

MCKOWNVILLE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Informal Meeting

December 11, 1968

The McKownville Improvement Association held an informal meeting on December 11th at Christ Lutheran Church for the purpose of acquiring information on the installation of sewer lines to be built in McKownville and vicinity.

Mr. Andrew Valenti, President of the Association, opened the meeting welcoming over 100 residents and members and thanking Rev. Gerhardt, minister of Christ Lutheran Church, for the use of the auditorium. Mr. Valenti stressed the fact that the Improvement Association had the interest of the Community and if any resident were not a member, that they should consider it that evening. He mentioned that at the close of the meeting one of the officers would receive dues.

President Valenti asked for a motion from the floor to omit the regular order of business in order to discuss the subject of sewage pollution, which was of particular interest to the community. He introduced Mr. Thayer Martin, Sanitary Engineer representing the Standard Engineering Corporation saying that Mr. Martin was a Civil and a Sanitary Engineer located in Westmere, whose firm was engaged by the Town Board to conduct a sewer survey for the Town of Guilderland. Also that the firm had done similar work for the Towns of Richfield Springs and West Danby.

Mr. Martin displayed 2 maps for the audience to see the area concerned with the sewer plan. He related he would try to give a brief outline of the project and that his report was supposed to have been in the hands of the Town Board by November 15th, but was not, so the proposed regulations have not been adopted by the Board; that there might be minor differences that would occur and until the Board has had an opportunity to study the proposal, what he would say would be informal. Mr. Martin mentioned that the State Health Department made a complete survey of the pollution problem and that 13 municipalities in Albany County represented by 8 different firms joined in the study. Malcolm Pirney Engineers of White Plains, New York coordinated the studies of each municipality's individual engineer. Standard Engineering acted as the engineering consultant for Guilderland in this study. The most economical plan for the area shown on the map displayed (bounded on the East by the City, bounded on the north by the City, on the South by the Town of Bethlehem and New Scotland to the West), the breakout being the Krumkill Drainage Basin, was chosen. Mr. Martin related that sewers like rain water

flow down hill. The sewer will run to the Thruway and under, through the McKownville System and then to our ultimate disposal site. The County study recommended this area go into the present City plant until the disposal plant near Menands and the one near the Port of Albany are completed. The County facilities will not be available to us until 1973. Supervisor Walters negotiated what is believed to be one of the first agreements for municipal service with the City of Albany by an outside municipality. There is an agreement to use the city system from the time the McKownville system is built until the County disposal plants are complete. The immediate project is to install a sewer line to service nearly everyone East of the Thruway. Westmere will eventually hook on at approximately at Carroll's Drive-In Theater.

Q. You say there are 2 ways of disposing of this?

A. Yes, but we are going with the City of Albany for the interim period of 1970-1973. When the County facilities are available we will discontinue and go with the County. This plan is more economical for us. There is a period of 2 1/2 or 3 years before the facilities of the County will be available and costs are rising. We hope that by the Summer of 1970, people can hook up, and then it will take until the following Spring before the streets are back to normal. The Federal and State will be given time for rejection of the plans after the Board of Supervisors handle it - perhaps six months time.

Q. Will any of the existing sewers be used? A. There will have to be all new sewers.

Q. Will the sewage flow into the Hudson River? A. Yes, but it will be treated by the existing plant. Q. What plant? A. The primary treatment plant at Westerloo until the other plants are operating.

The problem of the Hudson River Valley Commission around Chatham came from the floor. Mr. Martin said he was not sure why they would oppose treated sewerage going into the river; that the State Health Department was supposed to be the experts, and that Chatham had plans for doing what we are doing until a joint treatment plant is built.

Q. Is this plan tied in with the processing? A. Yes, the sewerage will be processed at the primary plant and then go into the river. It is better than what is happening now.

Q. Will the City of Albany use the County Treatment Plants after? A. Yes, Sir. Later the City of Albany will be going into the two separate plants.

Q. What is it going to cost the individual home owner? A. Less than the price proposed for the Town of Bethlehem. The proposal to the Town Board is on individual type of assessing or in

units, depending on the year and how many lots are involved. In an average year and an average homeowner with one lot, the cost would be about \$95. Stuyvesant Plaza would be considered as 165 homes.

