



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Gloucester Board of Health**  
**Septic Review Subcommittee**  
**August 31, 2017**  
**3 POND ROAD, GLOUCESTER, MA 01930**  
**Annex Conference Room**

**IN ATTENDANCE**

**Frederick Cowan, Subcommittee Chair; Rob Harris, Board of Health member; Joseph Rosa, Board of Health member; Max Schenk, Health Department Assistant Director; Jay McNiff, Property Owner and proponent; Jesse Blanchett, Design Engineer**

**OPENING OF MEETING – 9:00 AM**

**SUBJECT**

- **12 Causeway Street (Map 234, Lot 47)**  
**Property owned by Jay McNiff and represented by Jesse Blanchette, Griffin Engineering**

*To discuss issues and potential requirements regarding the use of a shared swale and drainage system between the proposed leaching facilities of Lots 1 and 2.*

**Discussion**

**Mr. Blanchette** described the development, which is a 30-acre parcel with three 3-house lots near the Jones River. There is an approved common driveway off Concord Street. Current plan proposal is for lot one, only, a 16.7 acre parcel. Proposed is a five-bedroom house, 1,500-gallon septic tank, 1,000-gallon pump chamber and a forced main that is needed, as soils [and leach field] are on south side of parcel, away from house location. Using the plan, he then outlined the proposed locations for the components and home. He then described the location of a drainage swale that will be partially located on lot 2, and an easement would be in place, but that operations and maintenance would be completely the responsibility of the owner of lot 1.

**Mr. McNiff** stated that the swale would be the financial responsibility of the owner of lot 1.

**Mr. Schenk** asked whether there would be provisions within the property deed that would provide the property owner of lot 2 a method for resolving issues, should there be a lack of proper maintenance of the swale that then impacts the lot 2 owner?



**Mr. McNiff** stated that he imagines that should there be any concerns in that regard, given that the swale is a component of the overall septic system design, the owners of lot 2 would file a complaint with the Health Department.

**Mr. Cowan** stated that his initial concerns were in relation to the idea of this [effectively] being a shared system and that the owners of lot 2 not be adversely impacted by the system proposed for lot 1. He then asked if there were plans for lots 2 and 3?

**Mr. Blanchette** stated that plans have only been created for lot 1. He then described a dirt road that would need to be created that would provide access for the construction and maintenance of the lot 1 system. He stated that a drainage pipe underneath the road will be the responsibility of the lot 2 property owner.

**Mr. Cowan** stated, that given the added fact that the water conveyed by the drainage pipe under the road will go into the swale located on lot 1, that the system is, in fact, a shared system.

**Mr. Harris** asked where the easement ended for lot 1?

**Mr. Blanchette** pointed out areas on the proposed plan indicating sections near the drainage pipe under the road and in the lower corner of the system.

A discussion between the applicants and the Board members continued regarding the possibility of moving the lot lines at this point, so that all system components within lot 1.

**Mr. Rosa** stated that the goal is to get rid of the shared-system aspect of the proposal, whether by moving lot lines or some other mechanism.

**Mr. Schenk** asked whether increasing the easement, rather than the property line to encompass all components, including the drainage pipe, rip-rap and swale, would be an easier solution?

**Mr. Blanchette** stated that would be the easiest way. Both he and Mr. McNiff agreed it would be the better solution.

**Mr. Harris** asked who would approve the design of the swale? Would it be the City Engineer?

**Mr. McNiff** stated that the Engineering Department held their review until the Board of Health had theirs and that they would certainly have a say in approving the design.

**Mr. Schenk** stated that a condition of the Board for their approval could be that they require approval of the design of the swale system by the City Engineer.

There was a general discussion regarding drainage components and their purpose in regards to sheet flow during rain events and peak flow of the septic system.



**Mr. Schenk** encapsulated the concerns of the Board and the proposed solutions. They are that, in order to respond to the Board's concerns regarding the appearance of a 'shared system' by virtue of the system drainage components being located on lot 2, the applicant will extend the easements that lot 1 will have listed on its and lot 2's deeds to include all components related to the swale system and that the revised plan will reflect that change. In addition, the applicant is required by the Board to provide a letter from the office of the City Engineer that they approve the proposed drainage plan that includes the area of interest to the proposed septic system.

**Mr. Cowan** stated that the revised plan must be presented to the Septic Review Subcommittee.

**Public Comment**

None

**Meeting was continued pending a revised plan to be provided by the applicant.**

**MOTION:** By **Mr. Harris** to adjourn

**SECOND:** By **Mr. Rosa**

**All in favor – motion carries**

**CLOSE OF MEETING – 9:45 AM**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

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**Max Schenk**

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**Date**

**Accepted by:**

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**Frederick Cowan**  
**Subcommittee Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**