

**MEETING NOTES OF
BARNES AQUIFER PROTECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

DATE: 9/6/16 **LOCATION:** Easthampton Municipal Offices, Easthampton, MA

MEMBERS AND DESIGNEES PRESENT:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M. Czerwec, Easthampton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. Seklecki, Easthampton	
D. Conti, Holyoke	J. Burkott, Holyoke	A. Smith, Holyoke
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> T. Gaughan, Southampton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M. Hanc, Southampton	James Labrie, Southampton
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heather Miller, Westfield	K. Leigh, Westfield	Jay Vinskey, Westfield
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R. Newton, Smith College	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P. Gambarini, PVPC	

Others present: Mary Ann Babinski, Westfield City Council; Barbara M. LaFlam, Southampton resident; Mark Reed, Heritage Survey; Jeff Tannatt, Williston-Northampton School; John Perry, Dynamic Energy; Charles B. McCullagh, Jr.; Daniel Desrochers, Westfield News; Ben Hildebrand, Sage Engineering

TIME OF CALL TO ORDER: 3:35 p.m. **TIME OF ADJOURNMENT:** 5:05 p.m.

Action Items from Meeting:

PVPC

- Prepare comment letter on Utz Building Addition
- Write up 9/6/16 meeting notes
- Prepare and distribute agenda for next meeting
- Continue assistance where needed for Cook Road land protection
- Finalize annual report

BAPAC members

- Help finalize Developments of Regional Impact comment letters

1. Adoption of June 7 meeting notes

Adoption of the June meeting notes was recommended by Tom Gaughan, seconded by Marla Hanc, and unanimously approved.

2. Citizen Speak

Mary Ann Babinski said that she would like to work with BAPAC to revisit recommendations to improve Westfield's Water Resource Protection Overlay District Ordinance. She said the contamination of several wells, the drought, and the outdoor watering restrictions provide a powerful motivator now to do something more with the ordinance that is far more publically visible. It is time to put a big collective foot down and take water supply protection seriously, she said. She noted that the discussion at the June meeting about installing signs is very important to making the Aquifer more visible to everyone.

3. Developments of Regional Impact

Solar Array, 198 Park Street, Easthampton

Mark Reed of Heritage Surveys, Jeff Tannatt and Charles B. McCullagh of the Williston-Northampton School, and John Perry, Dynamic Energy attended to present on the solar array proposed for 5 acres of land abutting the White Brook Middle School. The 650 kilowatt system,

will entail installation of 2,000 solar panels that will cover about 2.5 acres of land. Remaining acreage will stay in its current state.

Other key aspects of the development mentioned by project proponents include:

- Plan to install a 6-foot high perimeter fence that will be set 6 inches off the ground to allow movement of terrestrial creatures.
- Facility will be owned by the Williston-Northampton School.
- Planting of low growing grasses so that mowing need not occur more than twice each year. No fertilizers will be used.
- Transformer will use a mineral oil that has no carcinogens and carries no toxicity.
- Planning Board has been given a proposal for decommissioning for their consideration. Sense is that amount of money needed to decommission in 20 years is so nominal, likely less than \$40,000, which is significantly less than value of the land itself. Proponents referred to a 2.4 megawatt facility in Walpole sited on a landfill, the decommissioning for which is about \$150,000. They said that given the low value for decommissioning bonding is not really needed.
- Panels are fabricated by Jinko Solar and are composed of poly crystalline silicon. Project proponents provided toxicity test results run for the panels that showed no leaching of 1 contaminants from the panels and junction box when subjected to 18 hours of a 1:20 sample to solvent mixture of acetic acid and sodium hydroxide.

The Conservation Commission has provided approval with an Order of Conditions that establishes a 50-foot buffer for resource areas. The Easthampton Planning Board was holding its second hearing on the project that evening.

Given the tight time frame for the public hearing (and assumed to be the last opportunity to comment), BAPAC provided a pre-prepared letter and comments to the Planning Board on the project that are in keeping with BAPAC comments on other solar projects.

