

**Southfield/Union Point Committee Minutes
Town Hall Council Chambers
December 11, 2023**

Present: John Abbott, Chairperson
Gary MacDougall, Vice-Chairperson
Arthur Mathews
Absent: Christopher Heffernan
Fred Happel

Also Present: Robert Luongo, Planning Director

Recording Secretary: Janet P. Murray (transcribed from recording)

Chair Abbott opened the Southfield/Union Point Committee meeting and called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Oversight of Redevelopment of Former NAS South Weymouth - Infrastructure – Town Services

Chair Abbott stated that tonight’s discussions will be in regard to the development potential impact to town infrastructure as it relates to key town services including stormwater, transportation, and water wastewater.

Chair Abbott stated that Councilors Happel and Heffernan had prior commitments and are unable to attend this evening.

Chair Abbott read the following disclosure:

“We do not have a recording secretary for this evening’s meeting and meeting minutes will be created from the recording. This satisfies open meeting law regulations. Please note that anyone that gets up to speak tonight must identify themselves and their position, in order that the proper notations are indicated in the minutes.”

Chair Abbott stated that this committee previously met on September 12, 2023, and discussed the outline of the committee's purpose and met with the town's peer review consultant Pat Brennan, who was overseeing a review of the various impact studies necessary for the MEPA notice of project change (NPC). The committee met again on December 7, 2023, to discuss the impact on town services, focusing on police, fire, and schools. In preparation for tonight's meeting, Councilors received the official impact reports for stormwater, transportation, and water wastewater. The town's peer review consultant has also reviewed these reports and will be sharing his findings with the Council this evening. Councilors will have the chance to follow up with questions to the town's peer review consultants, as well as any representatives from the development team who are in attendance. The committee will be focusing on a higher level review of these studies. In the interest of discussing all three reports tonight, if any topic seems to be getting into deeper discussion, it may be tabled for follow up at a future meeting.

Mr. Luongo, Weymouth's Planning Director, stated that tonight's meeting is to review the four reports that will be submitted to the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA) as part of their NPC.

Mr. Luongo explained who has been involved in this review:

- Pat Brennan, lead peer reviewer, will comment on stormwater and water and wastewater
- Jack Gillen, transportation engineer, will comment on the traffic along with Owen McDonald, Weymouth traffic engineer
- Representatives from New England Development are present to answer questions
- DPW divisions have reviewed water and wastewater as well as stormwater management

Mr. Luongo noted that all of the reports have been reviewed by the various appropriate town departments.

John Twohig, New England Development, reviewed the actions of the Towns of Rockland and Abington as well as the MEPA process.

He stated that they received unanimous support from all boards in Abington as well as overwhelming support at Abington's October Town Meeting. He added that they had about 90% of the vote in support of the Zoning Bylaw.

Mr. Twohig stated that they went through the same process in Rockland and received unanimous support from all boards. Rockland's town meeting support was about 85%

Mr. Twohig stated that the projects key reports are on transportation, stormwater, and water and sewer. He continued that they will do legislation because the 2014 legislation talks about L-star particular plans, programs, the type of units, and even references individual developers. He stated that he expects to be filing something by the first quarter of next year.

Councilor Mathews stated he would like to invite Mr. Twohig back to this committee after they submit changes to the legislation to discuss this further.

Councilor MacDougall stated that if this changes the enabling legislation, then we certainly want to take a look at it.

Mr. Twohig clarified that they are not changing how the project functions, operates, or the Southfield Redevelopment Authority (SRA). He stated that there are specific individual development plans that are referred to that are no longer relevant. He continued that along with MEPA and the Undersecretary of Environmental Justice, they reviewed this project. He noted that this project is actually not technically subject to environmental justice because the filings all pre-date it, but they have voluntarily agreed to study it.

Pat Brennan, PGB Engineering, stated that he is doing the peer review for the town. He reviewed a letter he wrote with comments on water, wastewater, and stormwater.

