would have both an audible and a visual (a light) alarm to alert about problems with the pump. An

example being a tank would have floats that would trigger too much flow if the pump failed to move the flow out of the tank on a normal basis because the pump was failing or had failed or there was some other problem. Chrissy said something should also be added to the ordinance about property owners calling the operations manager to report when they notice any alarm signals. She noted that the pretreatment system for Phase II at south village site does have a cell signal to it. She also believed that Oakson (the manufacturers of the drip dispersal systems) specified they monitored their systems for the first 2 years and then would provide monitoring beyond 2 years for a fee.

Gary asked if the ordinance should require than the alarms be visible from the public R.O.W (Right-of Way). Chrissy said if a tank ended up being in a location that was not visible from the road and the alarm had to be in a limited proximity to the tank, that might become a problem and where it was possible to place them close to the public R.O.W. they could not plant something in front of it to block the view. Gary also mentioned requiring that the alarm be a reasonable height above grade) considering how much snow there may be in the ground during winter. Chrissy said there is a minimum height for mounting the panels. Shane asked if there might be a mute button to silence the audible alarm if it goes off in the middle of the night. Chrissy will check to see. Shane said this could be a problem for the property owner and neighbors if the alarm disturbs the neighborhood in the middle of the night. Tom suggested attaching instructions on who to call or text on the alarm panels and that would have to be something that would have to run in perpetuity. Chrissy said she would add that to the specifications for the alarm panels.

Chrissy said they would be meeting with one more property on Monday and have sent information to two additional properties in the south village but have not yet heard back from them. She said that there were two properties in the north village where the owner was interested, but there is no contact information on them. She said someone else was reached out to, in order to contact the owner, but have yet to get back to Chrissy. She added that both properties in the north village are in the floodplain and one of the properties in the south village is in the floodplain.

Tom spoke of the list Chrissy had provided of the properties in the south village that would be a help in establishing a priority list and mentioned that one property which was in the floodplain was listed as a lower priority. Chrissy explained that the property only minutely fell within the $\frac{1}{4}$ buffer area outside of the designated village area where funding would apply, (funding covers the designated village area plus a quarter mile buffer beyond those boundaries) so Chrissy was unsure if funding would still be able to apply to that property since only a very tiny portion fell within the buffer area. She added that she thought the property really should be included because it is in the floodplain. Shane asked if the property needed flood insurance because they fall into the floodplain. Some of the properties listed that are not top priority could become top priority for Phase II.

Tom brought up the supplemental boring probes and how progress was coming on that work. Chrissy said the north village work has been done, but yesterday as they were working their way

up Rte.100 from the village something on the drill rig broke. She had no schedule yet as to when repairs would be done. Tom asked how far they got. Chrissy said they began at the four-way intersection and got beyond the sharp corner. Tom was concerned about ledge in that area. Chrissy said there is ledge all over the south village. She said it varies in depth and is as shallow as 3 feet below grade. Tom asked if the estimate took encountering ledge into account. Chrissy said the estimates included 250 yards in the north village, 500 yards in the south village. She added that when profiles are completed, they can compare them to estimates. Tom asked if the current unit costs were reflected. Chrissy said yes the average unit costs were used, not the lowest.

Tom asked if any of the ledge found might be “rippable”, explaining that some rock is able to be torn apart with excavating equipment using special teeth of hardened steel or some other material. Chrissy said that in her experience the rock she encountered has been very hard and not likely to be “rippable” and that it requires hammering or blasting. Gary asked what the depth for the main would be required to be. Chrissy said that because it is a forced main it would essentially be treated like a water line and the depth would be at 5 1/2 feet. Tom asked if the insulation would allow the pipe to be placed at a shallower depth. Chrissy said yes, but generally even with insulation pipes are not placed less than 4 feet below grade. The insulation would be rigid board insulation placed over the top of the pipe. She added that if blasting is required there is a section that deals with blasting in the spec. She said that there is a preliminary inspection that needs to be done to check buildings before and after the blasting to see if any damage is caused by the blasting. Shane asked about blasting near wells. Chrissy responded that she does not even like doing soil boring close to wells. Chrissy said blasting should be a part of the spec and that in her experience it was only used where there were long stretches of rock and only once has blasting been used on any of the projects she has worked on to date. Tom said that maybe blasting should not be allowed because of its potential to affect so many things. Both he and Chrissy offered personal experiences where work that did not include blasting caused problems from vibrations and Chrissy said most contractors do not like to use blasting in areas where there are structures.

