

**PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
SOUTHAMPTON VILLAGE
FEBRUARY 7, 2019**

Due notice having been given, a workshop of the Planning Commission for the Village of Southampton was held in the Board room of the Municipal Building, 23 Main Street, Southampton, NY on Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 5:00PM.

Chair Paul Travis, Marc Chiffert, Joseph McLaughlin and Laura Devinney were present. Edward F. Corrigan, Robert Essay, Edoardo Simioni and Jesse Warren were absent. Eldon Scott was late.

Chair opened the meeting.

Chair began that they have been looking for months at issues related to drainage in the Village center and Lake Agawam. There is a list of all the items that are a compilation of measures that can be undertaken to improve Lake Agawam. One of the issues is the nitrogen load from the surrounding properties. Several years ago, H2M conducted a study regarding a sewer system. The study was undertaken, and it was decided that it needed more study. But, the lack of a sewer system does impact the Lake. They need to address what is the most economic and efficient way to handle it. We need diversified uses in the Village. Sag Harbor has a sewer system and they have more uses, and as a result have vitality all year, not just seasonal.

Marc Chiffert was involved in H2M study, the need for the sewer is unquestionable. One of the first reasons is public health, we have a high-water table and it doesn't drain properly. Also, the sewer system will allow for diversified use in the Village. One of the first things to be decided, in his opinion, is where to put the plant. Whatever the technology, the location must be established. When they studied the sewer, one possibility was to use the existing hospital plant, also a parcel behind the police station, which is now the future ambulance station. There is a property next to the post office, it is extremely suitable for gravity feed. He feels that deciding where to place the plant and then acquire the site, can help them to move forward. Second, would be to reach out to engineering firms for the construction.

There are new technologies, but with Suffolk County regulations, the issue is small lots. The allowable flow rate from a building depends on the size of the lot when there is no sewer system. A centralized waste water system is the answer because then they aren't restricted by size of lot. That would free up for more use and a level field for every commercial endeavor. There are many new technologies, but still need the centralized system.

L. Devinney feels the will to do it is lacking. Chair feels possibly new technology will make it less expensive. It will be bonded and there are lots of ways to make it affordable.

Around the Lake the homes greatly influence the health of the Lake, a sewer system will help alleviate that and there will be support from the homeowners now because of the condition of the Lake. There are a lot of County, State, and Federal programs to help pay for it. J. Warren has done a great job at accumulating all the materials from what has been done or suggested from previous study. Getting the property owners around the Lake to be on board is essential, it seems that they are at a more agreeable place, they could outreach to them. Chair stated that having homeowners and Village business center

support would help pay for the sewer system. Bring them into the solution so the Lake and Village both benefit. Doing a sewer district that covers North Sea Road, Village Center and Lake Agawam would be the most beneficial. E. Scott stated that it has been shown that all the houses of the Village affect the health of the Lake, the immediate on the Lake are quicker to affect but all the homes will eventually contribute to the problem. M. Chiffert states the value of the property will be positively affected on a cleaner Lake. He mentioned the P3, Public Private Partnership, funding as an option to help pay, it makes it easier. J. McLoughlin asked can they use P3 funding with the pod cluster system. M. Chiffert thinks that they will not be able to use that funding for that because they fund larger projects. E. Scott thought they put the sewer plant idea to bed and felt that the small cluster system is the way to go. M. Chiffert said there is no down side to the cluster option, but it works better as a centralized plant. Those cluster systems are better for smaller projects, the Village is a large area. L. Devinney asked does the high-water table affect the small system, yes it may. E. Scott recalls that the person they had invited to a past meeting spoke about the cluster system being easier and less expensive. They can invite the consultants back.

Chair stated that they need to decide, are they as a Commission ready to say to the Village, you must address that, and it is time for moving forward. J. McLoughlin stated that business owners in the Village they think it is great idea, but they feel that it is a gamble. L. Devinney feels that regardless of the system that we as a commission are committed to saying that that it is time. Chair feels that the price and burden on the owners is a concern in the public view. Looking at a bigger system so that others share the burden is the best option. With all the other things that are affecting Lake Agawam, there will be a lot more public funding. Westhampton Beach got it done. J. McLoughlin stated that they can see if it worked once they have finished. M. Chiffert said the centralized system treats it 300 times better and it is easier to fund than a smaller system. At the P3 conference he attended, he saw anything less than 30 or 40 million dollars is difficult to fund via the public private partnership.

