

Westchester County Board Of Legislators
Committee on Environment & Energy
Septic Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes, June 22, 2010

In attendance:

Committee Members:

Subcommittee Chair: Hon. Peter B. Harckham

Gina D'Agrosa, Water Master, Westchester County

Paul Kutzy, P.E. Assistant Commissioner, Westchester County Department of Health
Bureau of Environmental Quality

Hon. Richard Lyman, Board Member, Town of Pound Ridge

Guests & Visitors:

Jeffrey Osterman, Director of Planning, Town of Bedford

Jerry Faiella, Administrator, Town of New Castle

Bruce Thompson, Building Inspector, Town of North Salem

Bob Eichenger Green Septic Solutions, Amenia, New York

Vincent Giorgio, NYCDEP

Stephen Ferreira,, Town of Cortlandt

BOL Staff: Chris Crane, Wendy Wild

Chair Peter Harckham called the meeting to order at 3:35 P.M.

Chair Harckham gave an update on the most recent NWWC meeting and the discussion of seeking EOH funding for completion of the initial phase of the Septic Database project. He stated that the County is committed to aiding this effort, even if bonding is required. The main concern of localities is the interface of local governments and IT team designing the database. The Septic Subcommittee's next meeting will be dedicated to this issue, and members of the NWWC will attend as well.

In response to a question from Jeff Osterman, Paul Kutzy (Westchester County Department of Health WCDOH), indicated that 75A and WCDOH regulations apply to septic systems up to 1000 gallons and systems over 1,000 gallons (residential multi-family or cluster homes or commercial sites), are governed by DEC intermediate design standards.

Jerry Faiella raised an example of a problematic situation, asking what if a residence with a septic system has been abandoned, and its new owner wants to reconstitute the property-? He said WCDOH considered this a new build as opposed to a retrofit due to abandonment. Paul said if bedroom count remained the same and there was no other "major expansion" of the house then the house would be considered simply reoccupied with use of existing septic system. If additions are constructed that result in a "major expansion" as defined by Article VIII of the Westchester County Sanitary Code, then it would be considered as a new build .

Discussion followed about types of technologies allowed and disallowed and reasoning behind this, including the surface discharge as a less costly option for places like Katonah, and NYCDEP remains concerned about maintenance requirements for alternate systems, and the lack of assurance that proper maintenance will continue. The committee discussed possible options to ensure appropriate maintenance and necessary upkeep through municipal laws, including the revocation of a property's CO for noncompliance.

Ongoing areas of concern, including Stanwood and Random Farms neighborhoods were discussed as examples of challenges to optimal septic management planning

Bob Eichenger shared with the committee some examples of alternate technologies which might merit consideration. He and Peter referred to a completed report on the Skaneateles Lake program, which now has 5 years of data, and suggested that the principal, Eric Murdoch would be willing to meet with committee at a future date.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 22nd and the meeting adjourned at 4:53 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Wendy Wild