Next came discussion of considerations regarding prioritizing properties in the south village due to the capacity of the Phase I system versus those properties interested in connecting to the system.

Chrissy began with considering the properties that the main pipe will pass on its way to the system site versus properties that are outliers and would require a few hundred extra feet of piping to reach and are not in the floodplain. She said there is another property that would require a large portion of the available capacity in Phase I which also required some additional piping although not equal to the first set of outlying properties mentioned. It would also require pretreatment. Tom thought that the property already had pretreatment and Chrissy said that she checked and could not find any indication that they did. She said another restaurant in a different town with the same owners, does have pretreatment, but the one in the south village does not. Tom asked if there was any indication that the property owners wished to expand their operation or hours of operation and Chrissy responded that they had not indicated anything to her. She said the property consists of a house, an apartment and a restaurant. She added that

she had not yet confirmed the number of seats in the restaurant with the owners so their total capacity needs may vary from what is shown on the current table, once the seat number is confirmed. She also said that if the two properties which would require extended piping were to be connected in Phase I, three other equivalent dwelling units would have to be eliminated from connecting. She said there were two properties that have gotten the additional information they requested, but have not responded, but all other properties had both expressed interest in connecting and have been surveyed.

Sharon asked about the south village post office. Chrissy said it was on the list but had not yet been surveyed and an appointment had been made to survey the property on Monday. She said the owner is very interested in connecting to the system, but there were no definitive plans for what the future uses of the building will be aside from the post office use itself. The building has potential for several uses. It currently only has a holding tank for its wastewater, apparently once having a leach field, which somehow got cut off.

Sharon asked about the south village fire department and if they may be moving from their current location. Chrissy said in their discussions with them, they had not mentioned moving. Shane said he was aware of some discussion on a variety of options they were considering, but that any changes would not be soon. Tom asked if the building was in the floodplain or the floodway. Chrissy said it is in the flood plain and perhaps right on the edge of the floodway.

Tom suggested that in order to prioritize, anyone with a failing system should have top priority with the second priority being those properties with systems that lie in the floodplain and anything that would contribute to the water quality of the river were what he thought would be good candidates for the priority list. He said that the goal would be to as fair as could be in the prioritization so that in the recommendation to the Selectboard and property owners, the reasons were as clear and as fair as we could make them in consideration of all the circumstances and trying to be as economical as possible and with the understanding that there is a Phase II that will double the capacity once constructed. Chrissy said there is a combination of factors involving both the most critical conditions as well as the most economical conditions, where groups of properties present a better economy than long lines of pipe serving a small number of properties. Properties along the main pipe route to the system site provide better economy than piping that extends away from the system site. Balancing all the factors, but for the most critical situations, makes the recommendations difficult to make.

Sharon asked about the Town Hall and it being adjacent to one of the properties being considered for connection. Chrissy said that this is another consideration for extending the main pipe. Currently the location of the Town Hall septic field or where any sewage flows to is unknown. Shane said his understanding from Tina Labeau was that it was not a shared system. Larry said the Town Hall property is very small and does not appear to have an area outside of the parking lot, that could accommodate any sort of waste field. Chrissy believed that based on this it was likely that it was either a drywell or there was a waste field on another property and there did not appear to be any sort of cover for a drywell. She said she would see if there might be some money in the budget to try to locate where everything flows to. Sharon mentioned the

efforts underway to renovate and increase the use of the building year-round. Shane said the current use of the building does not involve a lot of use of the toilets and because it has not been a problem, there has been no reason to investigate where everything flows to. Sharon recommended that the Town Hall Renovation Committee see if that could be one of the items on its checklist.

