

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD CAPITAL PROJECTS

Irasville and Waitsfield Village Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

For more than two decades the Town of Waitsfield has been exploring the feasibility of providing municipal water and wastewater infrastructure to support economic growth in Irasville and Waitsfield Village, avoid undesirable sprawl into the rural landscape, protect water quality of the Mad River, and address public health concerns related to conflicts with private on-site water supply and septic disposal systems.

Water. After extensive analysis and testing, a water source in the southeast quadrant of town for a municipal water system was identified and, after further study and deliberation, a well was drilled at the end of the Class 4 Reed Road in 2006. Final engineering and permitting were completed, grant and loan funds were secured, and the project was advertised for bid in 2010. The following five separate contracts were awarded in September 2010:

1. J.P. Sicard – construction of the transmission main and hydrants in Irasville, Waitsfield Village, and Old County Road;
2. Munson Earth Moving – construction of the water main and hydrants from Old County Road to the tank site;
3. Natgun – construction of the 400,000 gallon storage tank;
4. Kingsbury Companies – construction of the transmission main from the tank to the well site; and
5. NECCO, Inc. – construction of the well house.

The municipal water system begins at the Reed Road well head and follows the Town's rights-of-way along Long Road, East Road, and Bushnell Road to a new storage tank to be constructed on the Town-owned former LeClair gravel pit site. From the tank, the transmission main follows a right-of-way to North Road, then along Tremblay Road to Route 100, and continues on to the Village and Irasville. Hydrants will provide fire protection along the route. An alternative route following Old County Road was included, primarily for fire protection for the residential neighborhood. The project is expected to be complete by the fall of 2011.

The feasibility studies for the water project were initially funded through the State Revolving Fund of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. Repayment of the \$342,040, 5-year, no-interest loans has now been rolled into the construction financing. Funding for construction, as well

as reimbursement for the planning and engineering costs, has been secured as follows:

Rural Development Loan	\$3,014,000
Rural Development Grant	\$2,500,000
Applicant Contribution (User Fees)	\$ 100,000
EPA STAG	<u>\$1,976,000</u>
TOTAL	\$7,590,000

Adjoining property owners of Reed Road appealed the Town's Act 250 permit, well source permit, initial condemnation proceedings related to the acquisition of the well source protection area, and challenged whether Reed Road was, in fact, a Town highway. A Washington Superior Court judge determined in a November decision that the Town had not presented compelling evidence that Reed Road was a properly established Town highway. Consequently, a stop work order was issued for work associated with the road. Local officials have resumed negotiations with the affected property owners and initiated condemnation proceedings to secure the land associated with the well and access.

Wastewater. Planning, design, and engineering for the creation of a municipal sewage disposal system for the Waitsfield Village and Irasville portions of the town began in 1998. The Town purchased property capable of sewage disposal in 2000 (so-called Munn site at intersection of Route 100 and Kingsbury Road). Final designs and permitting were under way to construct a phased wastewater system when two bond articles were defeated at the March 4, 2008 Town Meeting that asked voters whether to approve Phase 1 (\$5.5 million) and Phase 2 (\$5 million) of the wastewater project. Phase 1 would have provided in-ground treatment for up to 18,000 gallons per day serving only Irasville at an estimated cost of \$5.5 million. Phase 2 would have included construction of a tertiary treatment system that would increase disposal capacity to more than 90,000 gallons per day. In an effort to reduce costs, the wastewater system was proposed to serve only Irasville.

These studies were funded through \$768,500 in no-interest revolving loan funds through the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. To date, \$613,386 of the loan was spent that will need to be paid back over 15 years beginning in 2012. A balance of \$155,114 remains available for

further planning, engineering, permitting, etc., necessary to advance a community wastewater disposal solution. Unless design and engineering resumes for some form of wastewater project and a project proceeds to construction, the no-interest wastewater loan will be payable over fifteen years beginning in 2012.

