

**Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan Update  
Dolington Area on-Lot Sewage System Survey  
March 18, 2013 Public Information Meeting**

The public information meeting was called to order by Board of Supervisors Chair Dan Rattigan at 7:00 pm. In attendance were the following members of the Board of Supervisors: Chair Dan Rattigan, Vice Chair Bud Baldwin, Treasurer Mary Ryan, Member Larry S. Breeden and Member Tom Cino. Also in attendance were Solicitor Jonathon Reis, Township Manager Sally Slook, Water/Sewer Engineer Tom Zarko, P.E., Water/Sewer Consultant Mike McRee, P.E. and Bucks County Health Department Sewage Enforcement Officer Don Meadows.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Mr. Rattigan led in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance which was followed by a moment of silence.

**WELCOME/INTRODUCTION**

Chairman Rattigan welcomed those in attendance and noted that the purpose of this evening's meeting was to discuss the On-Lot Sewage Disposal System Overview pertaining to the Dolington Area of the Township that was prepared as part of the Township's Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan Update. He then introduced the Township's Water/Sewer Consultants, Tom Zarko and Mike McRee and Bucks County Health Department representative Don Meadows, who would be providing the presentation this evening.

**ACT 537 PLAN STATUS SUMMARY**

Mr. Zarko reviewed the purpose of an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan, and noted that the Township's current Plan is outdated, as it is almost 35 years old. He summarized the Township's prior efforts to update the Plan and noted that the Board of Supervisors authorized an overall re-evaluation of prior work performed to update the Plan in January 2011. He then summarized the public meetings conducted over the past year at which the progress of the Township's Act 537 Plan Update was discussed.

**IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEM OLDS AREAS**

Mr. Zarko noted that the Bucks County Health Department had identified the Dolington and Taylorsville Areas of the Township as problem on-lot sewage disposal system areas at the outset of the Township's Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan Update process. He added that the Dolington Area was identified as an on-lot sewage disposal system problem area as early as 1970 within the County-Wide Sewage Facilities Plan.

Problem OLDS areas as per the Bucks County Health Department were identified and shown on a map of the Township.

**DISCUSS BUCKS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR OLDS INSTALLATIONS**

Don Meadows explained that the Bucks County Health Department (BCHD) is responsible for OLDS management in all Bucks County municipalities. The BCHD assigns a specific Sewage Enforcement Officer (SEO) to each municipality. The SEO responsibilities include site testing and permitting for new OLDS, site testing and permitting for OLDS replacements and repairs and investigating OLDS complaints. To that end, Mr. Meadows noted that the Health Department was very familiar with the OLDS conditions in both the Dolington and Taylorsville Areas of the Township.

### **REVIEW SUMMARY OF BCHD OLDS RECORDS – DOLINGTON AREA**

Mr. Zarko presented exhibits illustrating the condition of OLDS within the original limits of the Dolington Study Area based upon Bucks County Health Department Records. He also presented a similar exhibit illustrating the OLDS conditions in a potentially expanded Study Area. The exhibits identified properties with prior surface malfunctions and/or holding tanks, properties with prior OLDS repairs and a property with a suspected OLDS malfunctioning problem. The exhibits also identified properties where prior well testing conducted by the Township had indicated some water quality issues indicative of potential OLDS malfunctioning problems.

### **GENERAL OVERVIEW OF OLDS FUNCTIONING**

Mr. Zarko explained that all properties included within the Dolington Area were served by on-lot sewage disposal systems and detailed the main components of an on-lot sewage disposal system and explained how such a system functions.

### **REVIEW OF PA DEP APPROVED OLDS/REPAIRS**

Water/Sewer Consultant Mike McRee provided an overview of the 25 different types of OLDS repairs that were approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) which included conventional systems, alternative systems and on-lot alternative technology listings.

### **REVIEW OLDS REPLACEMENT/REPAIR LIMITATIONS – DOLINGTON AREA**

Mr. Zarko reviewed OLDS replacement/repair limitations in the Dolington Area.