The NPC includes a stormwater master plan with the build out design concept and accompanying hydrologic model/calculations. The design concept includes modifications to the tactical air

control and navigation which is the outfall basin and construction of several stormwater basins throughout the base. Stormwater flows will ultimately discharge at two locations French's Stream in Rockland and/or Old Swamp River in Weymouth. The model indicates that post development rates of runoff will be less than existing conditions. The model is a full build out model. He noted that there is additional work to be conducted for certain phases of development. He reported that they have taken the full build out, did some estimations on what impervious area would be and so forth, so that they have a pretty good understanding of what the storm water flows will be from the completed development.

Mr. Brennan stated that the stormwater master plan includes a description of phase one of the stormwater improvements and indicates that the remainder of the proposed improvements will be constructed on a project by project basis. Phase one includes development located north of Delahunt Parkway in the area west of existing hangar number two, which is up against the existing development. Phase one work would include improvements to the outfall basin and intercepting some existing stormwater flows that discharge to that basin and diverting them to a proposed basin located along French's Stream, West Branch. According to the stormwater master plan, the Phase One work would increase storage capacity in the basin and allow the tributary areas north and adjacent to the parkway to be developed without building any additional stormwater basins.

Mr. Brennan stated that in the stormwater master plan it is noted that the design is conservative because groundwater recharge to the proposed basins has not been accounted for in the model. While the model does show that post development rates of runoff will not be greater than existing conditions, post development volume of runoff will be increased significantly. For example, runoff to the Old Swamp River would be increased by about eight acre feet during a two year storm and by about 17.4 acre feet during the 100 year storm. Some of the increase can be attributed to an increase in tributary area to the Old Swamp River, but 19 additional acres would be draining in that direction than what drains there today. Most of the increase is due to no groundwater recharge. They will need to provide groundwater recharge in these phases of development so that that the volume of runoff does not increase. The problem with increasing the volume of runoff, particularly to the Old Swamp River, is that it is a pretty flat river. He noted that there are houses that back right up to it. Increasing that much volume, even though it is releasing at a slower rate, could have adverse impacts on the abutters to the river.

The hydrologic model is based on build out of the base and includes all proposed basins. In the in the plan, it stated that after phase one, stormwater improvements are implemented, the remainder of the proposed stormwater improvements will be constructed on a project by project basis. However, phase one has not been evaluated on its own in the master plan; phase one needs to be evaluated to ensure that rates and volumes of runoff will not be increased. He noted that the model prepared is for the full build out. They are asking that they look at that phase one, and then inform then when phase one improvements will be constructed.

Councilor Abbott asked Mr. Brennan to further explain what it means that at full build out, there will be less runoff, but volume will be increased.

Mr. Brennan clarified that they are reducing the rates of runoff. He pointed out that there is no specific requirement to mitigate volume. However, he noted that volume is extremely important because 17-acre feet during a 100-year storm, that is 17 feet of water on that one acre, which is about 5.6 to 7 million gallons. He added that volume mitigation is critical because even though water is released slower, which is what is done when reducing the rates, is why basins are built to retain that water and release it at a slower rate.

Councilor Abbott questioned if Old Swamp River's infrastructure can withstand that increase.

Mr. Brennan stated that the river runs along Route 3 and then into Whitman's Pond. He noted that it is a flat river that does not flow rapidly; adding that volume to it will cause flooding issues. He continued that to mitigate this would mean recharging the water back into the ground, He added that they typically design artificial recharge basins, or a subsurface type of system with chambers and crushed stone.

Councilor Mathews asked for clarification on the total suspended solids (TSS) 5% TSS removal rate credit. He noted that it was mentioned that one of the solutions to reducing the TSS was street sweeping and that the proposed design incorporates quarterly street sweeping as best management practice (BMP) to control the amount of sediment that enters the stormwater management system. He added that the town's policy for street sweeping is once a year for side streets. Main roads such as Middle Street, Washington Street, Pleasant Street are swept more frequently. He questioned who would be in charge of doing that on a quarterly basis.

Mr. Brennan stated that they will not take the 5% TSS credit for sweeping because the stormwater standards is that sweeping be done monthly with a vacuum sweeper not a rotary which no one does. He added that there are other ways to take that TSS removal credit on the project by project, the phase development.

Councilor Mathews pointed out that the town of Weymouth cannot handle taking on that task.

