

Wainfleet Water & Sewer Servicing Project
Public Liaison Committee

Meeting Notes of August 20, 2009
Wainfleet Township Hall

In attendance:

Jayne Campbell

Anne Hetherington

April Jeffs

Ashleigh Miatello- Skrubbeltrang

Wayne Redshaw

Mayor Barbara Henderson, Township of Wainfleet

Scott Luey, Township of Wainfleet

Kimberlee Lambe, Communication Specialist, Niagara Region

Mary Lou Tanner, Manager, Niagara Region

Regrets: Joedy Groulx, Betty Matthews-Malone, Director of Water & Wastewater Services, Niagara Region

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:05 p.m. and the agenda was adopted as presented.

2. Notes of June 11 and follow up

There was no business arising from the notes; they were adopted as presented.

3. Correspondence

Mary Lou has been sharing the correspondence she has been receiving with the PLC members as it comes in. PLC members expressed their appreciation for this effort.

She received a recent email from a concerned citizen that contained a flyer prepared by the Wainfleet Ratepayers Association. The information in it, specifically the reference to the cost of the potential water and sewer project, was substantially exaggerated.

Action: Mary Lou to send PDF of flyer to members as many had not seen it.

PLC members brought forward synopsis of correspondence they've had directly with residents including:

- Residents being upset with the recent lot survey. Residents are encouraged to send a letter directly to Mary Lou outlining any issues. Mary Lou reported that she has also received about 10-15 calls from residents about the survey – some of them positive.
- Residents being confused as to whether they needed to complete the form if they lived on a private road. Mary Lou confirmed that all residents, including those living on private roads, should complete the form.

- Residents being unable to complete the forms because they don't know where the septic beds etc. are on their property (some may have recently moved to the area etc.). It was confirmed that the AECOM staff would be able to assist residents in this situation.
- Residents being concerned that if they fill out the form, they are committing to the project. It was stated, clearly and categorically by Mary Lou and Mayor Henderson that this was absolutely not the case. Filling out the form by no means is seen as anyone being 'for' or 'against' the project. It's simply a means of gathering more information to help further refine costs. The PLC members have confirmed that they tried to explain the benefits of the survey to residents, however, the actions taken by the Wainfleet Ratepayers to scare residents into believing if they fill it out, they are actually conceding to the project, made their opportunities for clarification difficult.
Action: a statement confirming these details will be added to the Wainfleet Township website. The Region will give consideration to taking out ads that also confirm the details for residents.
- Some residents who attended the Ratepayers AGM stated they didn't receive the survey package. Mary Lou noted that the survey package was actually mailed to more residents than just those along the lakeshore to ensure that everyone received it. Addresses were gleaned from MPAC and the local tax roll.
Action: Ashleigh will try and confirm the names of those who noted they did not receive it and will cross reference with the list provided by Scott and Mary Lou.
- Residents expressing dismay at not having heard about the survey during the recent Open House/Public meeting. Mary Lou noted that it was discussed, briefly, at the Open House, however exact details could not be shared at that time as the consultant had just been chosen.
- Residents were concerned that their properties might change (landscaping etc.) between now and if the project gets approved –thereby potentially rendering their lot survey invalid. Mary Lou noted that should the project proceed, the Township/Region will return to each residence and confirm the lot survey details.
- PLC members have had residents come to them with 'rumours' about those people living on private roads being 'exempt' from having to connect to water/sewer pipes, should the project move forward, because the pipes are only going on public roads. Mary Lou noted that the current design tender has requested that the consultants prepare designs that include running the pipes up private roads. In such cases, it is likely the Township would acquire an easement where the pipes are located and not take over the entire road.

4. Project Status Update

Natural Heritage Impact Assessment - Field work continues. Two draft reports – Environmental Policy and Background Studies Summary – have been circulated to the Natural Resources Steering Committee (NPCA, Regional Planning, MNR, Township Planning) for comments. The reports will be released this fall.

Archaeology - The Stage I Report will be completed by the end of August and will be released when received. Meeting with Six Nations (Elected Council) is on August 26, 2009.

Social Impact Assessment - The report has been received in its final form. The report is not being released until the ongoing complaint to the Information Privacy Commissioner has been resolved.

Finance - The consultant is finalizing their proposal and the kick off meeting is going to be scheduled for the week of August 31st or September 7th.

Design - The field survey is ongoing. The survey of households continues for household information.

A technology workshop will be held on September 28, 2009 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Four Points Sheraton in Thorold. The workshop will focus on the advantages and disadvantages of the technologies identified by the design consultant and what the various technologies mean for homeowners. There will be a general discussion of costs, but there is still not enough information for firm figures.

It was asked if designing the system for fire flow came at an additional cost. Mary Lou responded that yes, there is an additional cost for fire flow, however, with that in place, homeowners insurance drops significantly (upwards of 40 per cent).

It was also asked if there would be sewer back ups if the project moves forward. Mary Lou responded that the proposed system is a closed sanitary sewer and as such, would not cause back ups. They are usually caused when 'combined sewers' (sewers that combine both sanitary and storm water) exceed their capacity during significant precipitation events.

June 20th Open House/Public Meeting Facilitator's Report - This has been received in draft form. Comments from PLC members are due by August 31st at which time the report will be published.

5. Public Meeting and Open House – Facilitator's Report

The group reviewed Sally's report. The intent is to release the report to the public in the next two-three weeks. PLC members were asked to send any comments on the report to Mary Lou by August 31.

Comments on the day included that Sally was an 'excellent' facilitator and she was able to control the meeting well. It was also noted that the majority of attendees were seniors and the main issue was cost.

6. Other Business

1. Providing Ratepayers Association with information in advance of the general public.

Based on a number of factors, it was discussed whether or not the group should continue to receive PLC reports and other documents in advance of the general public. It was determined they would still receive information from staff in advance.

2. Walkerton speaker

It was suggested that the Township consider bringing in a guest speaker, who lived through Walkerton, to discuss safe water quality. He will be coming to this area and he might be able to stop here on his way through.

Action: speaker will be invited to the next public meeting.

3. Ratepayers water testing

It appears the Ratepayers had the water tested near Casey's Drain where E.coli levels were 'off the charts'. It is being suggested, by the Ratepayers, that the reason for this is because the E.coli is coming from nearby farmers fields and one or more of those farmers receives sewage sludge from the Region that is applied to his fields. It was noted that this sewage sludge must meet certain standards before being applied to farmland, and, that the whole process is highly regulated. The sludge is treated prior to being land-applied and will not have E.coli in it. The testing is being redone.

Meeting adjourned – 8:35 pm.

Next meeting – October, date TBD. Will be after the September workshop.