Don Meadows discussed the observations made by the Health Department concerning potential OLDS replacements or repairs in the Dolington Area. He noted that the Health Department is responsible for the monitoring of OLDS in all of Upper Makefield Township and therefore the Health Department is very familiar with the conditions within the Dolington area.

Mr. Zarko presented an exhibit illustrating the limitations for installing replacement OLDS on the Dolington Area properties based on setback restrictions imposed by the PADEP.

Due to the OLDS Replacement/Repair limitations discussed, Mr. Zarko recommended that other alternatives for addressing the long term sewage disposal needs of the Dolington Area be considered.

### **DISCUSS UPCOMING STEPS IN ACT 537 PLAN UPDATE PROCESS**

Tom Zarko discussed the future activities and anticipated timeline for the completing the Act 537 Plan Update process.

### **QUESTIONS/ANSWERS**

Supervisor Mr. Tom Cino questioned Mr. Zarko as to whether the information presented at tonight's meeting concerning OLDS conditions in the Dolington Area is conclusive. Mr. Zarko responded the Dolington area information was based upon documented records obtained from the Bucks County Health Department's files and therefore believes that the information is conclusive, unlike the inconsistent records concerning the Taylorsville area. Mr. Cino furthered questioned how many of the original properties within the Dolington Area had been identified as having significant problems. Mr. Zarko responded there are six (6) properties currently identified as having significant problems including surface malfunctions or holding tanks, but noted that there were a number of additional properties that had had OLDS problems with some type of repairs made. The types of OLDS problems and repairs made within the Dolington Area were discussed.

Discussion occurred, and Mr. Breeden inquired about well sampling that was conducted around the year 2000. Mr. Zarko stated there were ten (10) well samples that indicated water quality problems that could be related to the malfunctioning of OLDS in the area. Mr. Rattigan questioned the approval process with the PADEP concerning any other potential alternatives for OLDS repairs beyond the currently approved methods and Mr. Zarko said that he would expect that the PADEP would require significant historical performance documentation before approving any new OLDS repair method for use in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Breeden noted that the Corps of Engineers had performed a significant amount of work, some of which involving blasting, on the adjacent National Cemetery Development site. He indicated that he has heard from several property owners in the Dolington Area that this work has improved drainage conditions and reduced groundwater levels at their properties, which could make potential OLDS repairs feasible. Mr. Meadows stated that he did not expect that the work that was performed on the adjacent cemetery site would change soil conditions in the Dolington area or affect groundwater elevations. Mr. Breeden asked if the Health Department had performed any recent testing in the area to confirm any changes in site conditions, and Mr. Meadows responded that no such testing had recently been conducted by the Health Department.

Mr. Baldwin questioned how many of the affected areas are cesspools, and inquired if these are the ones that are malfunctioning. Discussion occurred, and Mr. Zarko said that was his recollection based upon a review of the Health Department records that the majority of the original OLDS installed in the Dolington Area included in-ground trenches or seepage beds. Discussion also occurred among Board members and Mr. Zarko concerning holding tanks, potential supplemental testing well water and determining a solution.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

George Pickering – 731 Washington Crossing Road commented on water collection methods used in the prior well water sampling and determining differences between a water problem and sewage problem.

Tom DeLorenzo – 809 Washington Crossing Road, commented on sewage problems and contamination of well-water.

Steven Markim – 75 Dillon Way, commented on defining the nature and scope of the problem and well sampling.

Michael Tierney – Brownsburg Road West, presented a solution called Eco-clean, which is used in Canada.

Larry Wenger – 821 Dolington Road, commented on gray water, the use of new technology and the Veterans Cemetery.

Cynthia Maxell – 811 Dolington Road, commented on the expectations of the DEP.

Anthony Stewart – 1790 Lindenhurst Road, commented on the availability of information to the public to review.

At the conclusion of the discussions, the Board requested that Mr. Zarko clarify the OLDS Conditions Exhibit for the Dolington Area, to illustrate properties that had long term OLDS replacements made to

correct prior problems, versus properties that may have had interim repairs made due to site specific limitations.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Rattigan at 8:40 pm.

Approved: April 2, 2013