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TOWN OF ACTON  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MINUTES OF MEETING SEPTEMBER 23, 1986

Barbara Brown  
TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Present: Daniel Costello, Chairman, Eleanor Voorhies, Charlotte Sagoff, Associated Member Richard Oakley. Staff present: Steven Calichman, Director, Deborah Robertson, Edward Wirtanen, Marion Donahue, Carol Holley.

The meeting was opened at 7:47 p.m. after it was determined that no more Board Members were to be present. Mr. Costello reported that Maynard's Town Meeting had voted against the tie-in with Acton sewers. The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and corrected. Mrs. Sagoff moved that the minutes be accepted as corrected. Miss Voorhies seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

7:58 Groundwater and the issue of Curtain Drains. A statement prepared by staff sanitarians was discussed in detail. This statement was presented as an attempt by staff to establish set and standard procedures for installation of curtain/interceptor drains. The purpose of these drains, it was explained, is to lower the natural groundwater table in order to permit construction of a septic system that would be the required 4 feet above groundwater level. Mr. Costello stated that he had always been of the opinion that such installations for new systems was contrary to Title 5. Staff stated that this was not the case, and that the installation of such drains was not uncommon in Acton. The issue the statement was addressing, it was explained, was the proper monitoring of groundwater levels after installation of drains to determine if the drains were having the desired effect before a septic system was installed. The issue was primarily one of ensuring that proper design of the drain and septic system could be confirmed. It was suggested that staff seek more information from DEQE regarding the installation of interceptor/curtain drains in relation to Title 5.

8:06 p.m. Review of some correspondence, provided the Board on an FYI basis.

8:11 p.m. The Board of Health, after review of a memorandum on the subject, resolved that fees for Food Service Permits for day care centers be \$50.00. It was stated that the same fee for Food Service is required of churches.

8:14 p.m. Memorandum of Deborah Robertson regarding water test results. The subject round of testing was performed by Nora Hanley from the State. The discrepancy in State and Town test results was discussed. The technique for sample gathering by State personnel is quite different from Town personnel's technique. It was stated that a confirmatory round of testing was to be performed after two weeks of dry weather, with both the State staff and Town staff taking samples of the same waters at the same time. Some particulars of the chemicals found was discussed. It was requested that staff chart water testing results in a graph format so that the Board could observe any trends over time.

8:23 Ken Burke of Wine and Cheese Shop at Acton Woods mall. There was a question of exactly what constituted dry goods, and whether or not this shop would use any significant amount of water. Board members could not reach an agreement if this were a "dry" or "wet" usage. Deborah Robertson stated

that 5 gallons/100 sq. ft. constitutes "dry" usage, the flow for which this system was designed. The food-related business went with flow usages, as a rule, of 15 gallons per employee. This generally results in an increased flow. There was a discussion on whether or not the people involved in this shop should be heard at this meeting. It was decided that the Board would hear what they had to say in order to gather information on which to base a decision.

8:35 Mr. Bigelow, Service Station Management, and the question of underground tanks. Mr. Calichman stated that he had discussed the issue of double-walled tanks with the installer, who was to appear later in the meeting. Mrs. Sagoff stated that if underground tanks were to be replaced, they should be replaced properly, with double-walled tanks.

Review of documentation on Bellows Farms proposed condominium development. This was removed from the agenda due to the engineer being ill. Some discrepancies in allowable flow figures was discussed. Mr. Wirtanen stated that the Board of Health had not issued or approved any permits to date. Mrs. Sagoff stated that she would like more details on this plan. Mr. Wirtanen stated that the Bellows Farms people had not been before the Board in some time, and at the last meeting with them open sand filters had been discussed. Mr. Costello suggested that the engineer involved with this project be requested to bring in his hydrogeological study.

8:45 Mr. Dentino and Mr. Maria, Special Permit conditions involving filter medium layer and setback from wetlands. Mr. Coburn, their engineer, was unable to attend. Mrs. Robertson stated that if they could not come up with a plan meeting the conditions of the special permit they should come before the Board to discuss the matter, explaining their slot on the agenda. No permits for the proposed system had been issued. Mr. Frank Dentino and Mr. Martin Maria appeared. Mr. Dentino stated that his engineer's point was that the nature of the material the Board of Health required would not allow for the necessary perc rate. Mr. Calichman gave Mr. Maria a description of filter medium as silty sand, and stated that other engineers had performed perc testing on this material and the desired perc rate was achieved. Mr. Calichman stated that the engineer was to certify as to the filter material on the plan. The other matter in question, setback of expansion area from wetland, was resolved by stating that it was possible to slightly alter the shape of the expansion area. The misunderstanding in this regard had to do with State versus Town of Acton specifications. Miss Voorhies then moved that a special permit be granted subject to conditions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7, with the pumping to be done every two years. Mrs. Sagoff seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