Defeat of the bond articles brought work on the wastewater project to standstill. The Planning Commission's fall townwide 2009 Town Plan survey was inconclusive on the matter of a municipal wastewater system: many respondents strongly supported further investigation and many did not. However, there remains a strong sentiment among many Irasville and Village property owners that a municipal wastewater system is a high priority and must continue to be pursued. The planning focus now is on a decentralized approach to a future wastewater management solution. The Planning Commission secured municipal planning grant funds in 2010 to revisit current wastewater disposal needs and opportunities for dispersed wastewater management systems. Resumed use of the ANR loan funds could delay the loan repayment start date. Funds for design and construction of a decentralized system are slotted for 2011 and 2012 in an effort to address identified needs.

Route 100 Transportation Path Project

The Route 100 Transportation Path Project began in the early 1990s and was moved forward with the award of a 90% grant from the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) in 1994. It progressed through many stages, public meetings, and adjustments. The final design phase began in 2001 and a municipal project manager was hired to shepherd it through the next steps of permitting, right-of-way clearances, and construction. In 2002, the final design engineering team was hired and final design work began. It is in the final stage of VTrans review and construction is expected to begin in late 2012 following completion of the water line installation. The project is anticipated to cost \$1.2 million, with a local match of at least 10%. Since 1997, the Town has set aside funds in a reserve fund, which totaled \$152,477 at the close of 2010. A contribution to this reserve fund is proposed in the 2011 budget to in response to citizens' desire to see continued investment in additional sidewalks and streetscape improvements in the Village and Irasville, of which this project would be the first phase.

Culvert Replacement Projects

An inventory of road-related erosion locations and the development of a five-year capital plan to prioritize and fund needed improvements was completed in December 2008. Replacement of the North Road culvert this year cost more than \$92,000, which was funded in part through a VTrans culvert grant. A major culvert on Brook Road will need to be replaced in the near future at an estimated cost of \$177,000. Grant funding may not always be available when the projects must be undertaken. The creation of a culvert reserve fund is proposed to ensure funds are on hand to address immediate needs and to help leverage grant funding for future culvert replacement projects.

Covered Bridge

The Town was awarded \$273,000 in federal funds through the VTrans Enhancement Grant program to address the cantilevered sidewalk on the north side of the Waitsfield Village 1833 Covered Bridge and repair the bridge's abutments. The Covered Bridge Repairs Reserve Fund was re-established in 2008 to set monies aside to meet the Town's matching funds obligation of approximately \$70,000. Even if the grant had not been funded, the funds would be necessary to address the bridge's structural issues. Dubois & King was hired after a competitive process for design and engineering services. After an alternative is selected, plans will be developed for possible construction in 2011.

Town Pond

In April 2008, following a period of heavy rains and saturated soils, part of the town pond impoundment collapsed over the outlet pipe that drains into the wetland to the north. Reconstruction of the impoundment was completed in 2010. Funds will be budgeted for an engineering inspection at least every five years to monitor its stability.

Howard/Tucker Gravel Pit

Waitsfield voters authorized the Selectboard in 2006 to purchase approximately 77 acres off of Route 100 belonging to Robert L. Howard and the Estate of Phyllis Tucker for development of a municipal gravel supply and for future redevelopment. In 2010, a new access easement was secured through the neighboring AmeriGas property, construction of the new access and bridge were completed, and gravel extraction began. A new line item in the general fund budget has been added for on-going gravel pit operations. An article on the Town Meeting warning asks

voters whether to reallocate the remaining \$17,000 in the Gravel Pit Reserve Fund to the general fund.

Police Program

Police Cruiser. The Town owns the police cruiser that is used in its traffic patrol program, the staff time of which is covered under contract with the Washington County Sheriff's Department. The current 4-wheel drive vehicle was purchased in 2008 through a 4-year note. It is equipped with oxygen and emergency medical supplies along with the latest speed measuring technology. A digital video recording device was purchased in 2010, with the cost divided between 2010 and 2011 budgets. Waitsfield receives mileage reimbursement based on the federal mileage rate from the Town of Warren for when the vehicle is used on patrols there.

