

**Minutes of the Carlisle Board of Health
SPECIAL MEETING
May 24, 2016**

338 Bedford Road – septic redesign

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:00 pm at Carlisle Town Hall. Present were Board members Lee Storrs (Chairman), Catherine Galligan, Todd Thorsen, Donna Margolies and Todd Brady (non-voting). Also present Linda Fantasia (Health Agent and Alex Brewster (Carlisle Mosquito)

BOARD ORGANIZATION – after a brief discussion, the Board voted the following slate of officers: Chairman – Lee Storrs, Vice Chairman – Donna Margolies, Treasurer – Cathy Galligan. Moved (Galligan), seconded (Thorsen). Motion passed 4-0-0 (Brady had not yet been sworn in).

BILLS - wages for Well Inspector and initial loan disbursement of \$10,531 under the Community Septic Loan Program to replace a failed system on Lowell Rd.

It was moved (Galligan), seconded (Margolies) and unanimously voted to approve the bills as presented. Motion passed 4-0-0

MEETING DATES – 6/1/16, 7/13/16, 7/27/16, 8/10/16, 8/24/16, 9/14/16, 9/28/16.

Permethrin – Thorsen had researched possible health risks associated with the application of Permethrin which has been approved by the EPA as an insecticide and frequently used to prevent tick bites. Permethrin is extremely toxic to ticks and causes them to die. It appears to be safe for spraying on clothing including pre-treated garments.

338 BEDFORD ROAD - septic system redesign. Present for the meeting: Alan Lehotsky and Mark Levitan (Housing Authority), Elizabeth Barnett (Housing Coordinator), Karina Coombs (Housing Trust), Dafna Krouk-Gordon (Till, Inc.), Steve Cummings (project manager)

Krouk-Gordon explained that during construction of the buildings they identified a problem with the foundation elevations so they are proposing a redesign of the septic system. Cummings explained during construction of the buildings it was determined that the sewer line inverts out of the existing buildings would be too low for gravity flow into the two septic tanks which have been installed. The proposed redesign converts the system from a gravity fed to a pump system. The two tanks will be lowered to account for the lowered building sewer and a pump chamber will be installed. Cummings noted that the building design specifications included large timber support beams making it impossible to run the waste lines from the foundation to the septic tanks and maintain the proper pitch. This most likely was the result of obtaining the septic permit before the building plans were completed. It was only during construction that the discrepancy was noted. Both the leaching field and two septic tanks have been inspected and approved. It is not possible to lower the leaching bed. Krouk-Gordon said the proposed solution is reasonable. The problem only became apparent during the last few weeks. Storrs thought the Plumbing Inspector should have noticed the problem since the tanks are very close to the building.

The Board asked whether there would be a generator to operate the pump during a power outage. Krouk-Gordon said there is no generator. Cummings said the pump chamber has the Title 5 required storage capacity and there is also the 1500 gallon septic tank for each building. It is a pump chamber, not a grinder pump. It will only be sending liquid out to the field. Fantasia said a pump chamber is required to have both a visible and audible alarm. Board members questioned who would be responsible for responding to an alarm. Krouk-Gordon said the onsite supervisor. The Board said the alarm should be in a very noticeable location. There will be an additional cost to the facility for running the pump. It is another piece of equipment that could fail. Galligan remained concerned about a long power outage. It would mean curtailing water usage which can be extremely difficult for occupants. She asked whether Till had an emergency plan. Krouk-Gordon said every facility has a disaster plan which includes moving residents out to other facilities or placing with their families. Management has a system for activating this plan.

