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SPECIAL MEETING NOVEMBER 25, 2002

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on November 25, 2002 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

Present: Councilors Cascio, Flynn, Gardow, Hemmann, and Chairperson Czernicki. Absent: Councilors Fitzpatrick, Morin, Sassano and Deputy Mayor O'Connor.

Also present: Joseph Swetcky, Jr., Interim Town Manager; Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk; Senators Fonfara and Ciotto; Representatives Doyle and Guerrera; MDC Commissioners Camilliere and Courneen; George Sparks, MDC Chief Executive Officer; Tom Morrissey, DEP; Leigh Standish, WINA; Bob Wright, Karen Perry, Robinson & Cole; Bob Moore, MDC; Peter Gross, Fuss & O'Neill

All stood for the pledge of allegiance to the flag which was led by Councilor Cascio.

George Sparks from the MDC reported on progress of work to reduce CSO to the cove. He stated that he has been in contact with Peter Gross of Fuss & O'Neill. Mr. Sparks introduced Bob Moore, Chief Administrative Officer of the MDC who gave an update of the additional modeling, scenarios and ongoing work related to the CSO project.

Mr. Moore reported that continual work has been done on the Wethersfield Cove drainage basin, the calibration of the model, and on the system-wide problem with DEP. Also a new consent order has been issued on the rest of the system throughout the city. The CSO alarm system, which will be used to manage over 36 overflow points throughout the city, was completed at a cost of \$4.9 million. The alarm system provides real-time information on when a storm starts, when an overflow begins and ends, when a storm ends and measures the amount of flow and the amount of rainfall that occurred. This is useful information that can be used for planning throughout the system. Sewer separation projects are underway for Maple Avenue. The first step of the project is 95% complete. Phase 2 of the Maple Avenue project is expected to be completed by July 2003. Flow slipping has been completed along mid & lower Franklin Avenue and Bond Street, which has proved to be about 82% effective. Only 18% of areas had to be opened up to prevent localized flooding. During the re-calibration, a major error was discovered in the system. There were 2-3 structures which were restrictions in the system that were not picked up in the model which led to higher flows and resulting overflows. Also 18% of the flow slipping had to be reopened due to producing about 1 million gallons of overflow back into the system which resulted in approximately 3.5 million gallons above the level discussed last June. The model has now been calibrated against recent storm events and shown to be correct. In October, additional options were looked at regarding the adjustment of storage in the system. Additional separation is recommended throughout the Maple Avenue and Franklin Avenue areas. It is suggested that the rain leader program Pilot Study in the City of Hartford be looked at regarding disconnecting the rain leaders at the ground level. The actions proposed are new storm sewers along the Franklin Avenue and Maple Avenue areas to provide separation and decrease the additional 3 million gallons of output. The \$3 million allocated for work on Wethersfield Avenue would only prevent a small amount of separation; therefore the money may be moved into other separation projects. Proposal would be to work with Fuss & O'Neil and SCA to obtain concurrence of where projects will go, what would be the extent of them, and obtain agreement on effectiveness of projects. Also to proceed on a step by step basis monitoring results while working with the Town to decide appropriateness of application of funds received as a result of work by our Senators.

Representative Guerrera joined the meeting at this point.

Councilor Cascio asked where the Cove project stands on the priority list of the State of Connecticut and since June, what benefit has Wethersfield Cove seen since all of these tests, follow-ups, projects, flow patterns, rain leaders, have been initiated? Councilor Cascio expressed concern for the accountability of the MDC and the DEP and is looking for action rather than words. Mr. Moore stated that more than \$30 million has been spent for construction of pipelines and

storm water separations that have greatly reduced the number of overflows.

Councilor Cascio asked if this construction has benefited the Cove. Tom Morrissey of the Connecticut DEP responded that ongoing action in the southend is about \$8 million worth of continued separation of storm and wastewater by the MDC. It is a very high priority for the DEP in terms of their Clean Water Fund funding. The CSO project for Hartford is moved quickly to the DEP bond commission for approval and a 50% grant has been funded. These actions have resulted in a significant reduction in sewage going into the Cove. Funding for Fuss & O'Neil to do Cove sampling and testing has been recently approved, it is hoped to show a reduction in sewage of close to 89%.

Councilor Cascio showed concern for the additional 3.5 million gallons of slush flow into the Cove. Mr. Morrissey said that the original modeling calculation estimates of work in the southend of Hartford and Maple Avenue would reduce combined sewage overflows to the Cove to approximately .4mgd. What has been discovered during actual monitoring and field verification during storms this past summer and fall is that the original model estimate was too low and that the actual amount is 3-4mgd. As a result of better data, we have a better understanding of the system underground. This data is a refinement of an incomplete understanding to begin with. There's a possibility to rethink the roof leader disconnect program and pursue instead further sewer separation and storm sewer construction.