DUI Processing Space. The Sheriff's Department, with whom the Town contracts for traffic control, has been in search of a small room where people suspected of driving while intoxicated (DUI) can be processed locally. Currently, DUI suspects must be transported to Montpelier or Barre for processing, which consumes time and resources that could otherwise be applied more effectively within town. The desired space would be about a 10' x 10' room with a table, chairs, location for the processing equipment, access to a bathroom, and with a secure separate entrance without stairs. Cost sharing with the Town of Warren should be explored for the construction and on-going operation of such space.

Waitsfield-Fayston Fire Department Fire Truck

The 1987 GMC tanker truck is proposed to be replaced in 2012. Depending on the features included, it could cost an estimated \$200,000 to \$300,000. Waitsfield's 60% share (\$120,000 to \$180,000) would be paid from the Fire Truck Reserve Fund. Grants may also be available to cover all or some of the cost.

Road Department Vehicles

2002 Low Profile Truck Replaced. The 2002 International 4300L dump truck was replaced with a 2010 International 4300M7 dump truck. The cost of the chassis was \$61,000, and body with plow was \$53,990. It was paid for with a 5-year \$95,775 loan through the Vermont Municipal Heavy Equipment Fund at 2 percent and the balance was paid with funds

from the Heavy Equipment Reserve Fund. The first loan payment will be made in 2011.

Road Department Buildings

Salt Shed. The existing salt shed does not meet possible future state requirements to stockpile the material needed. A new “bunker silo” style shed with concrete floor and walls is planned with a truss roof. A new facility would also help to prevent possible ground water contamination. State storm water management regulations have been under revision and such improvements may ultimately be mandated.

Town Garage. The Town Garage was built in 1986 and is in need of maintenance, including roof repair, improved insulation, and replacement of rotting trim and soffits. The combined oil and wood stove heating system was replaced with a more modern, higher energy efficient system in 2010, which was required to be enclosed in a fireproof room. Funds through the ARRA Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program helped offset the cost of the oil-fired furnace. An energy audit was completed in 2010 that recommended a number of improvements to the existing building. The space of the existing building, approximately 3,000 square feet, is no longer adequate for the storage of vehicles, work space, and necessary employee facilities. The construction of a required room enclosure for the new heating system further diminished usable space. Funds are budgeted in 2011 to hire professional assistance to develop a space, site, and cost analysis for the development of plans for an addition to the existing structure. This addition could also be designed to accommodate the space requested by the Washington County Sheriff Department for processing DUI pick-ups locally (see above). An addition would be paid for through a bond, possibly as soon as 2012.

Paving Projects

Borrowing is planned to begin major re-paving of Joslin Hill Road in 2012 after the debt service on the 2006 paving note is paid off 2011.

New Municipal Building

The Town Office located in the lower level of the Joslin Memorial Library building has become increasingly crowded over the past twenty-five or more years and is not accessible to persons using wheelchairs. Diminishing space in the vault is significant concern. A new shelving

system was added to maximize the available remaining space. New Town Office space is needed that would provide a larger vault and town clerk area, a separate meeting room for town boards (for up to 40 persons), and office space for the town administrator, planning & zoning administrator, and assessor. It is currently believed that an expansion of the Joslin Memorial Library building or a new municipal building at the General Wait House property are the two most likely options for a new Town Office, unless another suitable location can be established. However, the on-site septic systems in each location are an impediment, which means that new office space may not be possible until a municipal wastewater system has been developed. There is also interest in exploring a location in Irasville. A Town Office Task Force was formed in 2010 to evaluate the various options, solicit public input, and make recommendations to the Selectboard regarding the expansion or relocation of the Town Office.

Fire Department

The Waitsfield-Fayston Fire Department building was constructed in 1974. Its roof has been repaired over the years and was slated to be replaced in 2010 at an estimated cost of \$31,000; however, the unanticipated need for structural supports and the finding of asbestos more than doubled the total cost. The roof is scheduled to be replaced in the spring of 2011. Article 14 on the Town Meeting warning seeks voter approval to borrow up to \$20,000 to complete the project. The Town received a grant through the ARRA Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program to replace the 23-year old boiler with an energy-efficient unit and the installation of an on-demand hot water heater.