Bob Taylor, the lead for engineering and planning on the redevelopment project, stated that they did not assume any infiltration because in some of the basins that are up in the central portion, are in the Navy's groundwater capture and treatment. He stated that they have to be very cautious about infiltrating water in the areas where the Navy is trying to capture the groundwater and treat it-- there probably will be basins that are not going to have infiltration.

Mr. Taylor stated that along the eastern boundary coming from where the Coast Guard land is, which is now shown in the plans, running behind the homes on Union Street, the land is pitching down towards the parkway. All of that eastern boundary north of the Parkway will go out into a basin which has been redesigned to have infiltration. This will knock down the volumes between 26% and 10% in various storms times and infiltrate the first inch to inch and a half of precipitation; most storms will not end up having any discharge. It will capture that water, treat it, and recharge it into the ground. He noted that the basins are long and linear.

Councilor Abbott asked when the discharge control valve would go in.

Mr. Taylor stated that it is the in immediate second phase as soon as flow is added. Concrete, old Navy pieces, everything that sits in that basin will be taken out.

Councilor Abbott asked if there are any major improvements that the town of Weymouth will have to undertake along the path of Old Swamp River, as it makes its way past Hamilton and Ralph Talbot Schools, the highway, and the various residential neighborhoods.

Mr. Brennan stated that the town should not have to do anything; the developer is required to mitigate on site before they release.

Jack Gillen introduced himself. He stated that he looked at all 250 pages and could compare those with other traffic reports that he had. He continued that he is satisfied that the volumes made sense. He reported that he looked at the no build conditions, which is taking the existing conditions, then bring them to a normal growth up to the design year which is sometimes seven years out.

Mr. Gillen stated that two projects that were not accounted for are at Pond Street at the intersection of Route 18 at the old Factory Paint site and the arena complex on Delahunt Parkway.

Mr. Gillen pointed out that there is a lot of vacant, retail/commercial on the first floor in the area in Union Point. He stated that once the projects are built, the storefronts are all going to be filled. This will be internal to the site but should still be addressed.

Mr. Gillen stated that he looked at the trip generation and he is satisfied with the trips as they were projected. He did point out that the intersection at Pleasant Street and Route 53 should be included as well as looking at others to decide whether to change the traffic signal timing. He stated that there is still a lot of work to be done.

Owen MacDonald, Weymouth's traffic engineer, agreed with Mr. Gillen that the intersection at Route 53 and Pleasant Street should be included as Pleasant Street is the highest north/south street of the town roads in this area.

Mr. Gillen pointed out that there has been work done at this intersection and traffic signal timing may need to be tweaked based on the volumes.

Mr. MacDonald stated that in the study area, the intersection of Columbian and Forest Streets is listed for traffic signalization. He noted another location is the intersection of Colombian and Park Avenue West. Colombian Street is a state highway and Mass Department of Transportation (DOT) at this time requires, that for any improvements made on state highways, alternatives other than traffic signalization need to be considered such as roundabouts.

Councilor Abbott stated that he has concerns about the intersection of Route 58, Main Street, Pond Street, and Trotter Road which is probably the worst performing intersection in town. He questioned who is ultimately responsible for making the necessary improvements to these

intersections, whether it's phased to go along with the development of Union Point, or whether there are immediate changes and mitigations that need to go into effect now.

Jeffery Dirk, with Vanesse and Associates, stated that they are the transportation consultants for New England Development and the Union Point project. He stated that the mitigation associated with the project is going to be phased and a schedule was laid out as to when specific improvements would take place. He reported that a majority of the improvements are associated with the development, meaning that they would be undertaken as a part of the project paid for privately, but state grants will be pursued. From the standpoint of the mitigation program, it is the developer that backstops the work meaning that it is going to be paid for, designed, and constructed by the developer. He added when they say they are going to make improvements at 56 intersections, which is the total being discussed, the developer commits to doing that, to the extent that there is money available through partnering.

Councilor Abbott asked if there is any discussion of adding an additional exit from Union Point.

Mr. Dirk stated that there is no discussion at this time. From the mitigation perspective, the plan is to deal with the existing access points and improve them to add the needed capacity to the development.

Councilor MacDougall asked if these are suggestions.