Larry suggested also creating a priority list for Phase II as a potential incentive to find funding for its construction. Shane mentioned that he was going to apply for funding prioritization through BDCC (Brattleboro Development Credit Corp) which would provide access to Northern Borders funding. Chrissy added that anyone who has been very proactive and responsive to Phase I inquires and expressed interest in connecting should be prioritized for Phase II. Larry asked if there has been any contact with Stevens and Associates who have been working on a master plan for the south village to try to coordinate with their work and recommendations. Chrissy said no, there had not been any contact. Shane suggested that the VWC should contact the South Londonderry Village Task Force. Larry said he would try to contact Mimi Lines or Emmett Dunbar to see if some sort of coordination might occur.

Chrissy asked Emily who recently joined the meeting about the property which had only a minute portion fall within the $\frac{1}{4}$ mile buffer whether it would be eligible for connection funding. Emily responded that she would like to see the property or know more about it, saying there would be a different consideration for a property that was 20 acres and one that was 1 acre where only a small corner fell within the buffer. Chrissy sent her a screenshot of the property and Tom added that the property is in the floodplain as well as its current septic system. Emily said that under those conditions the answer would likely be yes, but she still would like to see the property and size in relation to how much of the property lies in the buffer.

Tom asked Emily about Chrissy not yet receiving comments from her for the 30% Design. Emily said that her comments were similar to Achouak's and by the time she was ready to send them to Chrissy, Chrissy had submitted the 60% Design plans, so she will add her 30% Design comments to the comments for the 60%.

Sharon asked Pam if she had any comments or questions, and Pam responded that she did not.

Tom brought up the question Matt Bachler had posed about the Town paying for a pretreatment system for an individual property adding that he thought money would be better spent going toward pretreatment for the community system as planned for Phase II. He asked Emily and Chrissy if pretreatment needed to be handled on an individual property sight or whether it could be handled through the community site's pretreatment. Chrissy said that it depends. She said in conversations with engineers that deal with pretreatment systems across the state, that a property that would require pretreatment for its high strength waste into its own onsite septic system, might not need it if it is connected to a flow which is mostly low strength waste because the high strength waste is diluted by the other flows to the point it is no longer high strength. She added that were there a lot of high strength flows coming into the main there may not be enough low strength flow to sufficiently dilute the high strength waste coming in, to the point it

is no longer high strength at the community waste field site. Based on those who have expressed an interest in connecting in both villages, there initially appeared to be only two high strength waste contributors. One in the north village and one in the south village. The one in the north village has since gotten a permit which does not require pretreatment leaving only the one in the south village. She suggested that allowing the one in the south village to enter the main flow without pretreatment on the idea that the high strength waste it produced would be diluted to normal or low strength waste by the other flows would have to be discussed and approved by Achouak and Emily.

Tom asked if there might be another middle ground option whereby high strength waste producers would still be required to have onsite components of pretreatment, like grease traps, but would still not need a full pretreatment system on site, again on the premise that their flow comingling with other flows would be diluted to low strength waste. Chrissy said that yes, certain components of pretreatment would still be required onsite at the individual properties, under the premise she was discussing. She added that the pretreatment for the community site in Phase II was for the purpose of allowing a doubling of the system and not to treat high strength waste at the community system site.

Shane asked about restaurants and the propensity for food to be flushed into their systems which adds to their level of high strength waste. Tom and Chrissy said that a prohibition about doing so could be places in the ordinance and Tom suggested that it was counter productive to use something like a garbage disposal to grind up solid waste into smaller pieces that still remains solid waste that accumulates in the septic tank and increases the biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), if one can do something like compost it instead. Shane also suggested and Chrissy concurred that degreasing chemicals should not be permitted since they merely break up the grease initially, but it then accumulates further down the line and deeper in the system causing problems.

