

Town of Freetown
Sewer Line Extension Committee
Minutes of the Wednesday, December 13, 2023 Meeting
Held at the Police Station Community Room

Present in Person: Deborah Pettey, Victoria Alfaro, Bob Parker, Mark Rosofsky.

Absent: James Frates

Call to Order: Victoria Alfaro called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m.

Introductions

Mr. Grota gave a brief introduction. He is the project manager from Environmental Partners (EP) and William Yan is also from EP and is helping with the project.

Mr. Grota explained the background of the project. EP was hired by the town to do the design and permitting for the sewer expansion in the Assonet area. A preliminary assessment was done in 2018 of what the sewer needs would need to be. The area would be from the Town Hall down to the route 24 exchange and essentially sewer in those areas. The conceptual plan and approach were drafted and preliminary estimates and options were given to be considered. Ms. Pettey worked with MassWorks to acquire grant funding. The grant was \$775,000 through MassWorks and \$200,000 is from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). A basis of design report was submitted in November. Mr. Grota made references to this report. There would be a main trunkline on South Main Street to pick up those houses and then two centralized pump stations to pump over to Fall River. The reason for the main trunkline is for any side streets off of South Main Street, in the future, would be able to connect in. He explained the areas of where the pump stations would be.

Mr. Parker asked a question about how big of lines will be ran. Mr. Grota stated that gravity lines will be 8-inches based on the flows. The force mains originally would have been 4-6 inches but when Jim Rezendes spoke at the last meeting, he stated that an 8-inch pipe was left in the ground and is larger than needed. Mr. Grota stated that they are looking at options to slip line that pipe. He added that plan development would be a problem. If the 8-inch pipe could be used then it would save the Town a significant amount of money. They would need to get additional flow information to see if that 8-inch pipe could be used. Mr. Parker asked if Fall River was contacted to see how much would be able to be given to them. Mr. Grota stated that the town has a current Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) with Fall River to take some sewage but this project would exceed that, they would then have to file an amendment. Mr. Parker asked if Fall River has the capacity available to handle what we would add to. Mr. Grota said he could not speak to that because he did not know the capacity of their system. Mr. Parker stated that it would be important to know the capacity. Conversations with Fall River would take place once designs were solidified.

Discussion and Update from Environmental Partners for the Assonet Sewer Extension Project

EP provided a few updates. There was an update on the preliminary design. EP's surveyor (Merrill Engineers & Land Surveyors) completed a draft of the existing conditions base plan and is currently working on addressing EP's punch list items. Preliminary survey results from the base plan indicate that the alignment of the existing 4" and 8" ductile iron sewer force mains on South Main Street run through the abandoned section of South Main Street, outside of the originally survey area, and across Innovation Way before discharging into SMH-20. Ms. Pettey noted that this abandoned section of South Main Street was the original roadway alignment prior to the installation of Innovation Way in the early 2000s. EP indicated that additional field survey/wetland delineations will be needed to incorporate this area into the existing conditions base plan. It was agreed that EP would incorporate these additional costs as part of an amendment to the Town. EP requested the Town's assistance in pumping out any flooded cleanout and/or air release structures along the existing sewer force main alignment on South Main Street in order to finalize the base plan. The Town indicated David Thibodeau (Freetown Water Department) could help assist as necessary to complete this work.

EP is in the process of drafting a Geotechnical Memorandum that summarizing results from the geotechnical boring investigation. EP has received soil sample laboratory results and is aiming to have a draft of the Geotechnical Memorandum available to share by the end of this year. EP confirmed that the MassDOT access permit for the geotechnical borings within the State Highway Layout (SHLO) on South Main Street has been formally closed out with MassDOT. EP noted that additional road restoration was required by MassDOT as part of this access permit. It was agreed that EP would incorporate these additional costs as part of an amendment to the Town.

Ms. Pettey asked about the feasibility of acquiring a 12" water main on South Main Street under the Route 24 overpass, which is within the MassDOT SHLO. The water main is currently owned by Churchill & Banks with Copart having the right of first refusal (previous conversations suggested the water main is owned by Copart). Taking ownership could allow the Town to slip line a sewer main without excavating a trench within the SHLO. The Town believes this could provide significant construction savings and would like EP to provide an estimated cost comparison between open cut and slip lining for this crossing in order for her to share this with the Water & Sewer Commission for their feedback. EP confirmed they would review their cost estimate to provide Deb with an estimated cost for these two options.

Ms. Pettey also noted the following information:

The Town does not have any existing record drawings on the existing water main but will research for additional information. The Town must take ownership of a dam to acquire the pipe, which would add unknown risks, liabilities, and responsibilities to the Town. Ms. Pettey requested EP to provide the Town with a breakdown of any additional costs incurred outside of the original project budget, as she has until April 24, 2024 to request any additional funding from ARPA for engineering design services. Outside of ARPA, she does not have any other funding sources available. She asked EP to include the cost of preparing an easement plan for the proposed pump station at 23 Alexandra Drive as part of EP's amendment. She will check how much budget the Town has to date for additional police detail costs associated with Merrill completing the survey punch list items. Ms. Pettey indicated the Town will likely divide any sewer construction work into two to three phases, depending on the available grants.

EP mentioned that they submitted a RFI to the Town requesting additional information to wrap up the preliminary design. Prior to the meeting, Mrs. Alfaro sent over responses to this RFI and indicated that she would follow up on providing any missing flow information, specifically any info on the Crystal Springs/Narrow Road area. EP indicated they want to make sure they have all additional sewer flows accounted for to determine if they can utilize the existing 8-inch ductile iron sewer force main on South Main Street, as opposed to slip lining a smaller HDPE sewer force main inside the host pipe. EP tentatively set the end of January 2024 to complete the preliminary design work.

Mr. Parker Bob and Mr. Rosofsky provided institutional knowledge and history behind the abandoned South Main Street. They also provided the following feedback. Mr. Parker would like to engage the City of Fall River as soon as possible to assess if the City has the capacity to take additional sewer flow from Freetown, in addition to the current flows approved in the existing (IMA) between Fall River and Freetown. Andrew agreed with Bob's concerns and indicated that EP needs to finalize the anticipated sewer extension flows based on the Town's feedback prior to meeting with the City to discuss sewer capacity. Andrew indicated EP will reach out to the City after the preliminary design phase is complete to set up a meeting between EP, Fall River, and Freetown to discuss next steps. The existing tanks on 205 South Main Street were abandoned approximately three years ago and were used for water filtration. Currently, the abandoned South Main Street is left gated off and is not used as a means of public access.

There are action items for all parties following today's meeting. The Town will follow up on additional information/acquisition of the buried pipe owned by Churchill & Banks. The Town to provide feedback on the 25% Design Plans and Basis of Design Report. The Town to provide additional flow information from the Crystal Springs/Narrow Road area. EP to provide an amendment for any additional work performed outside of the original budget so Deb could request funding from ARPA. EP to provide a cost comparison between slip lining and open trench excavation within the SHLO. EP to coordinate with David to assist Merrill with pumping out any flooded cleanout and/or air release structures along the existing sewer force main alignment on South Main Street in order to finalize the base plan. EP to update Preliminary Design Basis of Design Report, 25% Design Drawings, and 25% OPCC based on the Town's feedback. EP to follow up with the Town/Water & Sewer Commission on remaining RFI #2 questions.

Any other business to properly come before the Committee

Next progress meeting is scheduled for 2:00 PM on January 31, 2024, at the Freetown Police Station Community Room.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Victoria Alfaro, seconded by Deborah Pettey, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

This is a True Record by me

Attest: _____

Nicole DeMoranville, Senior Clerk