



Town of Sherborn Groundwater Protection Committee

GPC Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, June 14, 2023

Time: 7:30 PM

Location: Zoom Meeting

1. **Call to Order:** 7:31 p.m., roll call vote Members present: Tom Trainor, Tara Hourihan, Stef Harrison, Steve Constantine, David Sossen, Andrea Stiller. Members not present: Barton Kunstler, Adrienne Frankel. Guests present: Roger Demler, and later Julie Dreyfus and Mary Moore.
2. Welcome the new GPC member appointed by the Select Board, Adrienne Frankel. Adrienne was not in attendance, but we welcomed her to the GPC!

The GPC wants to sincerely thank Melinda O'Neill for her 3 years of services on the Committee. We will miss her smart and articulate 'bring-it-home' input, and capable clear writing skills that she applied to several public outreach documents prepared over the past few years. Come back for a visit now and again, Melinda!

3. Review of May 10th meeting minutes, motion to accept the minutes as amended (Andrea), seconded (Dave), and approved unanimously by roll call vote.
4. Existing GPC agenda items:
 - a. **Town well/septic GIS database ARPA-funded project – Project updates:** Julia Barton our intern from Holy Cross is dedicating many more hours per week to the project (16 to 18 hours) and she'd doing a great job. She has spreadsheets now for over 600 private wells, septic systems, and a separate cesspools file. Julia is going to present her findings to date in a meeting with the GIS mapping working group (Tom, Andrea, and Stef) soon. Roger and Julie D are also interested in attending the working group meeting. Julia will only be with us through August 15th and will provide the full GPC an update presentation at our July public meeting.
 - b. **May 9th GPC sponsored webinar on septic maintenance for Sherborn homeowners:** The recorded video has been sent to our DS cable TV staff to upload it to their YouTube account so that the public can access it soon from a link on the GPC webpage (thank you Jeanne Guthrie). This "Septics 101" event was not as well attended as prior informational meetings, perhaps due to the original March rescheduling due to a power outage/snowstorm for the RCAP speakers located in western MA.
 - c. **PFAS Initiatives:** Most recent data from May 8, 2023, sampling showed Town center well PFAS6 concentrations have dropped to 15.2 ng/L. The three-month moving average is a little under 20 ng/L at 19.1 ng/L. Testing of Sherborn public water supply wells will continue monthly.
 - d. **Updates on any MGL 21E hazardous waste release sites and/or new groundwater potential contamination within Sherborn and adjacent towns (General Chemical/Framingham, etc.) with potential threats to Sherborn groundwater:** No new sites were identified.
 - e. **MA Drought Management Task Force – June 8 task force meeting:** Tom reported that precipitation across most of MA was reported at the June 8th presentation to have been within the normal ranges over the past three months, but that many surface water bodies are still a little low in depth. There has been less precipitation in the Berkshires and on Cape Cod, so these areas are currently in a Level 1 drought. Farm Pond is lower than usual for this time of year, at about 18" below the high-water mark (large boulders near public boat ramp). This is usually what we would see later in a typical summer and could be a sign that groundwater levels may still be not fully recovered from the record 2022 drought.

- f. **New GPC Outreach efforts:** We discussed the potential distribution of a new PFAS trifold flyer that resident Sara Wylie recently developed in draft, as well as a more detailed writeup on PFAS issues in Sherborn. Stef suggested that we have a fact sheet that includes information such as What can I do if I find PFAS in my well? And discusses what choices households can take to reduce the potential for PFAS in the groundwater. Julie Dreyfus commented that the library director was amenable to having the flyer available at the library for distribution. Tom, Dave, and Andrea agreed to work on this outreach as a working group, with Tara and Roger staying involved as Water Commissioners.