Mr. Dirk stated that these are commitments on behalf of the developer not suggestions. They are saying that this is the mitigation that should be implemented at this location, and here is who is responsible for paying for the commitment.

Councilor MacDougall asked if it is Mass DOT, how does that impact the timing of having to go through the state process.

Mr. Dirk stated that the state process is to go through the MEPA filing, in that it outlines the mitigation commitments. He noted that once the project proceeds with construction, every year, a monitoring report is issued.

Councilor MacDougall stated that the report indicates that the town is above the Mass DOT average crash rate.

Mr. Dirk stated that safety is the first step of the mitigation program. He noted that there are five or six locations that have not had safety studies done and they will be doing those studies.

Councilor Mathews stated that he wants to make sure that the developer does go through with the proposed recommended changes. He noted that many of the improvements discussed in the past in relation to this project have been completed by the state such as the building of the Delahunt Parkway, the improvements to Route 18 intersections, and the widening route of 18.

Mr. Gillen continued that the section 61 finding is a good tool to ensure that items are completed in a timely manner. He continued that they have to issue section 61 as part of the MEPA approval process.

Councilor Mathews would rather see specific dates than phases because phases are subject to change.

Mr. Dirk stated that there is a table in the report that lays out the timing of the projects. He continued that the state is now more stringent in not allowing developments to move forward without this mitigation in place. It is the same with changes; it is very difficult to get changes done to projects now.

Mr. Brennan reviewed the water and wastewater. He stated that all the development is all in the town of Weymouth and Weymouth supplies the water and takes the wastewater from the base.

Mr. Brennan reviewed the notice of project change:

- The projected water demand is based on Title Five flows, with an added 10%. The Title Five estimated flow is 294,000 gallons per day. However, the actual consumption from the meter reading is about 116,000 gallons per day which is 40% of what is required. All of the infrastructure will be based on Title Five flows.
- Up to 2.1 million gallons of water per day may be needed. The notice acknowledges that none of the three towns has the capacity to provide that water.
- Two viable long-term options to supply water
 - secure water from the MWRA
 - purchase water from the Aquaria desalination plant through Brocton.

The proponents preferred alternative would be for Weymouth to join the MWRA and sell water to the base. This would supply Weymouth with its future water demand outside of the base as well as supply the base with sufficient water at full build out.

Mr. Brennan stated that there is discussion on obtaining an interim water supply and they understand that the permanent water supply is probably 10 years off before they actually get the distribution system built. They have looked at various options:

- work with Weymouth to find some additional supply by doing leak repairs and new construction with sustainable water saving fixtures.
- work with Brockton, Abington, and Rockland joint waterworks for an interim connection through either Rockland or Abington
- Work with the MWRA and the city of Quincy to utilize an existing condition under the Fore River
- Seek DEP approval for short term and interim relief from its 5,000 million gallon per day withdrawal permit for the town of Weymouth.

Mr. Brennan stated that in the NPC, they indicate that they would like to negotiate an agreement with Weymouth to allow for the supply of an additional 600,000 gallons per day of water and 540,000 gallons per day of wastewater capacity to serve the base during the initial phases of redevelopment.

The proponent evaluated some scenarios on initial build out with the assumption that residential was going to be in the first few phases. Using a 12 year and a 15 year period, they looked at how far that 600,000 gallons per day would be able to go. In the 12 year period, they estimated 500 residential units and 400 residential units per year in the 15 year period, built and occupied. Based on those numbers, they are looking at between four and a half to little over eight years, that the 600,000 gallons would be able to sustain the development at that pace.

Mr. Brennan stated that although it is not specifically stated in the NPC, based on the calculations provided in the notice, the 600,000 gallons per day of water and 540,000 gallons per day of wastewater would be in addition to what is existing currently.

Mr. Brennan stated that in talking with DPW, they understand that Weymouth does not have the 600,000 gallons per day of extra water supply capacity. He added that they recommend that the NPC not identify a specific amount of water, but rather leave it in general terms and note that the proponent and the town are in negotiations. He also noted that the proponent also placed more emphasis on a combination of Weymouth and the other interim alternatives that they identified in the notice of project change, either a connection through Abington, Rockland, or with Brockton.