J. McLaughlin said existing apartments are used for employees of the businesses in the Village. Apartment above Main Street are very expensive, and the average person cannot afford the rent. Chair stated that there are a very large number of older persons are looking for smaller housing in the Village center, do people see that as helpful? People can't rent anything that isn't grandfathered without a sewer system. E. Scott said it would be great to develop year-round housing, but it will not guarantee that a year-round resident rents the space.

Chair state that the Southampton Arts Center has activities every Friday, the people there are around 70 years of age, a senior crowd. How do you stimulate a younger market, you need affordable housing and things to do? Chair is frustrated that they are going in circles with this. For the business owners on Main Street ask will it give them more business. M. Chiffert stated these discussions should be separated. They must see how to fund and get support. Another team will have to look at parking and traffic flow. Chair said there are not certainties but the Villages that have done a sewer system have had tremendous positives, i.e. Patchogue and Sag Harbor. At some point, they must decide are they going to leave it or are they going to deal with it. The Lake is getting worse and Village business district problems are getting worse. J. McLaughlin stated they need to provide options. It may be up to the Commission to provide options. M. Chiffert said they need to get a site, E. Scott feels that it isn't the first step. M. Chiffert said that the site is first.

E. Scott doesn't feel the central system is sellable to the Village. The other question is what we are trying to accomplish. The homeowners on the Lake feel there is a real need for the clean-up. J.

McLaughlin stated that there are lots of flag lots around the Lake and it will involve installing down driveways. L. Devinney stated that progress is disruptive. E. Scott stated there is technology in place and that homeowners are putting in systems to treat the sewage. E. Scott said they need to look at what are the goals, Lake clean up and Village uses. M. Chiffert stated it is a health issue as well.

Chair stated the problem is going to get worse, there is only so much you can do but you can't solve it without the will to do so. All the lakes along Long Island have had the problem, there is a whole compiled list that needs to be addressed. Bonding capacity is good in the Village right now. E. Scott feels the tax issue for the voters will be difficult for getting it done. Chair states what is going to happen if we do nothing. He is concerned where the Village is going to be 10 or 20 years if they do nothing. He is upset that Westhampton Beach went forward and got it largely paid for with all the resources available for funding. A centralized system will be far less and its easier to finance stated M. Chiffert. Chair stated that you say to tax payers that they want to borrow 30M and people get concerned and feel it will change their life. In the long run it is much cheaper, the other option is that everyone must comply eventually in changing their septic within a time frame. E. Scott stated that they can control their property more by putting apartments above with the new systems. M. Chiffert said the County won't approve that on small lots because they don't have the size of property to allow for the flow rate. Chair said that homeowners may have to cluster because few are large enough to handle. How do they get that to happen because there is not public funding for that; for instance, ten owners for a 300,000 system is 30,000 and they all have to agree to do it and have mini sewer district. Getting ten people to agree to do it and then get it paid for is very difficult, the easier is the sewage plant.

E. Scott they are speaking without facts, they need to study it. M. Chiffert said the Hospital technology is old but they still have a plant. E. Scott said the other major thing is the strength of the Village center economics and it may be a piece of that. They need to attract locals into the Village. The retail has changed nationally so that makes it harder. Chair would like the Commission to think about who they can engage and start with what are we trying to accomplish. It may be helpful to have someone to come in from Westhampton Beach to speak regarding how they funded it. They took the initiative and it took about five years to put it together. M. Chiffert think it will be five years out as well, he thinks it starts with the site. The police station site was very small, they boxed themselves into that limit even though the setbacks were small. A new site with less restriction would be better.

Chair thinks the issue is what do they want to accomplish, what are the options and what are the costs of the options. CPF can now fund clean water, so there would be help there as well. J. McLoughlin stated that they did get CPF funding for drainage on Jobs Lane. M. Chiffert noted that there is Village property across from McDonald's, it is also an option.

Lastly, the hospital RFP was presented at the last meeting. E. Scott said they had great presentations from all three of the consultants. They had Aecom, BHC and James Lima Planning + Development were invited to present. They have the scoring cards and they can circulate those. They will get the summary notes on the presentations and the meeting is up on the Village site for the Commission members that were not present, so they can get the scoring in. The hospital representative was good at focusing the scope. Their job is to look at economic feasibility and how the Village will be impacted. All three firms are good, there was a lot of talent. E. Scott will circulate that information so that all can look at it. The Commission is looking to make a recommendation to the Trustees. There are three options and E. Scott has done some scoring and then the Trustees will decide off the scoring. The commission will recommend the highest score; however, it is up the to the Trustees in how they will proceed.

Next meeting will be March 7th.

Chair Travis closed the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted by:

JoLee Sanchez

File Date: _____

Village Clerk