General Wait House

The Town purchased and renovated the Wait House in the late 1990s with the help of grants and generous contributions from individuals and organizations. Located at the northern gateway to the historic Waitsfield Village, the Wait House is a tremendous asset to the community and contributes to its economic vitality. It provides office and meeting space for non-profit and community-based organizations that support the operation of the building through their rents. The building also serves as a visitor center, provides public restroom facilities, and includes storage and display areas for Waitsfield history and artifacts. The carriage barn was substantially renovated in 2010 by the Waitsfield Historical Society

for use as 3-season meeting and display space. A storage shed was constructed several years ago.

The Town received a grant through the ARRA Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program to install insulation in the attic and basement, install exterior storm windows, and replace the boiler with a more energy efficient system. The Town also secured a loan, following voter approval, to replace the carriage barn roof, repaint the buildings, and address other deferred maintenance items. Rents were raised by 8.35% to repay the loan and will be re-evaluated in 2011 as cash flow is monitored.

Community Development Fund

The Town has two long-term loans receivable as a result of a 1999 Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) Grant, which funded two affordable housing projects at the Verd-Mont Mobile Home Park and the Evergreen Place Senior Citizens Center. Repayment funds from the loans for these projects will be re-usable for community development eligible activities subject to the negotiation of a close-out agreement with the VCDP. The Town renegotiated the terms of the original Evergreen Place note in 2005 and obtained an additional VCDP grant for the Evergreen Place Project. Those combined funds were then loaned to the Central Vermont Community Land Trust to refurbish and build an addition to the facility. These notes are due as follows:

Evergreen Place Senior Citizens Center:

Mortgagee: Evergreen Place, Inc. (this note was originally issued to the Mad River Valley Senior Citizens, Inc., and was transferred to EPI in 2002 and transferred to CVCLT/EPHLP in 2005)

Principal Amount of First Note (1999): \$150,000

Interest Rate: 0%

Payment Schedule: 30 annual payments of \$5,000 beginning July 2021.

Principal Amount of Second Note (2005): \$247,000

Interest Rate: 0%

Payment Schedule: deferred, payment in full due May 31, 2035.

VerdMont Mobile Home Park:

Mortgagee: Central Vermont Community Land Trust

Principal Amount of Note: \$115,000

Interest Rate: 0%

Payment Schedule: \$20,000 due January 2019, with 14 annual payments of \$6,786 beginning January 2020.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Initiatives

A combination of state and federal tax credits this past year prompted the installation of many solar panels in Waitsfield and throughout the state. The Town spent considerable time considering a partnership with one of two companies that proposed a partnership for the installation of solar panels on Town-owned land. A project did not go forward for a number of reasons. An Energy Reserve Fund is proposed to be established to ensure that funds are available for future opportunities that may not have been foreseen but require some form of matching contribution or downpayment.

Townwide Reappraisal

According to Waitsfield's assessor, the common level of appraisal (CLA) for the April 1, 2011 Grand List is 101.57% and the coefficient of dispersion (COD) is 18.6%. They were 96.52% and 16.3% in the previous year. A CLA of less than 80 percent or a COD of greater than 20 percent would lead to the Town being notified that a reappraisal must be conducted. This could happen if Waitsfield's COD continues to increase. The CLA and COD are determined annually by the Department of Taxes. If the Town fails to submit an acceptable compliance plan or fails to carry it out, the State can withhold education, transportation, and other funds until such time as the Vermont Department certifies that the Town has carried out the plan. Waitsfield's most recent townwide appraisal was completed in 2006. The cost of a townwide reappraisal could range from \$75,000 to \$100,000 or more. To prepare for this cost, reactivation of a Reappraisal Reserve Fund established years ago is proposed