

Hi Board members:

July 14, 2008

The dates for this adventure are in May, June and July, 2008.

Mike Johnston, 765-2841, NYSDOT engineer, was contacted by me about a cave-in.

There are now 7 cave-ins near Western Avenue.

One is in Alice Torda's driveway. Another across the street from Alice in Moore's old house driveway. A third is behind the Moore house. A 4th is in front of 1420-1423 Western on the edge of the highway. A 5th in front of Martha Harausz home, 1445 Western, on the edge of the highway. A 6th in front of Mrs. David's home at 1455 Western and then there is the one behind the Fusco's on Parkwood.

The one in front of Martha's—it gave way when I stepped on it on the way home from Stuyvesant.

I then called the Town—Bill West—456-6474—and Todd Gifford—861-5108--- who said that since it is on a State highway to call the State and that is how Mike Johnston got involved.

Mike sent out a crew and filled in the hole in front of Martha's with stone. The next big rain—the stone blew upwards and came to rest on Martha's sidewalk.

This told me that a blockage someplace was causing backpressure and the explosion of stones.

I again called Mike and he again responded, this time he came out to see.

Then there started the discussion between whose storm sewer line was ruptured/blocked—the Town's or the State's or the County's. The map that I have does not show who owns which line. Mike has the same map that I have.

Then the Town came out and flushed out the storm line next to Martha's that come down the alley for about 150 feet and the one that is behind my house for about 250 feet.

Then the State and the Town came and worked all day trying to flush out the drains along Western and discover which ones are connected to which. They found that they were all interconnected, I think.

Then Don Csaposs came and took photos of the cave-ins.

Then the Town came and filled the holes in the Moore driveway and in Alice's driveway.

Then Mike Johnston called and said that the State was going to hire a TV camera device to go into the storm lines along Western and try and figure out where the blockage was.

In the "Blue House" lot there are two drop-ins (what the state calls sewer covers which have grates on the top or do not have grates on the top) with grates that are filled with water up to nearly the top. They are obviously malfunctioning. The water just sits there. But there is at least one drop-in on the Blue House site with a grate where the water is flowing well.

Then there is one drop-in grate nearby along Western in front of Lettick's old home that you can easily hear water running continuously but the one next to it—to the west—is silent and appears to be filled with mud.

The cave in area behind the Moore home is large—maybe 7 feet long. Just to the west of it is a drop in grate where you can hear the water running constantly. Obviously (?) the caved-in area is blocking the easy flow of this huge volume of water and that is causing the cave-ins in the Moore driveway and that of Alice's. Paving the holes is good but it does not solve the basic problem. Both Alice and the new owner of the Moore house—Murphy—have severe wet foundation/basement flooding problems.

There are 7 different storm sewer systems—I think—in McKownville. They came into being at different times but they are all inter-connected—I think.

The oldest ones are those installed in the alleyways and in some streets that were a combination of storm and sanitary sewers until the sanitary sewers were installed in about 1976 in the center of most streets whereby the oldest systems became, defacto, storm sewers.

Then there are storm sewers installed by the Town in the newer sections of McKownville on the upper part of Norwood, and on Providence, etc.

Then there is the State system along Western and maybe behind the Best Western motel.

Then there is Stuyvesant's system.

Then there is the University system—remember about 40% of the university is in McKownville/Guilderland.

Then there is the county system under Fuller.

Then there are private add-ons that were made by various people—see the one that Alice and I uncovered across the street from her home on Knowles.

Prior to the merger of the water districts---around the time of the first Crossgates development—the water and storm sewer system was maintained out of money collected by the McKownville water district.

Besides me and Alice and Mike and Todd and Don Csaposs and Bill West someone should know about all of this.

Therefore this report.

I have no doubt that the Town/County/State/Stuyvesant/University will do what it can to improve the storm sewer system in McKownville.

It is imperative that we encourage them to do so—and to do it before more cave-ins occur.

Furthermore, you can help by taking a look around your streets to note---(1) if the drop-ins with grates are clogged with standing water the obvious sign--and (2) there are cave-ins that might be related to storm water lines. Problems need be reported.

Maintenance and improvement of the McKownville storm water drainage system needs as much attention as all of us can give it.

Don Reeb