



OBSERVER REPORT

BOARD OF HEALTH:- 3/1/22 LWVM Observer - Thomas Krueger

Members in Attendance via Zoom - BOH : Andrew Petty, Todd Belf-Becker (chairperson), Sec. Andrea Flaxer, Joanne Greer Miller, Helaine Hazlett

Meeting - Emergency

Meeting held in a Handicapped Accessible Location - not applicable

Public allow to Participate in the Meeting - via Zoom - 107 in attendance

The meeting was opened with a brief statement about opening meetings, followed by a roll call.

Transfer Station Community Forum

Andrew opened the meeting with the statement that this is a transfer station community forum, and was to gather input from the community not to discuss how things were done. He then outlined the agenda - introduction, the project, Option A, Option B, and Q&A.

As a historic prospective of the transfer station:

- 1930-1956 there was an "open bit" burning of trash and refuse which was buried on site.
- 1957-1976 there was a solid waste incinerator on site and ash (including toxic material) was buried on site.
- 1978-2000 In 1975, due to the Federal Clean Air Act of 1970 the town closed the incinerator and converted the operations into a transfer station
- 2001-2010 MA DEP ordered the solid waste to be remove and the site "capped" to prevent further dispersal of toxic waste
- 2004 The town signed an order with MADEP to cap the site with \$2000/day fine if not done so
- 2011 a MHD override for \$15.1M was passed and appropriated for the cap and new transfer station
- 2011-2013 studies were performed to determine the scope of the clean up
- 2013 a subsequent appropriation of \$1.3M was obtained for the clean up on 151 Green Street

- 2014 bids were obtained (4) with costs ranging from \$17.7M-19.3M
- Subsequently a new architectural firm, Winter Street Architects, were hired and were able to redesign the project that still met the needs and saved \$3.6M
- July 2014 clean-up was begun
- September 2018 a conditional approval by MADEP for the clean up and cap were completed.
- In the intervening time until 2020, legal issues had to be resolved.

Andrew then conducted an online poll-questionnaire of the attendees at this meeting with the following results: 88% own their homes; 80% were single residences; average age of attendees 46-60; 47% were residents with only 2 people living there; most were concerned with residential and not commercial interests; trips to the transfer station - 40% 1/wk, 34% 1/month, 16% occasional; types of disposal - 63% residential, 31% yard waste; concerns for the transfer station - 52% traffic flow, 11% commercial, and 32% resident drop off.

Andrew next gave the parameters of the transfer station space: 13.5 acres for the cap, 7.5 acres of grass, 6 acres of pavement, with 130 trees and 330 shrubs planted.

At this point Dana Weeder of Winter Street Architects with the use of slides and building graphic projections outlined what Option A and Option B were for the redesign of the transfer station.

Option A most notably has the ingress and egress from Beacon Street. It has an entirely new structure with the front for residential use and the rear for commercial. The refuse is “dumped” directly into trailers below the residential and commercial drop areas. This building cannot be at another location because of drainage and utilities issues. He went on further to discuss a new swap shed, new scale house building, and a staff area building which would include a shower, lockers, etc. Cost \$6.275 M.

Option B is a more modest proposal. The pit would remain and would have new siding and roof. A new scale house and staffing areas, as well as, a new swap shed would be built. Another major difference with Option B is the traffic flow: ingress would be from Green Street and egress onto Beacon Street. This would allow of divergent streams of residential and commercial users with few crossovers. This could be further operationalized by using a stickerless system, whereby users would sign up with their license plate and pay online. An optical reader would then identify the car.

Question & Answer

Over twenty people had an opportunity to express their thoughts and ask questions. One felt that there should have been more time for Q&A. Another noted that there have been previous BOH meetings that have discussed the options. Others had questions about specifics of the plans: how waste would be separated, how TV, etc could be dropped off, how the optical system would work, etc. Many were concerned for abutters with the traffic flow from Green Street - volume, noise, fumes. Some

suggested an oversight committee drawn from community as was done for the new Brown school. Others were concerned with costs and contingencies. One asked about the possible increased use of commercial users with Option A. (Andrew answered that the town has an allocation of 15,000 tons a year, and currently does 12-13000 tons a year. To exceed the 15K allocation would require applying to the state, public meetings, etc. A major problem then would be further increase in traffic in the town, especially of trucks.) Another respondent who had worked on the previous project noted that the dump is where it is and the access points where they are; he lauded Winter Street Architects with putting out a plan quickly once Green Street was considered an option. He also reiterated the fact that in contracting the town is obligated with taking the lowest bid. One resident opined that there is no perfect solution - cost, traffic, etc. - and we need to come together as a community.

At the end of the discussion, Andrew conducted another online poll asking which option was preferred and whether or not one would vote for an override. The results were 59% preferred Option B and 51% would vote for an override.