

Minutes
Northfield Board of Health
February 15, 2023
6:00 PM
Northfield Town Hall
69 Main Street, Northfield, MA
Board of Health Office 2nd Floor* Moved to Selectboard Meeting Room at 6:20 pm

Call to Order: 6:05 pm

Quorum Established: David Balk, Ruth Potee, Kathy Bridges, Karen Boudreau, Allison Wahlstrom
Also Present: Pamela Veith, BOH Secretary, Steve and Seth Wiggin, William and Jon Sieruta, Bernie Boudreau, Dominek Poli, Tom Walker, Robin Mckeen, Howard and Jinx Hastings, Sarah Kerns, Michelle Wood, James Vohr

Business:

- The Board unanimously decided that non-profit organizations would not be charged Food Permit fees.
- The FRCOG and the District contracts are still current. Board members were given copies of the FRCOG contract and discussion on these will resume at the next meeting.

David Balk, Chairman, was asked by members of the public who were present if they could ask questions of the engineers during the presentation and were told no as this was a meeting and not a hearing. David informed them they would be heard during the Citizen Concerns portion of the meeting.

Kathy Bridges recused herself from any discussions on the campground's proposed septic system design due to a prior professional relationship with this project.

The Sieruta's, engineers for the proposed campground design, presented the Board with 3 copies of such. They proceeded to go over the proposed layout, where water tables were found in various places and how they had designed the system according to information on occupancy provided by the owner. The site was designed to accommodate 2 people per unit with 12 permanent sites and 27 semi-permanent platforms. No accommodations would have washing machines or dishwashers.

Allison Wahlstrom, Ruth Potee and Karen Boudreau all questioned whether using 2 people per unit would be adequate as they were concerned that more than 2 people would be utilizing each unit. The engineers explained that with the data they were given each unit would have 1 bedroom and therefore the calculations they were allowed to use would be for that amount of wastewater per day. The engineers also explained that they had built according to the MA DEP usage for campgrounds.

Ruth Potee asked if these engineers had ever done a design on this scale previously and were told they had done more than a few. Examples were given. Ruth also questioned if this design was more like one that would be provided for a subdivision.

The Board asked where the wells would be placed. The campground intends to utilize the town water supply and piping will be placed appropriately when installed.

David Balk asked if the possibility of connecting to town sewer instead of private septic systems had been explored. Steve Wiggin stated that the closest connection to town sewer was 2,000+/- feet away and the cost would run astronomical. The engineers stated they feel that a septic system is more environmentally safe than a town sewer system. The engineers stated they had not done the feasibility study for this – Clockwork, Inc was charged with any feasibility study.

The Board inquired as to the wetlands in the area of this campground design. Engineers stated that they were outside the 200 foot buffer zone as required.

Allison expressed concerns about the size of the system and asked the engineers if they had sent a copy of this proposed design to DEP. The engineer stated they were not required to send based on the size and pointed out that this Board has health agents and septic engineers on it.

Engineers explained that the design includes an additional day of storage in each pump chamber in case of malfunction. Karen inquired where cleanouts were located and was shown.

Ruth inquired as to who oversees the installation and final approval of this system. Engineer explained that both the engineer and the Board of Health oversees the final approval of the installation.

Discussion of this design was tabled until the next Board meeting to be held on March 9, 2023 at 6 pm. One of the engineers will be present at that meeting should the Board require additional clarification.

Engineers to forward this septic system design as a pdf as well as architectural footprints – These will be available to be emailed to those who request it. Copies of the plans will be available in the Board office by prearranged time.

Board to get Planning Board Permit with the conditions placed on the project for the Campground prior to next meeting. Karen made a motion to this then a motion to friendly-remove it. This friendly-remove motion was 2nd by Ruth. It was firmly stated that no one is withholding any information – the Board just needs to retrieve it and the secretary will do so prior to the next meeting.

- Continuation of discussion on whether or not to permit Urine fertilizer as requested by a local farmer. Allison reported that she was unable to find any specific broken down information on this type of fertilizer. Kathy reported that she called DEP and was told they will contact the liaison to the AG for further information and circle back to Kathy with information. The person requesting the permit has informed us that Northampton has permitted use of this product. The person requesting the permit has stated that no food will be grown using this product. David stated, and the rest of the Board agreed, that it will be important to know exactly where this product comes from if we do eventually agree to allow it's use. David also suggested if permitted should be annually to have some control in case things change.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

- February 8, 2023 Minutes- Approved

Citizen's Concerns:

- Jinx Hastings – Questioned whether this design was ultimately going to be allowed to service a compound of “tiny homes.” She also questioned where the reserve areas are located for this system and whether the Board would consider hiring an outside consultant to look over this design also. She states that Clockwork, Inc. is not a B Corporation as she feels it has claimed to be.
- Sarah Kerns – Expressed that she lacks trust in the people hired to design and install this system. She wants a consultant hired and a new set of perc tests performed.
- Michelle Wood – Questioned Kathy Bridges (who had recused herself from the campground septic design discussion) about what she had done for the owners of that property. Kathy had been one of the engineers who performed a few of the perc tests and stated such. Michelle asked about seeing a feasibility study. David stated that the engineers at the meeting tonight had stated that Clockwork, Inc. had handled the feasibility study. David also stated that the Board would acquire the permit and conditions put in place by the Planning Board prior to the Board's next meeting.
- James Vohr – Stated his concern that since his property is serviced by a shallow well, he is in danger of contamination from the proposed campground septic system. He further states that the water table is quite a bit higher in his opinion. Also feels it isn't right that the company who did the digging for the perc tests is also going to be installing the system. He would like the perc tests redone.

Permit Applications:

- none

Reports:

- none

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair within 48 Hours:

- none

Adjourn: 7:48 pm

Karen Goodreau 3/9/23

Kathryn Bridger 3/9/23

fr J Wahlstrom 3/9/23

Alotum