

Meeting Report

Oneida County Sewer District (OCSD) Permit Compliance and Abatement Project Steering Committee Kick-Off Meeting

**November 28, 2007
MVCC IT Building
Utica, NY**

Facilitator:

Nancy Pattarini, OCSD Consultant Team

Attendees:

Mike Mahoney, City of Utica; Deb Day, City of Utica; Terry Coughlin, Village of New Hartford; Don Ryan, Village of New Hartford; Rob Maciol, Village of New York Mills; Mike Bailey, Village of New York Mills; Darlene Abbatecola, Town of Frankfort; Al Candido, County Executive Chief of Staff; Nancy Pattarini, Paige Group; Karl Schrantz, Shumaker Engineering; Steve Devan, Oneida County Department of Water Pollution Control; Carson Sorrell, Town of Marcy; Joe Lazenby, Village of Whitesboro; Richard Pugh, Village of Whitesboro; Tony Leone, Village of Yorkville; Chuck Gibbs, Town of Whitestown; Roger Cleveland, Town of New Hartford; Scott Owens, Town of New Hartford; Bill Schmitt, Whitestown town attorney; Anthony Picente, Oneida County Executive; John LaGorga, Stearns & Wheler; Dan Gilbert, Brown and Caldwell.

Introduction

Facilitator Pattarini explained that meeting reports will be sent to Steering Committee members following each meeting and will also be posted on the County's web site. As previously discussed, meeting frequency will be determined on an as-needed basis.

It was recommended that the next meeting be held in the latter part of January after major Consent Order deadlines have been met and there is substantive action to take on plan review and project activity.

Suggestion was made to consider possibility of appointing a chair from among the membership. A chairperson will provide a single point of contact for the Public Information project team in terms of creating and reviewing meeting agendas and meeting reports, and funneling information to committee members and community delegates. This item will be added to the next meeting agenda.

Roles and Responsibilities of meeting participants defined and explained.

Facilitator

The facilitator will maintain meeting order, enable discussion among committee members, and follow agenda to accomplish meeting objectives in a timely fashion.

The Public Information team will provide administrative support before, during and after Steering Committee meetings.

Appointment of committee delegates by the member communities was undertaken to ensure that there is a voice from the community through these representatives.

Chief elected officials in attendance were reminded to name community delegates over the next several weeks. Involvement of delegates is critical to the success of the project. Community leaders who were not present and have not yet appointed a community representative will be contacted by the Public Information team.

The objective of the facilitator is consensus building and encouraging solutions-oriented participation by committee members.

Steering Committee

Committee members are being asked to make significant commitment of time and effort in the name of the public good.

Committee members will provide strategic oversight for project planning and activity.

In particular, the rollout of plans addressing tasks identified in the Consent Order, and their impact on individual communities, will require involvement of committee members. They will be asked to provide input and reaction to ideas and suggestions presented by the project team.

Public Information

The Public Information team will provide ongoing communication with community members, stakeholder groups and Steering Committee delegates to facilitate public education and understanding of project activity.

Committee members were provided with project binders containing project background, copies of the Consent Order, project status reports, and committee meeting reports. These binders will continue to be populated as the project and meeting activity progresses.

Community websites and newsletters will become important sources of information. A request was made for officials to identify appropriate contacts so the OCSD Consultant Team can convey information to webmasters and newsletter editors.

**Status Report by Commissioner Steve Devan
Oneida County Water Quality/Water Pollution Control**

Commissioner Devan provided a recap of the past five months of project activity since the Consent Order was signed in July 2007. He reviewed each of the tasks listed under Schedule A of the Consent Order and announced that the District has met all deadlines so far and avoided costly penalties for failure to comply with the DEC's stringent timetable. Project status is currently good and the outlook for continued compliance is positive.

Devan also outlined details of the funding of an Environmentally Beneficial Project for the Sauquoit Creek Basin, which will apply \$30,000 of the \$150,000 fine that was part of signing the Consent Order. The project, which includes a trailhead parking site for the Rayhill Trail, also involves the offering of land by BOCES and design by the New York State DOT. The Highway Departments from the Towns of Whitestown and New Hartford will assist in the construction. Completion target date is July of 2008.

Devan added that the rollout of an Inflow/Infiltration (I&I) Offset Plan will involve members of the Steering Committee. This important plan will help guide future development in Oneida County. The District must also conduct an overall district-wide, long-term study to find out the sources of excess stormwater. This will involve flow monitoring of the sanitary sewers and will include the installation of approximately 50 flow meters throughout in various sections of the municipal sewer systems.

Communities can now begin identifying projects that will remove I&I from the system, Devan said, but it is important that the County be notified so that project work can be documented and I&I credits can be accrued. Devan said these projects include the removal of homeowners' sump pumps, roof leaders, foundation drains and leaky or broken sewer laterals.

**Report by Engineering Project Project Manager Karl Schrantz
Shumaker Consulting Engineering**

Karl Schrantz said committee members will have many opportunities for brainstorming and more involvement beginning in early '08. These will include highly sensitive issues like funding of I&I projects, enforceability of inspections, and other related legal issues.

The project team will be evaluating possible models and best practices from other cities and towns for committee and communities to consider.

Schrantz underscored the need for cooperation, teamwork and participation on the part of the Committee. He added that the Steering Committee meeting structure will allow for

participation by encouraging committee members to react to materials and project alternatives received prior to meetings.

Questions/Comments from Steering Committee and Project Team members

A number of questions and comments arose during this portion of the agenda. These included:

Possibility of involving DPW personnel to add value to group. Response from the project team is that they have been and will continue to be involved in the process.

Documenting and banking flow credits per the pending I/I Offset Plan for quick-fix, inexpensive community inflow/infiltration removal projects will be important. Communities must notify the County before beginning any projects in order to determine amount of flow credits that will be generated by a project and, if necessary, to inform DEC of the project.

With regard to the County's Sewer Overflow Response Plan, communities should begin implementing the process for reporting overflows to NYSDEC so that operators can get into the habit of performing this additional administrative step when overflows do occur.

District and project team personnel spent a significant amount of time this past summer and early fall conducting visual inspections of portions of the sanitary sewers located in low-lying areas. Additional inspections will continue in conjunction with flow monitoring and other activities in order to identify sources of I/I. It was noted that the drought that occurred this past Summer and early Fall did have a positive effect on the sewer system by reducing the amount of I/I entering the system.

The most critical parts of the project will be cost and private I&I issues. The Project Team will be looking to the Steering Committee for assistance and community input in those areas.

We will need to evaluate options for increasing available capacity within the sewer system through sewer system repairs, expansion/building new pump station, or the possibility of relief tanks/storage. Do we fix sewers or fix treatment capacity? The question will be put on the table for further discussion at future meetings based on the results of engineering assessments..

Installing meters and breaking tasks down to workable projects is a positive first step.

Comments from County Executive

County Executive Picente added that Committee might consider rotating meeting venues. He will appoint two at-large delegates shortly and expressed appreciation for committee

members' time and efforts in this important undertaking that will impact Oneida County for decades to come.

Next meeting: late-January 2008 Committee members will be notified at least two weeks prior to meeting date.