

July 10, 2009

To: Property Owners in the Yellowbanks Neighborhoods

Re: Sanitary Sewer and Water Service



Dear Property Owner:

Enclosed please find the following:

1. A copy of the meeting summary/notes from the neighborhood meeting on the above-referenced subject, held on May 27, 2009, at the Weston Municipal Center.
2. A copy of the table with estimated costs of service as distributed at that meeting. Please note that the handwritten note on the bottom right corner indicates the need to add \$5,000.00 to the cost of sanitary sewer in the Northwestern Avenue area for any of the zonings, if pressure sewer were to be used.
3. A copy of the brochure from Marathon County related to the County's policy/ordinance on selling or transferring property with a septic system.
4. The survey being sent in follow-up to the neighborhood meeting, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope for your convenience.

Your survey includes information in the box on the second page regarding your property's zoning, estimated frontage for street reconstruction costs, and equivalent lot estimates for sewer and water service. You can use the enclosed table to estimate the total assessment to your property.

As discussed at the neighborhood meeting, the survey is being kept quite simple with only three basic questions: 1) Do you want the Village to install sanitary sewer and water facilities to serve your property? 2) Would you feel differently if you could receive either water or sewer service rather than both? 3) Would you be willing to allow your private well to be sampled?

With respect to the emotions that this topic seems to invoke, it is vital that you make your opinions known by answering this survey. Without your input, the Village and property owners will remain in a state of uncertainty, not knowing what the desired course of action is. Secondly, is service by single utility extension (water or sanitary sewer) a more appealing approach? Last but not least, in determining whether there is a need from a water quality perspective, the Village is currently relying primarily on anecdotal evidence from specific customers and haphazard water tests to determine if there are, in fact, water quality problems. Unless we are permitted to draw samples and have them analyzed, the veil of uncertainty will remain and will continue to cloud this picture. As discussed at the meeting, if the Village is not allowed the opportunity to answer the water quality questions, we may be forced to make a decision to proceed with a project based on incomplete data.

Please return your surveys in the envelope provided by August 7, 2009. If you have any questions on the material contained in your packet, please do not hesitate to contact me at 241-2610.

Sincerely,

Keith E. Donner, P.E.
Director of Public Works

KED/vrp

Enclosures

Weston Municipal Center

5500 Schofield Avenue ■ Weston, Wisconsin 54476-4395 ■ Phone: (715) 359-6114 ■ Fax: (715) 359-6117

Summary of Yellow Banks Neighborhoods Meeting held on May 27, 2009 at the Weston Municipal Center, 6:00 P.M.

Subject: Public Utilities Discussion

81 people signed the attendance roster. An estimated 100 people were in attendance however.

The meeting began with an introduction from Dean Zuleger, Village Administrator. Mr. Zuleger indicated that there have been some recent inquiries about the status of this discussion due to water quality concerns along Northwestern Avenue. Mr. Zuleger then turned the meeting over to Keith Donner, Director of Public Works.

Mr. Donner followed a slide presentation with the following outline. (Items discussed that were not on the slides are *italicized and supplemental information not discussed that night is **bolded**.*)

WHY ARE WE HERE?

- Brief History
- 2005 Survey Results
 - 48.3% No
 - 16.7% Yes + 25% “Yes in the future”
 - **10% Undecided**
- 2006/2007 Focus Group Meetings
 - Address desire for more information from survey - (*the focus group last met in the fall of 1997 and this is the first follow up meeting being held*).

OTHER FACTORS

- Camp Phillips Road Reconstruction 2011
- Village update of 5 –Year CIP
- Continued Questions from Homeowners/Prospective Buyers

GOALS FOR TONIGHT

- Address Concerns Expressed in Surveys
- Explain Any Planned Work
- Leave With a Sense of Direction

ANSWERS TO YOUR CONCERNS

- Curb & Gutter (*is it necessary?*)
- Costs
- Repayment Terms
- Connection Requirements
- Criteria for Village to Undertake a Project

CURB & GUTTER

- Clean Water Act Permit
(The Village meets the requirements of its general permit, but if more curb & gutter and storm sewer are added, there would be added costs for detention ponds and the like. Therefore the Village will not be requiring curb & gutter in these neighborhoods.)
- \$15 to \$18 per foot eliminated *(The estimated cost of curb & gutter used in the special assessment estimates in the past)*

