

MINUTES OF THE LAND USE COMMITTEE MEETING 7-10-2023

The meeting was called for 7 pm on Zoom. Present were Dedun Ingram, chair; Kathy Flaxman, Sybil Freedman, and Eric Murtagh.

The Committee discussed several issues pertaining to the Town's water drainage regulations.

Setbacks for drywells:

Several of the Town and County drywell setbacks differ. Dave Walton thinks that it would be preferable for the Town to adopt the County's setbacks. The Committee agrees, except perhaps for some where the Town setback is stricter than the County setback.

- Rear and side setbacks are currently the same for the Town and County.
- Front setback: County does not require a setback; the Town requires a 5-foot setback from the front lot line.
- Slab (for example, a garage): County required setback is 10 feet; Town setback currently 5 feet.
- Pools: County setback is 10 feet; Town does not regulate.
- Setback from below-grade foundation on target property: County setback is 15 feet; Town setback is 10 feet.
- Setback from below grade foundation on an adjacent property: County setback is 15 feet; Town setback is 20 feet.
- Setback from other drywells: County setback is 15 feet; Town setback is 10 feet.

The Committee agreed with Dave's recommendation to change the Town setbacks for drywells to match those of the County, with one exception. The Committee thought that it might be useful to retain the Town's more lenient setback from other drywells so that there could be more flexibility in locating any additional drywells required by the Town. The Committee will take a vote on this in September.

Calculating the amount of water required to be contained:

The County requires that stormwater from the roof be collected and filtered and does not allow stormwater run-off from at-grade surfaces to be collected in the dry wells collecting the roof stormwater. The Town also requires that runoff from at-grade impervious surfaces also be retained/prevented from running onto neighboring properties. The County limits the maximum roof area that can drain to a single dry well to 1000 square feet. The Town could use the county's dry well calculations for retention of roof stormwater run-off, plus an additional retention amount calculated for at-grade surfaces. To be collected in an additional dry well. It was suggested that houses being renovated/expanded only be required to deal with run-off from the additional impervious square footage created, while new construction would have to deal with run-off from the entire structure (this could go some way toward discouraging teardowns).

The Committee was unclear whether or not the County requires retaining run-off from all roofs both new and existing structures, but will check with Dave W. The Town requires that at

minimum no project create more runoff than previously existed from the property. It was suggested that the Town need only require retention of run-off from new impervious surfaces.

Some of the projects on Dave Walton's list that required a Town water drainage plan did not require a County water drainage plan. Generally, this occurred when the project was a driveway. If we base part of our stormwater retention calculations on the amount the County requires, then for projects involving additions that don't require a County water drainage plan we'd need some way to compute the amount of run-off to be retained from the roofs.

The Committee had asked whether it would be acceptable for impervious surfaces, particularly driveways, to drain to the street/storm drains as opposed to retaining the water in a dry well. Dave Walton thinks that this would not simplify the water drainage plan process because it would necessitate detailed surveying to produce topographical maps (probably before and after construction) to ensure that run-off from the driveway actually drained to the street and did not flow onto an adjacent property.

Which impervious surfaces

The Committee agreed that we need to think about which impervious surfaces need to be included in the computation of run-off to be retained (tops of walls, steppingstones, etc.?)

Variations:

Recently, the Town's Water Board only sees 1 or 2 water drainage plans per year. If a project does go before the Water Board, the Town's water engineer advises the Water Board on possible solutions. The Town Water Engineer works for the Town so cannot advise residents directly,

Inspections of stormwater systems:

Despite the Town's regulations regarding inspection of stormwater systems, inspections have not been happening. The Committee again discussed the need for the Town to make homeowners aware that their systems might require maintenance and that they are required to allow inspections. Ways to increase awareness have been suggested previously. Although inspections were originally intended to be annual, this may be overkill and given the number of water drainage systems in Town is now impractical.

The Committee agreed that a three-year inspection cycle seems reasonable.

The Committee agreed that the Town should have a database showing where the systems are, when they were installed, when inspected, and similar pertinent information. The Committee also agreed that the inspection should be comprehensive (i.e., the whole system needs to be inspected, not just the tanks/dry wells, but downspout connections, etc.).

Minutes of the June 5 meeting were approved: No corrections were offered by those present.