8:56 Wine and Cheese Shop. Ken Burke and Bob Kulak. They had received their liquor license and were seeking a Food Service permit to sell and cut bulk cheeses and some cold cuts. No consumption is to take place on premises. Water usage would be limited to occasional washing of knives. Knives would be wiped clean with a cloth between cuts of cheese, then washed at the end of the day. Cloths used for such wiping would be laundered off premises. They wished to have a slicer for cold cuts. Sanitarian Donahue objected to their methods of cleaning knives, and expressed concern for cleaning the slicer between rounds of slicing. Mr. Kulak expressed concern for compliance with

Acton regulations. Mr. Kulak now owns a similar shop in New Hampshire. Mr. Costello stated that the only issue was one of water usage, and whether or not the septic system for the complex could accommodate the flow needed by the proposed business. It was stated that staffing could reach a top level of five individuals in the store at once during holiday rushes. It was learned that the area of the store was to be 1125 sq. ft. According to Mr. Burke, 30% of the product is to be wine, 20% pate and cheese, 50% prepackaged foods. Miss Voorhies moved to table the matter pending further information gathering. Mrs. Sagoff seconded. Motion unanimously carried.

9:20 David Bigelow, Service Station Management Corp. Mr. Costello stated that the Board of Health policy was for secondary containment. Mr. Bigelow stated that the tank in question was already in the ground, backfilled to the top of the tank but not to grade. Bigelow asked the Fire Department for a permit to remove the old steel tanks and put in fiberglass tanks with fiberglass piping. Mr. Bigelow did not do the preliminary set up, nor did he know the by-law regarding secondary containment. The Fire Department had stated that he could not install two fiberglass tanks side-by-side. Mr. Bigelow stated that with the tanks there would be installed hydrocarbon sensor linked up to alarm and telephone alarm and a test-well at the site also. Also to be installed was a tank level monitor, also alarmed. The tank is single-walled fiberglass for diesel fuel. The proposed 2,000 gasoline tank could be changed to a double-walled installation. Brochures on three different types of tanks and the virtues of each was displayed. The miscommunication occurred when aquifer protection regulations were reviewed - State regulations but not Acton regulations had been checked prior to installation of the tank. It was not known to Mr. Bigelow that the installation was in an aquifer protection area. Mr. Bigelow stated that, when installing the tank, they hit groundwater at about 13 feet, and the last 3-4 feet before that was fairly heavy clay soil. Observation wells were installed at either end of the tank excavation area. These could also be used to pump out any product leaking out. Mrs. Sagoff expressed a desire to see double-walled tanks installed. She wished to table this matter pending further study. Mr. Bigelow stated that he is a qualified installer and that his client went with the fiberglass tanks because they were safer. Mrs. Sagoff moved to table the matter, Miss Voorhies seconded, and the motion was unanimously carried. Mr. Bigelow will return at 8:45 on October 7. Mr. Bigelow, before leaving the meeting, asked for and received advice on how to deal with a septic system being replaced at a gas station on Great Road.

9:36 Groundwater testing. Mr. Calichman stated that the subdivision in question had testing done during a dry fall, followed by a dry spring. The developer, Charles Bourque, is in a situation where they are trying to design systems. On some of the lots the Board of Health has been able to see groundwater levels clearly. Mrs. Robertson stated that Mr. Bourque anticipates the season will open on November 1. Mr. Wirtanen stated that based on information now available, and if conditions continue, the Board will not recognize maximum groundwater, and Mr. Bourque's condition may not improve. Mr. Bourque made a request for opening of the testing season. Mr. Costello stated that the testing season will open, but water tables may not be recognized. Mr. Bourque stated that if any number could be given for adjustment of groundwater for system elevations, if each lot could be looked at, if they could set the elevation. Mr. Calichman stated that some communities do have adjustment figures; Acton does not. Some have an adjustment figure of 2 feet. Mr. Calichman stated that there is not a lot of

background data on this locus. Mr. Costello stated that it was not possible to make adjustments due to the lack of data. Mrs. Robertson stated that if the engineer could find the data from testing done in 1983 on Pope Road, there was a possibility that data could prove useful in solving the problem.

10:00 p.m. Ice House Pond. Some discussion was held regarding the Acton Water District maps and future comparisons between Water District, Groundwater Protection Coordinating Committee, and Board of Health areas of concern. Nothing could be done in this area without further coordination. Mr. Halley, Conservation Commissioner, was praised by Mr. Calichman for his diligent efforts to keep various entities within the Town coordinated and apprised of each other's actions. Due to the absence of Mr. Emmons and Mr. Stephens, both of whom are concerned with this area, Miss Voorhies moved to table discussion. Mrs. Sagoff seconded. The matter was unanimously tabled.

10:10 p.m. Brief discussion of Hazardous Waste Day, contracts, and funding.

10:20 p.m. Reopening of the discussion of Groundwater. Mr. Wirtanen and Mrs. Robertson discussed how to note signs of groundwater in test pits. Staff requested clarification of the regulations regarding groundwater recognition.

10:35 p.m. Mrs. Sagoff moved to adjourn. Miss Voorhies seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Holley  
Carol Holley, Secretary

Signed and approved,

Daniel Costello  
Daniel Costello, Chairman