

Long Range Planning Committee Report

Chair: Tom Farrell

Members: Ellen Frost, Chris Getman, Ron Jarvis, Roy E. Jacobsen, Paul Matthews, George Prior

Over the past year, the committee focused on two primary topics: 1) the quality and quantity of the water that QCBFD supplies to its customers and 2) the aborted phragmites remediation project in West Pond.

Water:

Coming out of a joint meeting of LRPC and Public Works Committee (“PWC”) held in July 2016, was a review of a draft of the Engineering Evaluation and Facility Capital Improvement Plan prepared by Northeast Water Solutions, Inc which is our water system operator. Some discussion of LRPC continued involvement occurred but LRPC decided that implementation of this plan was best left to PWC.

We also examined the potential sale of the QCBFD water system to an outside for profit company. The principal benefits considered were the infusion of capital from such a sale and the relief of QCBFD having to make future capital improvements. Offsetting those benefits was a loss of control over the system. While no formal motion was made, it was the consensus of the committee that such a sale not be considered at this time.

The QCBFD well field is next to that of the East Beach Water Association (“EBW”) due to both communities shared history of being developed by Howard Thorpe. LRPC learned that EBW was pursuing funding for a potential well field site off of Quonochontaug Neck from the Rhode Island Water Resources Board (“RIWRB”). The principal advantages were eliminating the potential of salt water intrusion into their well field, reduced nitrate levels and perhaps sufficient amounts of water so as to allow fire hydrant installation for improved fire protection.

Subsequently, EBW has participated in our LRPC meetings as the committee saw obvious benefit to QCBFD in partnering with EBW in this effort. On its own, RIWRB has already identified several potential sites for a well field to serve Quonochontaug Neck as they did when they examined and purchased the former Oceanaire Motel site in Cross Mills to potentially serve as a water source for the community near Charlestown Breachway. EBW solicited the support of QCBFD in this quest.

LRPC was very supportive of the effort to obtain an off neck well field site by RIWRB. Through discussions with RIWRB management, EBW that at this time the RIWRB would only work with a municipality or semi municipality although none was involved in the Cross Mills purchase. EBW first asked Dunn’s Corner’s Fire District (“DCFD”) to take the lead, but they were rebuffed. EBW

then asked LRPC for QCBFD to take the lead. LRPC was supportive of QCBFD doing that but only to the extent of determining RIWRB willingness to purchase the off Neck well field site. Subsequent discussions with Charlestown Town Council President, Virginia Lee found that the council has never considered a town role. Accordingly, it has been agreed that she and Tom Farrell will meet with the RIWRB manager at a near date undetermined at the time of submission of this report.

Phragmites

A subcommittee documented all of the steps that had been taken during QCBFD's previous consideration of phragmites remediation. Importantly, it was found that if QCBFD wishes to now undertake a new remediation project, we will be starting over as the old submissions to the state are dead. The committee will readdress this issue at future meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Farrell