Pam Spaulding asked what would happen if a garbage disposal was already in place at a property that connected to the system. Tom said that it would have to be removed, and Chrissy added that even direct discharge systems require them to be removed. Tom suggested that it equates to using one's septic tank to compost and if one has a private system, it remains their prerogative to do so but reiterated that the ground up waste is essentially compost with water and accumulates in the septic tank as an expensive way to compost when it has to then be pumped out of the septic tank. In a community system where the town pays for the pumping of the tanks there is savings in not allowing garbage disposals.

Gary suggested that we add to the notes that some sort of visual signage should be displayed for shop sinks and where there are floor drains that commercial strength cleaning and/or other chemicals are prohibited from being poured down the drains. Chrissy added that dumping large quantities of alcohol into community septic systems should be prohibited as doing so is harmful to any system. Emily suggested the Town do some educational programming for users that are connected to the system. Shane suggested an instruction manual, and Emily added that an instructional setting where people can ask questions would be very helpful to help keep the

system better maintained by the users. She also suggested a means to also provide some training and a manual for new owners, when a connected property changes hands. Tom asked if there is a way to tie this to a deed? Shane said the Town does deed transfers and there may be an opportunity to include a packet of information with them, Chrissy had an EPA publication called “A Homeowner’s Guide to Septic Systems” saying it might be a good starting point.

5. Discussion of draft Wastewater Ordinance-RCAP engagement for assistance in development

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6. Other

Shane had to leave the meeting, but said an agreement was signed with RCAP solutions and that Matt, Chrissy, Sharon and he should meet to coordinate.

Emily mentioned there were some changes in some of the ARPA deadline dates and their being pushed out a bit and wanted to make us aware that there were changes. She'll send a copy of the changes to Shane.

Emily suggested that we should continue moving forward and that we remain on track, but expressed that the biggest concern is always archeology. She added that she thought Chrissy had a good handle on remaining attentive to making sure their work is done as early as possible. Chrissy said nothing is scheduled yet, but in a few weeks, more should be known about what's required and VTDP would put us on the schedule for spring of 2025 as soon as they get started. She added that having the time over the rest of fall and winter to nail down where things will go will be an advantage in that when they come to do the Phase I investigations there won't be any changes afterward which would mean they having to return.

Tom asked if there was anything Chrissy could be doing to help them with their work, recognizing that it is specialized work. Chrissy said that they are currently doing their desktop evaluations and that they are much more qualified to do that sort of work than she is.

Sharon asked if anyone had any additional comments. Gary responded with reiteration of his previous thoughts for specs on the local disconnect panels regarding their location, visibility and height above grade and an ordinance provision to place signage at all commercial sink and floor drain locations about prohibiting the disposal of chemicals like commercial cleaning liquids down the drains. He added that he was interested to see what the profiles looked like for the linear runs and thought the use of insulation so the piping would not have to be placed so deep was a good option.

Chrissy said there was a hope to use directional drilling because it is less expensive and avoids cutting pavement, but what she recognized with the ledge a various height, she felt even as an option left open for contractors, they would still use "open and cut" rather than directional drilling. The "open and cut" method would likely allow for the use of insulation and less depth for the main pipe.

Tom had some questions about specific sites and how to make connections. Chrissy offered some ideas about how to solve them

7. Next VWC Meeting:

The next regular meeting of the VWC is Tuesday, October 15th at 6:00PM, Neighborhood Connections, 5700 Mountain Marketplace. Londonderry, VT

8. Adjourn:

Sharon made a motion to adjourn. Tom seconded, all approved. The VWC meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Larry Gubb
Secretary, Village Wastewater Committee

Approved_____
Village Wastewater Committee

_____, Interim Chair

Link to AV recording of October 4, 2024 meeting below
Date: Oct 4, 2024 08:47 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Duration:01:36:08

You can copy the recording information below and share with others

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