CURRENT ESTIMATED COSTS - *(Mr. Donner noted during the presentation that in 2004 the budget figure used was \$100 - \$120 per foot. The current estimates are in the range of \$135 to \$150 per foot without curb & gutter. In the Northwestern neighborhood the estimate is \$190 to \$210 per foot. Mr. Donner explained that on sanitary sewer and water projects he favors using an equivalent lot method of apportionment. Equivalent lot sizes are different with different zonings so different equivalent lot rates apply. Street reconstruction would be based on equivalent front footage. The following table was also distributed to meeting attendees. A copy of that table is also attached. It was also noted that if pressure sewer is used in the Northwestern area, \$5,000 should be added to the sanitary sewer costs.)*

	Mallard Court Area	Eau Claire Avenue	Northwestern Avenue
Water	\$ 57.88	\$ 42.88	\$ 48.06
Sanitary Sewer	\$ 108.71	\$ 46.85	\$ 85.81
Street	\$ 30.16	\$ 31.49	\$ 34.40
Total Rate	\$196.75	\$121.22	\$168.27
Water per lot	\$ 5,829	\$ 5,814	\$ 4,529
Sewer per lot	\$10,948	\$ 6,351	\$ 8,086
Average lot frontage	145.6 (R-1)	135.6 (R-1)	93 (R-2)
Per Lot Total	\$ 21,167	\$ 16,434	\$ 15,814

REPAYMENT TERMS

- UP TO 20 YEARS - *(Historically the repayment term has been 10 years. Due to the magnitude of the estimated assessments a longer repayment period would be allowed. Terms allow any part or all of principal to be paid interest free within a 30 day decision period after which the balance would be repaid in equal annual installments of principal each year with interest added.)*
 - Affordability criteria – *(It was discussed that Rural Development uses affordability criteria in determining if residents of a community have the ability to pay for a project and in determining whether a community is grant eligible. Their criterion is that people can afford to pay utility rates that amount to 2% for each utility. This approaches \$2,000 for Weston residents).*
 - 2% of MHI = \$980/year for **each** utility
 - \$1,960 per year
 - Current average annual utility bill for 18,000 gallons/quarter
 - Water = \$233.60
 - Sanitary Sewer = \$306

*(Using the affordability criteria and current rates, RDA would say Weston residents can pay an additional \$1,500± per year. Weston would not qualify for grants on a project under current policies.)
(Weston population makes us ineligible for RDA funding)*

CONNECTION REQUIREMENTS

- Deferral of connection vs. deferral of special assessment *(Connection costs will vary dependent on circumstances in each home – how the laterals need to exit the basement, existing utilities, retaining walls, trees, etc. Plumbing contractors are reluctant to give ball park ranges since each situation is different however, \$15 - 20 per foot would apply as a budget range for the trenching only. The costs per foot will be higher for shorter runs since all the mobilization costs are necessary regardless of length. In a neighborhood that had sewer & water installed within the past 5 years the costs of connection ranged from \$1,800 to \$5,000. Consult a plumbing contractor for a better idea. The Village would allow deferral of connection, but this would only defer the expense of connection, not deferral of special assessments).*
- Stand-by Service Charges *(With deferral of connection the water utility (its customers) would still be obligated to pay debt service on funds borrowed for projects. A stand-by service charge would be recommended to cover this obligation that would normally be collected through rates. If customers aren't connected they wouldn't be paying their share. The stand-by charges are*

estimated to be about 30% of an annual bill – \$70/water and \$90/sewer annually).

- *Based on Private Wastewater System Life (Deferral period would be based on the remaining useful life of private septic systems. Systems that are not on the permit system and holding tanks would not be allowed deferral. The average age of systems in these neighborhoods overall is 26.2 years. An average age would likely be determined for specific neighborhoods).*

VILLAGE CRITERIA TO PROCEED WITH A PROJECT(S)

Petition of Citizens – (The Village would prefer to see a majority of property owners approve of a project).