Councilor Cascio asked why the Cove is any different than any state beach in regards to shutting the facility down due to waste in the water. Is the Cove required to have a "beach" in order for the State to shut it down? Mr. Morrissey said that State beaches are monitored weekly and that it is the responsibility of the Town to test local facilities. The DEP publishes bathing beach bacteria criteria and the Health Department will evaluate samples for free. Mr. Morrissey was not aware of any samples of the Cove meeting the bacteria criteria at this point.

Representative Doyle wished to thank Mr. Morrissey for attending this meeting and many others over the past ten years. Rep. Doyle stated that he is skeptical of the Town spending \$10 million for roof leader disconnections. He believes this is a pre-existing obligation of the MDC.

Chairperson Czernicki stated that at this point there seems to be postponement of the roof leader disconnect and to look instead at further separation.

Councilor Flynn asked if the modeling had been completed and if the modeling data had been shared with Fuss & O'Neill. Mr. Moore answered that the modeling is complete and that there are no specific reports just data and general information at this point. Councilor Flynn asked if there is a cost estimate at this point for the additional separation. Mr. Moore said that there is no cost estimate available at this time. MDC has been averaging for separation about \$1,000 for foot for 10,000 to 12,000 feet. The result of this separation would be a reduction of approximately 400,000 to one million gallons of water.

Senator Fonfara asked Bob Wright of Robinson & Cole, if the additional sewer separation is put in place, how much of the four million gallons of overflow would be eliminated and what the process used would be. Mr. Wright said that approximately three million gallons would be eliminated and that the MDC would go back to find where the flow came from and then the decision would be made to use either storage or a new pipeline to remove the flow in the area. Mr. Wright said that sewer separation is used throughout the Cove area as the primary solution. Also included is flow slipping. There are two sources of rainwater getting into the sanitary sewer. One is the street catch basins which go into the combined sanitary sewer (CSO) and the other is through the roof leaders that go into the sanitary connections to that same pipe. Original model suggested getting rain from the gutters out of the sewers. However, rain leader program cannot get that much water out of the system.

Senator Fonfara asked if anything above .5 million would require looking at sewer separation. Mr. Wright said that there is not a limit on the amount. Roof leader would get us one million plus. We'd look at sewer separation or storage within a system or other options. The question with storage is where to put it. You would want to locate it in an area where it would do some good so it collects flow that has sewage in it.

Senator Fonfara stated if we consider the original proposal of the roof leader disconnects, would the cost of doing that create the need for Special Act Funds and that those funds could be accessed for other approaches. Mr. Wright said that this is correct.

Councilor Flynn asked Mr. Moore if the modeling is complete and the reports generated, could Peter Gross get the information and when would he like the project completed. Peter Gross told Councilor Flynn that he would like to see the data soon so that they can understand where the flows in the system are coming from. They would then assemble the group who had met previously from the MDC, the DEP, and WINA to discuss the alternatives as they pertain to the new modeling.

Representative Doyle clarified that the \$10 million was designated to do work in Wethersfield not to right the pre-existing obligation in the Southend of Hartford. If council decides that sewer separation is the way to go, he will abide; however he is skeptical of work being done in Hartford rather than in Wethersfield.

Councilor Gardow asked if of the 3.5 million gallons, 2 million is taken up by the west part of the City of Hartford and 1 million by the Franklin Avenue area would rain leader disconnect still need to be part of the formula to get rid of the last half million gallons? What is the plan for the remaining .5 million gallons? Mr. Wright answered that rain leader disconnect is still part of that solution and it counts for over 1 million gallons.

Councilor Gardow asked then would there never be an overflow? Also, by doing rain leader disconnect, which means digging up lawns, would there be additional separation that would be done by the city of Hartford without doing rain leader disconnect? Mr. Wright answered that the original program included rain leader disconnect which brought the level to .6 or .7. With the new model that number is raised to almost 4 which still includes the 1 million to be reduced by rain leader disconnect. The .6 wasn't in addition to the rain leader, it was a result of those efforts. The rain leader disconnect would have to be done to keep the rain out of the sewer. There had been discussion regarding connection of a new pipe to the new storm drain. The original proposal was to disconnect the drain at the downspout, which has been successful in many cities throughout the country.

Senator Ciotto expressed concern with the issue of the Cove get settled. He has had inquiries as to when this issue will be settled. He stated that part of the problem is Hartford's and that some of the \$10 million grant should be dedicated there. He was very disappointed that the Deputy Mayor was not present. He expressed his wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving to all and asked that his comments be extended to the Deputy Mayor. At 7:20 Senator Ciotto needed to leave to attend meeting in both Newington and Deep River.

Representative Guerrera stated his concern that if the money is earmarked for sewer separation in the Southend and rain leaders do not get disconnected, what happens then? Mr. Wright answered that they have to be disconnected or there will still be overflows.

Senator Fonfara wished to clarify that he and Representative Doyle do not disagree with the current opinions. He stated that the problem is in Hartford and that Wethersfield contributes very little to the sewage problem in the Cove. The bottom line is that Wethersfield Cove should be the beneficiary of the \$10 million being spent regardless of which town the money goes to. The issue is what is the best way to spend the \$10 million to affect 100% removal of waste from the Cove.

