



WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2024

7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Present: Barry Rosen, Ron Parenti, Mike Geis, Matt Mostoller, and Joe Robb,

Chairperson: Joe Robb

Clerk: Ron Parenti

Wright-Pierce Representatives: Kevin Olson, Thomas Hogan, Marc Moccio, and James Cray

Others in Attendance: Alissa Nicol (Select Board Liaison), QinRui Pang (Town Engineer), and Kim Kastens

1. Opening

WRAC chair Joe Robb opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

2. Regular Business

A. Public Remarks/Comments – None

B. Review of Potable Water Section of the Great Road Wastewater Solutions Report – The Wright-Pierce team lead by Kevin Olson initiated the discussion with an overview of the major results of the potable water section of the Wastewater Solutions report. Included in this part of the briefing was a review of the number and types of parcels within the Great Road corridor, and a discussion of projected increases in water demand for three growth scenarios following the installation of a sewer line. Overall, these results indicated that the expected increases in the average and peak water demand would not be large in comparison to the current demand. It was noted, however, that Concord may choose to move its treatment plant from Nagog pond to Concord, which would mean that the current line that supplies treated water to customers in Acton would need to be replaced with a new water main connected to the Acton Water District's distribution system. The cost of this replacement would be substantial, and it is unclear as to who would be financially responsible for that project. It was also noted that the Water District's capacity has recently been impacted by steps taken to comply with the MassDEP PFAS regulations.

Following this presentation Joe Robb asked for a clarification of the criteria used to determine if a parcel could be developed, and James Cray responded that the criteria included parcel size, location, and frontage. Ron Parenti asked if the predictions of future demand were formulated using an automated search through the Town's GIS information or manually processed; Cray indicated that the parcels along the Great Road corridor were manually evaluated to see if they could be developed or if the current use of the property could be changed in a way that would result in a higher demand. Parenti also asked if there might be any growth scenario, such as a large number of new restaurants.



that would result in a significant increase in water demand. The Wright-Pierce team responded that this would be unlikely as it would require a large number of existing businesses to be converted to a different use. It was also noted that a 25% growth estimate had been included in the calculations to provide a worst-case estimate of future water demand. With regard to the potential impact of new wastewater treatment plants to service Great Road on PFAS concentrations in drinking water, Barry Rosen asked if Wright-Pierce had investigated this issue and also asked about the possibility of state and federal regulations on PFAS concentrations in plant discharge. QinRui Pang indicated that there are currently no regulations on effluent concentrations, but that regulations are being considered. Matt Mostoller stated that he has seen PFAS data from the existing Middle Fort Pond Brook Treatment Plant, which are orders of magnitude higher than that found in groundwater. This would indicate that sewer discharge areas situated near the protection zone of a wellsite could elevate the PFAS level at the well. Rosen noted that the WRAC has expressed its concern about the possibility of a discharge site on one of the Grace parcels, which are close to the Water District's Assabet wells. Pang reminded the Committee that current discussions about the use of the Grace property for sewer discharge are very preliminary. At the conclusion of this discussion Parenti and Rosen both thanked the Wright-Pierce team for their report, and Joe Robb stated that he was impressed with the amount of work that had been performed for a relatively small contract.

Prior to the introduction of the next agenda item, Kim Kastens and Alissa Nicol raised questions relating to the possibility of expanding the GIS data analysis used by Wright-Pierce to evaluate future water demand in the entire town. Joe Robb expressed the opinion that it would be very inefficient to apply the manual analysis used by that company to the entire town, but that it should be possible to develop an automated script to perform that task more efficiently.

- C. Review Minutes from 18 January 2024 – A motion to approve the minutes for 18 January 2024 was made by Barry Rosen and seconded by Mike Geis. Barry Rosen, Ron Parenti, Mike Geis, and Joe Robb voted to approve the minutes. Matt Mostoller was not present at that meeting and abstained.
- D. Discussion of WRAC Contribution to the Town's Annual Report – The WRAC members reviewed the Committee's contribution to the Town's Annual report, which had been briefly discussed at the meeting on 18 January. Edits suggested by the members and Alissa Nicol were inserted into the document in real time by Ron Parenti during this discussion. [During this editing process, Nicol educated the Committee members about the use of a hyphen in a compound adjective (referred to as a "temporary compound") to clarify the intended meaning of a sentence.] When the discussion concluded, Matt Mostoller moved to accept the modified report and allow Parenti to apply any minor wording adjustments needed to improve readability. The motion was seconded by Barry Rosen and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.
- E. Any Other New Business – Nicol notified the Committee that a discussion of future tasks for the WRAC would be discussed by the Select Board at their meeting on 5 February.



Ron Parenti and Mike Geis indicated that they would be available to attend that meeting and present the short list of task recommendations that had been compiled at the previous WRAC meeting. These tasks included: 1) a study of the impact of efforts to spur commercial development on water demand; 2) advocating for stricter water-protection zoning bylaws; 3) investigating methods to educate abutters to critical water supplies about the water protection bylaws; 4) providing guidance to the Select Board on the formation of a stormwater utility; and 5) providing guidance to the Select Board on the formation of wastewater districts.

Barry Rosen informed the members that he had responded to the Open Space and Recreation Working Group and provided WRAC's comments on their suggested tasks for the Committee.

3. Adjournment

Committee members agreed to hold the next meeting on 29 February 2024 at 7pm. A motion to adjourn was subsequently made by Barry Rosen and seconded by Matt Mostoller. The motion was approved at 8:45 pm by a unanimous roll call vote.

Meeting Chat File

20:36:35 From Matthew Mostoller to Host and Panelists:

<https://www.acton-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9315/Zoning-for-Groundwater-Protection-Mailer>