Q. What is the cost per unit? A. We add up all the units then the costs to be financed. Mr. Martin said there was a total of five different items. Debt for basic system; debt for excess capacity; debt for county facility; local operating cost, and annual charge, first payable to the City of Albany and later to the County Sewer District - \$80,000 divided by the number of units. For a 5-unit property, average one-family home with one building lot, for the year 1972, will be \$68., but again I want to caution that this is subject to change or modification by the Town Board. Local costs, such as number of gallons of water, how much power to treat the sewerage, will be added to the semi-annual water bill, perhaps approximately \$15. per year - \$7.50 every six months. The debt for excessive facilities will be paid for by everyone alike at perhaps \$12. per year. The average home owner will be paying in 1972, \$96. per year; in 1973, about \$1.50 higher.

Q. Did you include the Albany City debt? A. Yes, Sir.

Q. Do we pay for the hookup and if so, how much? A. There are no actual figures. The Town brings the sewer to the property line, behind the sidewalk, and saying 30' from the middle of the street, it could be \$400 to \$500 per house.

Q. In McKownville, we have a carriage path at the back of some homes which is where the water supply and, in some cases, the storm sewer line is, why can't the sewer line come in there? A. We are not using any of the existing sewer line, and it is more practical to bring the line in from the street rather than through a long backyard. We cannot treat the amount of water that comes into a storm sewer.

Q. Then you are going to use the actual street rather than the rear pass? A. There is a 95% chance that this is true. Teams of men, however, will come to each house to see the circumstances. We are not 100% sure in each instance.

Q. But, where there is sewer lines already, how come the City of Albany hasn't told the citizens of that area they couldn't be used. A. There has been a long history of delays and legality.

Q. Maybe they could be corrected. A. We have been fortunate that a major fire hasn't occurred where contaminated water has had to be used.

Q. I had not planned to put it in, can you even imagine the Town of Guilderland would allow us to live with a condition that is inadequate and even dangerous? A. I can't completely follow.

Q. Are we all on the old system required to be hooked into the new sewers by a certain time? A. Yes, the Town has a time table.

The Town has to stop polluting the Krumkill by a certain date. Over 200 homes have to be hooked up within a year after the system is complete. Did this reflect an answer of what you were trying to ask?

Q. The condition in McKownville since 1910 where the water and sewer lines both came in from the carriage paths - in the back of the houses - they are easier to utilize. A. I question it. Q. They are there 30 or 40 years and suddenly you say they are to be in the roads, we are living in an unideal condition. A. Another aspect is this, the condition of the lines in the rear of your property to your house being that they are old. Fifty per cent of the pipe would have been used. The condition of the pipe is such that it would have to be pressure tested. It would cost a considerable amount of money to get in there. The system was designated for storm water. When pressure tested, 20% would have to be replaced. Evaluate this. Going to the rear, replacing the water lines, servicing the lines and 30' or 40' for an easement, fences and everything. Economically it is unpracticable and unreasonable. This is confined to a small area of a total project.

Q. How many extensions - Elmwood, Norwood and the next block effected? The agreement you gave in the existing plans should have to be fixed to support extensions. One block extended. A. If I said that, I did not intend to, the only area under consideration is the old section to the north of Western Avenue where there is Elmwood, Parkwood, Norwood. I would prefer since this is only an informational meeting that you speak with me after either making an office appointment or after hours. I will know more after the official public hearing. Let's get off the subject of behind the houses.

Q. Do you propose to run the sewer lines in the center of the street? A. In urban and quasi-urban areas, where there are trees and utilities, the only place left, is the middle of the street.

Q. You will try to save the trees. A. We will endeavor to save as many as we can.

Q. What is the breakdown of costs? A. (same as Page 3. Question at top of page. New customers coming in should bring the cost down.

Q. Can you give an estimate for an individual hookup for an Average home? A. It depends upon the available contractors who are licensed to do the work. The line goes 5' or 6' below the ground - the average house from the middle of the street might be 80' - could be \$500 or \$600.

Q. Who voted this in? A. The Town is under mandate to stop pollution and the State Health Department will probably give the Town a year after completion to have all residents hooked up. You have no choice.

Q. How deep will the sewer be? A. Deep enough to serve everyone's outlet.

Q. Do you mean some will be deeper than others? A. Yes, Sir. Some of our men will come and determine the ground water conditions.

Q. You won't use the storm sewers? A. That's right.

Q. Which way are you going? A. We are going down Western Avenue. Not going to say whether in front or in back of the houses.

Q. But the storm sewer has been considered?

A. At the special meeting it will be fully considered.

Q. Could it be a common ditch with the neighbor next door? A. We have done this in some areas before. We will advise each home owner where he hooks up and he can advise us if he wants to hook up at another location.