5. New GPC agenda items.

- a. **Sherborn Climate and Resilience Action Plan** – Stef urged the committee members to review the posted public draft plan with an eye toward what is missing from a groundwater perspective. Concern was expressed regarding cutting down trees/vegetation to install solar panels. Roger noted that the town center water/sewer project was discussed to a lesser extent, with town sewer not in the current draft of the plan at all. The Climate and Resilience Working Group is accepting comments through Saturday June 18th.
- b. **Oversight of large multi-dwelling Groundwater Discharge Permits by MassDEP** (treated effluent from larger wastewater treatment facilities in Sherborn, existing locations, and future proposed sites): For the larger (10,000 gpd) shared treatment system for the development on Whitney Street, for example, they are required to conduct quarterly testing and submit annual monitoring reports to MassDEP. Smaller projects are not required to submit monitoring reports (Abbey Road development, e.g.). The Board of Health is supposed to receive the reports to review. Tom suggested that the GPC should also in the future review any new proposed large wastewater treatment systems, and any associated permit renewals. As an example, he will email GPC members the most recent Whitney Street permit renewal from late 2022.
- c. **MA Coastal Railroad 2023 Vegetation Management Plan, annual herbicide applications along rail line, Sherborn comments due June 9th to Mass Pesticide Bureau.** Tom prepared and submitted a letter to MA Coastal Railroad on June 8th expressing concerns about residential wells near the railroad right of way that would be receiving herbicides. A representative of the Coastal Railroad emailed a reply to Tom to confirm the well locations. One of the wells located on our new ARPA funded well location project was, in fact, outside the 100 feet no-spray buffer zone from the railroad tracks (a proposed well location had been mapped because subsequent “as built” location information was not in the BOH files). The RR consultant agreed that several Sherborn private wells were indeed within the 100 ft buffer zone, and the RR agreed to modify its 2023 herbicide treatment applications to protect these wells. Our ARPA-funded GIS database is already coming in handy! The Sherborn BOH sent a separate comment letter also to the RR.
- d. **New Select Board initiative: North Sherborn Water/Sewer District.** The Select Board presented and discussed at their May 4th public meeting a proposal to create a “North Sherborn Water and Sewer District” to allow for the connecting of the two proposed Coolidge Street affordable housing developments to the Framingham-MWRA water/sewer service lines. Tom shared a copy of the SB member Marian Neutra’s presentation slides These two developments have the potential to achieve the town’s overall 10% affordable housing requirements, although projects already underway that have an affordable housing component will likely be able to continue. There would be two districts – a sewer and a water – but the same commission could oversee both. The commission would be comprised of members appointed by the select board, as well as some appointed by the two developers. Some properties near the Sherborn/Framingham town line are already connected to Framingham’s municipal water supply. Other homes in the area may want to connect to the municipal systems in the future. Mary Moore commented that the Town of Natick had a very organized program for sewer hookup that should be

considered. The Water/Sewer Commission, and the Sherborn voters at a future Annual Town Meeting, would vote on adding additional properties to the North Sherborn water/sewer district, and the cost would be borne by the property owner. The initial costs to set up the districts are to be funded by the housing developers. Much needs to be accomplished by the Town for this to happen, including a favorable vote by residents at a 2023 Fall Annual Town Meeting, favorable vote by the state legislature, approvals by MWRA, and finally, approvals by the city of Framingham.

- e. **How to best manage the new GPC SharePoint site on the Town's IT department account.** New common location to archive and share files (big thanks to Klaus Ullmann). Additional files will be added. Dave Sossen volunteered to replace Melinda to receive emails sent by residents to the gpc@sherbornma.org email node in addition to Tom.
 - f. **Discovery of past report: 2004 EOEAs Sherborn Water Assets Study Community Report, Earth Tech.:** An older state funded study of Sherborn potential municipal water supply resources, conducted by Earth Tech, was provided to Tom from outgoing Town Planner Gino Carlucci. Tom has sent a copy to GPC members. The study included very good (circa 2004) major aquifer maps along with land use mapping for Sherborn. Mapping our water resources would allow us to protect adjacent towns from encroaching on our watersheds, Zone IIs, etc.
 - g. **New topics to add to future GPC meeting agendas:** None added.
6. **Scheduling the next GPC meetings for the summer:** We will meet Wednesday July 12, but not on August 9.
7. Motion to adjourn made by Dave at 9:06 pm. Tara seconded, roll call vote unanimous.