Utz Building Addition, 225 Root Road, Westfield

Ben Hildebrand of Sage Engineering said that land owner Frank Demarinis is proposing to more than double the size of his existing facility, with a 11,760 square-foot addition. The project site is located within Westfield's Water Resource Protection Overlay District and within the Zone II of Southampton's water supply well. The building addition will be a pre-engineered metal structure supported by a conventional slab-on-grade foundation. Half of the addition will be used by Utz for office space and dry storage of pre-packaged chips, pretzels, and snack foods, as is the existing building. The other half of the addition is to be used by a "high-end" woodworking shop, Grains of Thought. Mr. Hildebrand said that the woodworking shop does not use or store any toxic substances, that it works with low VOC materials.

The project will also include an expanded parking area, amounting to approximately 20,000 square feet of new impervious cover. For stormwater management, the proposal is to enlarge the existing system. Roof drainage at the back will connect to an existing swale system, while roof drainage at the front will connect to a pipe system running along the front of the building to outlet at the detention basin. Parking lot drainage will go to an existing catch basin and pass through the existing Stormceptor unit before flowing into the forebay within the detention basin.

To handle increased storm flows, the project will involve enlarging the existing "detention" basin. (Note that in talking with Mr. Hildebrand, it became apparent that the basin is designed to "retain" flows as most stormwater infiltrates into the soils.) Mr. Hildebrand said that the existing Stormceptor unit can accommodate the increased flows from this expansion to pretreat stormflow before entering the basin. He also noted that there is an existing emergency shutoff valve to use in the event of any spills to keep polluted flow from the parking area from reaching the Stormceptor and entering the retention basin.

BAPAC members noted that the applicant may not be in compliance with the special permit issued for the original project on this site. There is no curbing along the drive and parking area, increasing risk for contamination of groundwater, and there are serious erosion issues.

BAPAC members had the following four recommendations to protect drinking water supply:

- Ensure that the Stormceptor unit is in good working condition and has the capacity to adequately treat additional flows, and that there is regular maintenance of the unit. Also make sure that the emergency shut off valve is highly visible and that existing spill response procedures specify shutting off the valve.
- Require that the project includes curbing of all bituminous surfaces on the property so that in the event of a spill, contaminated material can be contained on the impervious area.
- Ensure that locations for snow storage and dumpster pad are within the curbed parking lot in order to avoid problems in basin functioning and to minimize risk of groundwater contamination. On the proposed plan reviewed by BAPAC, these facilities are shown near the basin and outside of the curbed area.
- Stipulate in the operation and maintenance plan that no synthetic chemical fertilizers or pesticides be used for landscaping work associated with the project. Also for winter de-icing, use ecologically friendly alternatives to sodium chloride to prevent salt contamination of drinking water supplies.

4. Updates

Cook Road land protection - Marla reported that on August 31st Forest & Land Policy Director for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Bob O'Connor walked the Cook Road land with officials from Easthampton and Southamptton and Kestrel Land Trust. This site visit is part of the LAND grant review process. Marla said that comments during the 2.5 hour site visit were generally very positive, but it was noted that the state has received 27 applications under this program.

Marla said that she believes Kestrel Land Trust was working with the City of Easthampton on a grant request to the Drinking Water Supply Protection program. Also, Easthampton City Planner Jess Allan submitted request to her Community Preservation Committee to collaborate in funding for this land protection. Barbara LaFlam said she is very glad to see things moving along.

Salt

Patty noted that she had received an inquiry about one of the Southamptton wells from the Southamptton Water Commissioners. She relayed the question to Bob Newton and also

provided links to MassDOT materials indicating their process for addressing wells contaminated by road salting practices.

Marla noted that there needs to be some education around winter road conditions. She sees increasing pressure in Southampton for improved winter conditions on roads by new "city" people who are moving to Town.

Drought

Southampton has a voluntary outdoor watering restriction and has avoided going mandatory because it would place more restrictions on what the municipality could do. Westfield has a mandatory restriction and the City is exploring where to get additional water given the closure of Wells 7 and 8. Mike said that Easthampton has a mandatory ban, but that supply still seems fairly good. That may change though if drought continues, he noted.

Tom said Southampton is looking for a permanent connection to Easthampton. This will require a pump station to reach entire service area. A redundant source is required by MassDEP in any case.

5. Annual Report and Work Plan for FY2017

Patty walked members through the draft Annual Report and work plan, asking several questions and showing where there are still a few remaining gaps. She will finalize the report for the next BAPAC meeting.

6. Next Meeting

October 4, 2016 @ 3:30 p.m.
50 Payson Avenue, Easthampton