Q. What about the piping in the manholes. A. They would have to be pressure tested. There are expenses to that.

Q. If you are going to dig up the roads, how long will they be that way? A. We will try to right the construction as we complete each section. We are going to suggest that the 3' to 3 1/2' ditch be covered with gravel until Spring to give it a chance to settle and then put in permanent pavement. It will probably be over one winter.

Q. I assume there is a definite time for a bond issue?
A. Forty year issue. It is more economical to sell the bond over a thirty-year period.

Voice from Floor: In the final point, this project should be done as soon as possible as there is a 5% increase per year - approximately 25% more than the cost is now. This should be considered as individuals.

Mr. Martin: Desirable growth will be attracted after the sewer line is in thus helping to pay the expenditures. The sewer systems are inadequate. Stuyvesant Plaza invested \$100,000 in a waste disposal system, it is located in front of Howard Johnsons. Office and commercial businesses are deterred by lack of sewers.

Q. You say 1971? A. The system should be fully operating by the Spring of 1971, serving some people as we go.

Q. Will certain localities be en masse? A. We will serve each as we go.

Q. Where will they start? A. I am not certain whether they will come up Ayre Drive, up the creek and Plaza or whether they will come up behind Quadrini's Motel.

Q. How soon after the street sewer is completed, is the home owner obligated to hook up? A. Rules have not been established or determined. The Board will make the decision to this.

Q. What treatment plants will be used or designated? Who is responsible for the treatment? A. Until 1973 the treatment plant in the City of Albany.

Q. What about the plumbers to hook up? Is it up to the city or the individual to obtain them? A. There are legal problems, I hope to have an answer at the time of our public hearing.

Q. When will the men come around to the houses for the survey? A. Probably the first of the year when everything is to the Town Board.

Q. What is the rest of the Town going to do? A. The rest of the Town is going to have its own treatment on the Normanskill.

Q. We have to pay around \$100. a year then the hookup is to be \$500-600, can this be spread or does it have to be on one lump sum? A. There ~~is~~ are different types of financing, Home Improvement loans will spread it over 10 years. are

Q. Getting back to the units, there is a difference in the frontage, and corner lots. A. Up to a limit, if considered as a building lot and one home, it would be considered as 3 units. Just because you are on a corner you will not be penalized if you have only one building lot and one house. The Town Board will evaluate this.

Q. Then a 40' would be the same as a 100'? A. It would be a matter of zoning, how it is listed on the Assessment Roll.

Q. Has the public hearing been set? A. No, the report that was to have gone to the Board by November 15th has not been gotten to the Board as yet.

Q. What would happen if the bond issue were defeated?
A. A referendum for this area is not required. You don't vote on it. This area has no choice. If it is not done, the State will step in and do it.

From the floor: The Town Board can be put in jail if they don't do it. The North area has to be taken care of. They can't use the existing lines. I am all for it, but the point being that the storm sewers will be abandoned.

Mr. Martin: Legally, but your getting out of it doesn't abandon the district. They should not be in existence. In the 1940's the McKownville Sewer District was legally established for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a sanitary sewer

system for this area. The Department of Audit and Control approved but the bids submitted were considered too high - nothing was done - bids were \$250,000 or \$300,000, then in 1951-1952, it was found that septic tanks of private homes had been connected to the storm sewers. Any referendum, only the Southside can vote on it.

Q. Why do they need another plant at Westerloo where they already have one? A. To adequately take care of the other sewers. It is higher the other side of the creek.

Q. Where is the pumping station to be located? A. There are plans to locate it at a location near Dillenbeck Drive. I talked with Mr. Abele from the Water Board and he has talked to his Board, it seems the most economical site.

Q. What type of material will be used for the home owners - cast iron joints, etc. A. The rules and regulations have not been adopted.

Q. \$80,000. is that the amount of principal and interest on the debt to be raised from the units per year? A. Yes, Sir.

Q. What about the Pinebush residents? A. It is not final.

Q. We would be better off if we were annexed by the City. Is this contracting with the City a thing that could be used as a weapon for annexation? A. No comment.

Q. Where is that pumping station going? A. Near Dillenbeck Dr. - that is the most isolated area available. The proposals will go to the Town Board before Xmas.

Q. The \$80 per year, will that continue or diminish? A. It is like a sliding scale, 7% of the bond issue the first year and continues down until at the end reduces as the principal. Later years would go to 1% or 2%. You will have growth also, any office building is equal to 30 homes, an apartment complex, it is up to the Planning Board.

At this point, nearly 10:30P.M., most of the audience started to go and 7 residents wished to leave their dues with the Secretary and Mr. Martin spoke with some individuals.

President Valenti adjourned the meeting.

Bernice E. Hamme
Secretary.