Mr. Brennan stated that in previous MEPA filings, it had been assumed that the Redevelopment Authority, which has now Southfield Redevelopment Authority (SRA), would be a Water Authority, where they would purchase water but run the water system on the base. The notice of project change notes that currently the town of Weymouth supplies water to the base on an intermunicipal agreement with the SRA and bills Weymouth customers directly. It also states that while SRA has the authority to be a water supplier, having direct municipal supply has simplified water service.

Mr. Brennan stated that they assume that this means that the proponent's intent under the NPC would be that Weymouth would be the water supplier. However, it should be clarified that as the supplier the town would not only be supplying but also running the system, taking care of the pipes and everything at the base. He questioned if Weymouth were the supplier then what would happen with development that is in Abington and Rockland.

Mr. Taylor stated that they believe that the SRA filing a joint application with the town of Weymouth and joining the MWRA is the best of the alternatives for the redevelopment. He noted that the Abington/Rockland joint waterworks is running at their limit.

Councilor Abbott questioned if there is a plan for either water extraction from land on the base through a well, or through a wastewater treatment facility on the base at this time.

Mr. Taylor stated that this is correct.

Councilor MacDougall asked about the number given to them by DPW for water.

Mr. Brennan stated that they were not given a specific number; they were told that the town did not have the 600,000 gallons available per day.

Councilor MacDougall asked if the two interim solutions require 600,000 gallons of water per day.

Mr. Brennan stated that this is what their scenarios were based upon.

Mr. Taylor stated that this was a question in the MEPA secretary's finding, that they had to demonstrate the buildout on an interim basis, how many units and what are the consequences of the interim period.

Councilor Mathews stated that he would prefer to keep a specific water number in the NPC as he does not want to give DEP a hypothetical, vague number. He stated that he does not agree that Weymouth has a surplus-- there has been a surplus recently due to the increased amount of rain. However, he pointed out that that the previous year there was a water ban. He noted that the numbers do not include all the new construction in Weymouth in the last year or two.

Mr. Brennan stated that the wastewater flows from full development will be discharged to each respective town. There are issues with all the systems in all three towns.

Mr. Brennan stated that in looking at the projections for flows they relied heavily on the Environmental Partners Group town of Weymouth water and sewer capacity analysis that was completed in November of 2022. In that report, there were a number of recommendations for improvements to the sewer system--much had to do with low lying areas where there is a lot of infiltration and inflow into the sewers, replacing some of those large trunk mains to eliminate that inflow and infiltration to provide additional capacity in the system. They are figuring that wastewater discharged from the base to Weymouth would be between 1.1 and 1.2 million gallons per day. The cost in the report to upgrade all of the sewers listed in the report was about almost 83 million. He stated that it is critical for them to work with the town to develop a schedule for sewer improvements to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the system to accept flows from the base as their Phase development progresses.

Councilor Abbott asked if there has been any discussion on a structure being built that straddles municipal lines.

Mr. Taylor stated that each community issues its building permits. He stated that it is possible for a building to straddle town lines, but that this would be rare.

Councilor Abbott asked if the plan is for wastewater to go to individual towns as opposed to being treated on site and that there is no plan for a wastewater treatment facility on the premises.

Mr. Taylor stated that this was correct.

Councilor MacDougall asked if the town issuing the permit will be the owner of the sewer and water.

Mr. Taylor stated that this is correct, and they will control who gets the bills.

Councilor Mathews asked if there is a plan for Rockland, if they want to start developing their portion, to temporarily hook into Weymouth's wastewater system or look to Weymouth as an interim water source.

Mr. Taylor stated that there is no plan for wastewater from Rockland to hook into Weymouth. He stated that he cannot speak for Rockland-- but providing water to Rockland is not in the plans or the MEPA documents.

At 8:10 p.m., there being no further business, Councilor MacDougall made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Councilor Mathews. Motion passed 3-0 on a roll call vote as follows:

Councilor Abbott – Aye Councilor MacDougall - Aye Councilor Mathews - Aye

Respectfully submitted by Janet P. Murray as recording secretary

Approved by John Abbott as Chair
Voted unanimously on 16 January 2024