Galligan said she had voted against requiring an annual pump out when the original permit was issued but is now reconsidering. Following a meeting with local installers, she learned that an annual pump out can be one of the best and most cost effective ways of protecting a system. Krouk-Gordon said Till will manage the facility in the best interest of its residents. Resident safety is Till's primary concern. She felt it completely unnecessary for the Board to impose such a condition. It would appear that the Board did not trust Till to do a good job. Galligan said the Board requires annual pumping for condominiums due to the number of people affected if there is a problem with the sewage disposal system. It also helps to protect the groundwater supply for the town by preventing issues sooner rather than later. Krouk-Gordon argued that Till has over 86 facilities and their success is based on protecting and looking out for their residents. For the Board to impose a regulatory condition is unnecessary and looks bad. Galligan said she would still vote for an annual pumping of the septic tank.

Levitan (Chairman of the Carlisle Housing Authority) did not dispute the need for best management practices in maintaining a septic system but warned the Board that they need to treat the group homes the same as any other residence. The Board cannot discriminate against this type of housing. He does not believe that annual pumping is a standard condition for single family residences. Till was chosen to operate the facility based on their reputation and experience. They provide good oversight and control of their properties. Storrs was concerned that a well-run facility does not guaranty knowledge of how to maintain a septic system. This is especially true if managers are used to having town water and sewer, not private wells and septic systems. The Board does not want to wait until there is a problem for management to be educated. Krouk-Gordon was asked how often they typically would pump a tank. She replied that it might one or possibly two years. It depended on the facility. Galligan said if they normally pump annually or bi-annually then it should not a problem to include it as a condition. Krouk-Gordon was concerned about the perception of stating it as a condition and disagreed that the Board should add new conditions at this time. Galligan was concerned about the fact that 338 Bedford Road was forced to return to the Board with a septic system redesign. This is a costly change and possibly could have been avoided with proper oversight during the planning stages. This does not give Galligan confidence that there will not other, unknown problems in the future. She would still want a condition for annual pumping.

Levitan said the Board should only be treating the request as they would single family homes. He referred to legal decisions that the Board should be aware of. Fantasia noted that those particular decisions had to do with zoning cases not public health. The Board is not treating this application any differently than a similar one on East Street which included two housing units. Annual pumping of the septic tank was required. Galligan suggested tabling the decision until the next meeting to allow more time to research the issue. Krouk-Gordon did not want to wait for another meeting. She did not have a problem with pumping annually only the principle of making it a permit condition. Krouk-Gordon thought it would be a waste of time to table the decision. She felt that nothing new was being requested other than adding a pump chamber. The issue of conditions was already voted on by the Board and she did not feel it was appropriate to reconsider them at this point. Levitan agreed that the Board should only vote the changes not reconsider the entire permit. He is confident that Till will maintain its asset. Thorsen felt Till had an incentive for maintaining its properties and their facility managers provide appropriate oversight. Margolies agreed.

It was moved (Galligan) and seconded (Margolies to issue a permit for plan entitled "Pump Chamber Plan, 338 Bedford Road, Carlisle MA Map 14 Parcel 14-21-0, prepared for Till, Inc., designed by Stamski & McNary, Inc., revised May 23, 2016" with the same conditions as the original approval for the septic system with an additional condition to pump the septic tank annually. Yes – Storrs, Galligan; No – Thorsen, Margolies. Motion failed.

A discussion followed on why two members voted "No". Thorsen explained that the group homes will be professionally managed. Margolies said the residences will be under one ownership unlike the condominiums on East Street. Cummings said a pump chamber will have an alarm to notify the property managers that there is a problem. Thorsen said this is another mechanical component that could fail. Storrs said it is still possible for solids to get out into the field if the septic tanks are not maintained. It is not the function of a pump chamber to prevent this. The Board agreed to take another vote.

It was moved (Thorsen) and seconded (Margolies) to issue a permit to add a pump chamber to the septic system at 338 Bedford Road, Carlisle MA with all of the original conditions but without requiring annual pumping of the septic tank. Yes – Thorsen, Margolies, Storrs, No – Galligan. Motion passed.

Storrs said he changed his vote because of the assurances from Krouk-Gordon that Till would pump the tanks annually.

There was no further business discussed. Meeting voted to adjourn at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Fantasia
Recorder