1. 80% of neighborhood participates
 - a. (1 vote per land parcel)
2. Simple majority (51%) *(Approval level needed to initiate a project).*

VILLAGE CRITERIA TO PROCEED WITH A PROJECT(S)

Village Board Directive (This is always a possibility based on the Village's "Police Powers," the municipality's authority to undertake a project in the interests of public health, safety, and/or welfare. Common scenarios are:)

1. Utility reinforcement/integrity/piggyback with developer
2. Public health need

UTILITY REINFORCEMENT

- *Boy Scout Camp Well – (This is a future need dependent on Village growth. It was stated that the Village was considering extending water main to Camp Phillips in 2011 as part of the Camp Phillips reconstruction by Marathon County. As late as 2 weeks prior to this meeting the Village was not planning to do this in 2011, rather we were only considering the extension of water and sewer to just north of the northernmost railroad R.O.W. with provisions to extend north at a later time).*
- *Wausau Interconnection – (This is an option for serving the neighborhoods off of Northwestern and to supplement the Village's supply. An estimate was not available at the time of the meeting).*

PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS?

- Bruce Drive/Cecil/Joan Drive/Northwestern Avenue
 - Water quality? *(High iron content has been reported in wells in this area. The Village recognizes, but was not pointed out at the meeting, that high levels of iron are not considered a public health risk. Iron is a secondary contaminant in drinking water under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. However, the impacts of high levels include staining of plumbing fixtures and laundry and support of iron dependent bacterial growths).*
- Mallard Court/Puffer, etc.
 - Septic system limitations (holding tanks) – *(This area appears to have a higher ground water table and it is unlikely that conventional wastewater systems or mound systems would gain approval. Pressure sewer is recommended in this area since conventional gravity sewer would likely have high construction costs due to de-watering and there is likelihood of high groundwater infiltration rates after completion)*

WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE 2005?

- Project Costs and Estimated Special Assessments
- Dept. of Commerce and Marathon County Codes – *(DOC code requires counties to begin monitoring older septic systems. Marathon County recently adopted (April 2009) the requirement for a septic system evaluation when selling property. A copy of the brochure generally describing the requirements was available. Property owners were advised to discuss more specifics with Marathon County Zoning).*

POWTS REGULATIONS

(Private On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems)

- Pumper Inspections - *(These will be general observations of septic tank condition/construction and leach field condition at time of pumping. Owners of pre-1980 systems will now be sent a letter to document their system has been pumped every 3 years. This will be implemented over a 3 – 5 year period).*
- Real Estate Transfer Requirements – *(Summarized above).*

CURRENT SYSTEM INVENTORY – (In these neighborhoods)

- 174 Systems
- 81 (60%) are pre-1980
- Average age at time of replacement = 26.2 years
- Average age of original systems = 29.4 years
- Median age of remaining original systems = 32 years *(Half are older and half are newer)*

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Village Capital Improvement Plan Development and Implementation
 - Camp Phillips Water Main – *(Decision as to timing)*
 - Northwestern Water Main – *(Estimate for extensions from Wausau)*
- Neighborhood Petitions?
- New Survey?

After questions & answers it was determined that a new survey would be mailed out. The Village would also ask for permission to sample wells and it was stated that if sampling was not allowed, a decision about a project would have to be made assuming wells were unsatisfactory.

Questions were asked about the following topics:

Specific treatment of lots in determining assessable frontage; corner lot situations, large lots, lots outside of municipality. Answers are specific to each situation.

Pressure sewer – what does it involve? – Special pump and pressurized sewer lateral. Dependent on power supply. Village would not own pump. Costs of pumps included in Mallard/Puffer/Vern Lane cost estimates. Would need to add \$5,000 to Northwestern neighborhoods cost if pressure sewer used there. Cost estimate for directional bore of pressure sewer lateral was ball parked at \$25.00 per foot.

Costs of private septic systems – Conventional \$4,000 - \$5,000. Mound systems \$10,000 to \$12,000.

Why discuss this now with economic situation? – The questions to the Village about the project keep coming regardless of the economy and always come when a home is for sale or if a well or septic system needs replacement.

Whether the project had to be done for the entire area or whether certain areas could be served individually? – It is possible to serve a neighborhood, such as the Northwestern Avenue area by itself; the Mallard/Puffer/Vern/Random Street area individually; and areas along Eau Claire Avenue, progressively from the east or the west.

Meeting ended at approximately 8:30 P.M.

5/27/09

Village of Weston
Sanitary Sewer and Water Service to Un-served Areas

Summary of Estimated Construction Costs and Estimated Special Assessments

	Mallard Court Area	Eau Claire Ave Area	Northwestern Ave Area
Estimated Assessment Rates (Equivalent Lot)			
R1 Zoning			(R2)
Sanitary Sewer	\$ 10,948.49	\$ 6,350.89	\$ 8,086.35
Water	\$ 5,828.68	\$ 5,813.68	\$ 4,528.84
Average Lot Frontage	145.55	135.57	92.97
RE Zoning			
Sanitary Sewer	\$ 9,906.99	\$ 6,874.88	\$ 13,138.32
Water	\$ 5,274.22	\$ 6,293.34	\$ 7,358.25
Average Lot Frontage	131.7	146.75	151.05
SR Zoning			
Sanitary Sewer			
Water			
Average Lot Frontage			
RR Zoning			
Sanitary Sewer			\$ 18,967.85
Water			\$ 10,623.12
Average Lot Frontage			218.07
Estimated Assessment Rates (Adjusted Front Foot)			
All Zonings			
Sanitary Sewer	\$ 108.71	\$ 46.85	\$ 85.81
Water	\$ 57.88	\$ 42.88	\$ 48.06
Street	\$ 30.16	\$ 31.49	\$ 34.40
Curb & Gutter	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Sidewalk	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Average Assessments all Improvements			
Per 100 feet of Lot Frontage	\$ 19,675.00	\$ 12,122.00	\$ 16,827.00
R1 Zoned Lots	\$ 21,166.96	\$ 16,433.67	\$ 15,813.36
RE Zoned Lots	\$ 19,153.28	\$ 17,789.38	\$ 25,692.69
SR Zoned Lots			\$ -
RR Zoned Lots			\$ 37,092.58

stated to add
± \$5,000 to sewer
for pre-purchase
sewer arrangement



Summary

The Marathon County Private Sewage Systems Ordinance includes Property Transfer requirements (effective as of April 1, 2009).

These regulations define a Transfer of Property and specify when an Existing POWTS Evaluation report is required.

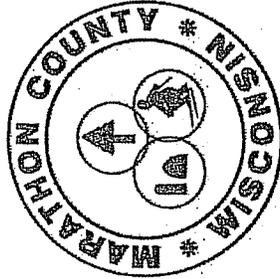
When required, a properly licensed individual must evaluate the existing POWTS and complete an Existing POWTS Evaluation Report. This report must be submitted to the county before transfer of ownership.

If the report identifies a defective or failing POWTS, the county will issue a directive requiring correction. Corrections do not need to be completed before transfer of ownership, but must be completed in the time frame set in the county directive.

This brochure is intended to give a summary of the county's Transfer of Property requirements.

Complete requirements can be found in the General Code of Ordinances for Marathon County, Chapter 15, Private Sewage Systems.

To view Chapter 15 or find forms and contractor lists, please visit our website at the address below (look for "Conservation, Planning & Zoning Department" under the "Government" / "Departments & Services" tab).



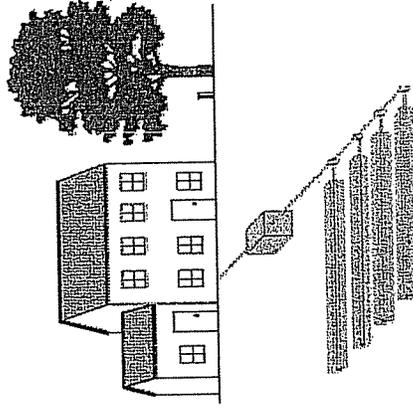
Marathon County Conservation,
Planning & Zoning Department

210 River Drive
Wausau, WI 54403

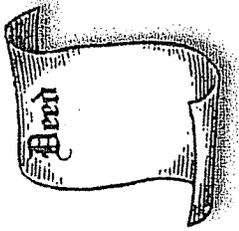
Phone: 715-261-6021
Fax: 715-261-6016
Website: www.co.marathon.wi.us

What you should know about

Selling or Transferring Property with a Septic System



Requirements of the Marathon County Private Sewage System Ordinance



If there is a private sewage system (POWTS) on your property, you may be required to have it evaluated before you sell or transfer ownership of the property.

What is a POWTS?

POWTS is an acronym for Private On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems, commonly referred to as septic systems. POWTS refers to all types of private sewage systems, including conventional, at-grade, mound, holding tank and other types of systems.

Why are evaluations of existing POWTS required?

Identifying defective or failing POWTS before a change in ownership will protect the new property owner. Repair or replacement of failing POWTS will protect public health and the environment.

What is an Existing POWTS Evaluation?

The evaluation is a thorough inspection of the POWTS, including pumping of tanks and soil testing, intended to identify systems which have defects or are failing.

Why is soil testing required?

The depth to groundwater and bedrock must be determined to identify those POWTS which may be polluting groundwater. If a valid soil test report is already on file with the county, a new test may not be necessary.

Who can evaluate my existing POWTS?

The evaluation must be completed by properly licensed individual(s), such as a master plumber or a certified POWTS inspector. Soil testing must be done by a certified soil tester and pumping requires a certified pumper.

What happens after the evaluation?

Existing POWTS Evaluation Reports must be submitted to the county Conservation, Planning & Zoning Department before the transfer of property. After reviewing the report, the county will send a letter to the owner which accepts the report or, if a problem is found, a letter will be sent requiring correction.

Isn't my POWTS "grandfathered"?

There is no term "grandfather" in state or county regulations. A POWTS identified as a failing system must be repaired or replaced, regardless of age.

If the evaluation finds a problem, do I have to fix or replace my POWTS before I can transfer ownership?

No, the rules only require completion of the evaluation before transfer of ownership. Corrections may be made by the buyer or the seller, but must be completed by the date set by the County.

If the POWTS on my property is new, do I still need to have an evaluation?

No, if your POWTS is less than 20 years old, and has been maintained according to county requirements, an evaluation is not required.

If an Existing POWTS Evaluation Report was approved for my system recently, do I have to do it again?

No, if the evaluation was approved by the county within the last 5 years, and the POWTS has been maintained according to county requirements, another evaluation is not required (evaluations conducted before April 2009 may not be complete and may not be acceptable).

How do I know how old my system is or whether it has been maintained properly?

The county keeps detailed records of POWTS installations and maintenance (older systems may not have a record). You may contact the Conservation, Planning & Zoning Department to inquire about these records or request copies.

If I already know that my POWTS is failing, do I still need to have someone evaluate it?

No, if you obtain a sanitary permit for a replacement POWTS before transferring ownership, an evaluation is not required.

ID #«ID1»

Date _____



**SEWER & WATER SERVICE SURVEY
YELLOW BANKS NEIGHBORHOOD**

1. Do you want the Village to install sanitary sewer and water facilities to serve your property?

Yes

No

1(a) What should the timetable for construction be?

___ As soon as possible

___ Within 5 years

___ 5 to 10 years

___ 10 years to 15 years

___ Never

2. Common practice has been for both water and sanitary sewer service to be extended at the same time as a practical matter. Would you feel differently if you could receive municipal water service or sanitary sewer service rather than both?

Yes (*answer question 2(a)*)

No

I would only want both

2(a) If you answered yes to question 2, which service would you prefer to receive?

Water

Sanitary Sewer

3. Would you be willing to allow your private well to be sampled by a representative of the Village and analyzed for the presence of nitrates, coliform bacteria, and iron in an effort to survey the water quality in your neighborhood?

Yes,

Yes, but only if there is a cost share

No

Weston Utilities

5500 Schofield Avenue, Weston, WI 54476-4395, Phone: (715) 359-2876 Fax: (715) 359-6117

ID #«ID1»

Please mark boxes of the appropriate choices, sign this survey and return by July 31, 2009.

Comments:

SIGNATURE

ID#«ID1»
«NAME»
«MAIL_ADDR1»
«MAIL_ADDR2»
«CITY» «STATE» «ZIP5»

PROPERTY ADDRESS: «ADDRESS»
PIN: «PIN_12»
ZONING DISTRICT: «ZONING»
ESTIMATED ASSESSABLE FRONTAGE FOR STREET: «ASSESSABLE_F»
EQUIVALENT SEWER AND WATER LOTS: «EQUIVLOTS»

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Weston Utilities
5500 Schofield Avenue, Weston, WI 54476-4395, Phone: (715) 359-2876 Fax: (715) 359-6117