

Sewer, runoff issues on NVC warrant

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The Northport Village Corporation, commonly referred to as Bayside, held its 90th annual meeting Tuesday night and the major topics of discussion—the sewer system and surface runoff problems—were anything but new.

With no opposition, voters approved a revised Northport Village Corporation Utility Ordinance. Utility Committee chairman David Crofoot said the present ordinance, which was adopted three years ago, is in conflict with the consent agreement Bayside has with the state that allows it to continue to discharge into the ocean from its primary treatment plant.

Crofoot said Bayside continues to violate the amount of flow it is allowed to discharge, especially when it rains, and the state wanted Bayside to build a new secondary treatment plant, which was estimated to cost \$4 to \$5 million. He said even if the state build the plant, the new facility would be more costly to operate and Bayside couldn't afford it.

Instead Bayside has agreed to upgrade its present plan at a cost of less than \$2 million, if and when funds become available.

Currently Bayside has a waiver so it can discharge from the existing plant. He said the current plant is not meant to be an expandable system.

Still the utility ordinance currently in place calls for anyone who lives within 200 feet of the sewer system to connect, while the state says Bayside cannot substantially increase its discharge.

Crofoot said the changes in the ordinance set up an objective basis to allow the overseers to disallow a connection from a new customer. The two criteria are:

- is there capacity in the plant; and
- is the property owner not able to have a septic system on his own property.

Sid Block asked how many buildable lots there are left that could request to hook into the sewer.

Crofoot said probably 10 to 12 lots.

Overseer Judy Metcalf said the new ordinance gives the overseers the criteria to evaluation an application.

But, questioned one woman, wouldn't the second criteria give a leg up to someone who is subdividing property so doesn't have room for a septic system?

Crofoot said each application would have to be evaluated individually but he said for himself he feels the sewer system was built for the existing little lots that can't support a septic system. He stressed again that the capacity in the plant is "very, very limited."

Spollett said as improvements are made in inflow and infiltration into the 100-year-old sewer pipes, that capacity might increase in the future.

Dan Webster said he understood that only lots currently of record could even apply to hook in.

Metcalf said a moratorium on applications was put in place from June until Sept. 30 for lots that currently aren't of record.

Overseer Bill Cressey said that moratorium will expire at the end of September unless it is extended by the overseers so someone could subdivide and apply to hook into the sewer.

A surface runoff committee met during the past year and made its report Tuesday night. The committee recommended \$30,000 be put in an account to deal with such issues each year for the next three or four years.

Among the top priorities for work are new culverts, new and upgraded catch basins, new piping to catch basins, channeling water into existing swales and new ditching. Committee chairman Cressey said this year's \$30,000 in projects does not include the paving of any street, a controversial proposal.

The first work is scheduled for Main Street .

The \$30,000 included in this year's budget is the main reason the mill rate will increase by 32 cents per \$1,000 of valuation.

In other action, Bayside residents:

- approved a budget for fiscal year 2007 of \$184,350, up from last year's \$157,176;
- elected Betty Wilson as the new clerk for the corporation, replacing Eleanor Lagner, who was thanked for her years of service and for whom the annual report was dedicated;
- re-elected Josiah Huntoon Jr. as president of the corporation and Julian Sheffield as treasurer;
- thanked outgoing overseers David Crofoot and Peter Spollett and elected as overseers for the upcoming year: incumbents Marge Brockway, Peter Allen, Judy Metcalf, Linda Houghton and Bill Cressey along with Rick Malone and a former overseer Judy Rohweder;
 - heard praise for the work performed during the past year by office manager Ken Hoedtke; police officer Sal Demeo and utilities supt. Dick McElhaney;
- approved short-term disability coverage for Bayside employees through the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust;
- heard another plea for property owners to place their address numbers prominently on their residences.

The meeting was moderated by Tim Samway.