Chairperson Czernicki expressed concern over consent order 5365 and does it in any way affect what happens in the Cove?

Mr. Wright said that consent order 5365 was issued and signed by both MDC and DEP and was a long-term control plan for the City of Hartford. Wethersfield Cove is a separate basin and has its own consent orders. One is to develop the plan shown on the map distributed to those in attendance. Additional actions under a separate consent order pertain to the alarm system. The new consent order for the entire system requires coming up with a control strategy. The work on the Cove will be incorporated into that plan. MDC, rather than Fuss & O'Neill will be required to come up with a monitoring plan for Wethersfield Cove, the Connecticut River and Park River.

Chairperson Czernicki asked regarding the sewer separation, what will be the next steps taken? Coming up with sizes, lengths, diameter, capacity and the flow that is available in the pipes using the model. Next, MDC would work with Fuss & O'Neill and SCA to insure that all agree on the program. The feasibility analysis is expected to be complete by the end of January. If \$3 million is moved from project in Wethersfield Avenue to Franklin Avenue it is expected that

design could begin in 2003 and construction in 2004. Speeding up funds would greatly enhance getting to this goal much more quickly.

Councilor Cascio wanted to know if there is any way to find out in what range the bacteria water in the Cove falls and if the town could be notified of these counts. Mr. Gross said that sampling has been done and that results are not back yet. They are trying to get both dry and wet weather samples. Mr. Gross said that the Town would certainly be notified as soon as results are received.

Councilor Flynn verified with Mr. Morrissey that a 75% rain leader disconnect would reduce water flow by 1 million gallons and that as of right now there is only a proposal for a pilot study of the rain leader disconnect program. Mr. Wright said that the rain leader disconnect program has been put off to do the separation project and then take a look at it again.

Councilor Flynn is concerned that there is not a time line for completion of the rain leader disconnect program. He asked why we are not proceeding with the rain leader disconnect at this time and why in terms of water quality health is this not the more effective choice. Mr. Wright said that very little of the drainage basin will not be separated as a result of the drainage separation plans. In addition to pipes there will be flow slipping in between them to carry rain down the gutter. There is little water left beyond that and if it proves to be cost effective and the rain leader contributes enough flow needed, it will be considered.

Mr. Sparks, MDC CEO, said that even if a complete separation, which would include flow slipping, you still would not eliminate combined sewer overflows without rain leader disconnections. Downspout disconnection is much less disruptive to neighbors as it does not require any digging and it frees up the \$10 million to go ahead with other projects like sewer separation. Hartford has looked at a study done in the 1980's in the city of St. Paul where 18,000 of 19,000 downspouts were disconnected. Right now in his opinion, the most cost effective solution would be to go ahead with the downspout disconnection which would free up money to do further sewer separation including flow slipping.

Representative Guerrero departed at 7:40 to attend a meeting in Rocky Hill.

Councilor Gardow asked if it is \$1,000 per foot for approximately 12,000 feet of rain leader disconnect is there enough money to do this? Mr. Sparks stated that these are early results and early numbers. It is premature at this time to decide if \$10 million is enough. We need to obtain more and better information before we determine what it will take to get where we have to be.

Mr. Wright suggested three tasks that may be taken on regarding the modeling and available information. First, the modelers data available needs to be reviewed by Peter Gross. The next task would be to look at alternative solutions and use the model to cost out the different design information to be made available to the engineers who would come up with a viable alternative. Everyone needs to get back on a schedule. MDC, SCA and Fuss & O'Neill need to meet on a regular basis to keep advancing the task. Thirdly, the current consent order doesn't concern the code of issues but that consent order 5143 does. This consent order needs a new time table of tasks to bring it current. Need to encourage DEP and MDC and various engineers to caucus on that issue as that is the tool to be used to set up the schedule of goals for advancement.

Senator Fonfara is concerned that although he is enthusiastic about the progress being made, there has not been an honest discussion getting beyond the designed storm event. Mr. Wright said that his understanding is that in terms of the updated model, there are numbers available for the 1,5,10,25 and 50 year storms that can be reviewed by Fuss & O'Neill, SCA and MDC. They can tell projected volumes of uncontrolled flow and how they play into the alternatives.

Chairperson Czernicki expressed appreciation to all parties involved for their cooperation in coming up with solutions to rid the Cove of waste. She asked Mr. Gross to gather information as soon as possible so that all parties could continue to work together. It was agreed upon by all parties that the next meeting be scheduled for February 17. It was verified that Mr. Sparks is asking us to release money for the sewer separations.

Mr. Sparks explained that all parties need to be on the "same page" before proceeding to the State to request the money. He stated that the most cost effective solution seems to be continuing the sewer separation and rain leader

disconnection jointly.

Senator Fonfara thanked Chairperson Czernicki inviting him and for the opportunity discuss it.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:40 p.m., Councilor Flynn moved "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**" seconded by Councilor Cascio. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk