1946

AN IMPROVED WATER SUPPLY, FIRE PROTECTION FACILITY, AND SEWER SYSTEM FOR McKOWNVILLE

Background:

In September, 1944 the McKownville Improvement Association appointed a Committee to investigate and report on the possibilities for improvement of McKownville's sewer and water system and the cost of such improvements. This Committee has made a report to the Board of Directors of the Improvement Association. At their direction it is herewith being presented to all members.

The following questions and answers have been prepared by the Committee and the directors of the Association and briefly cover many of the items which the Committee believes will be of general interest.

Water for Domestic Use and Fire Protection

How much territory should the proposed water system serve?

The proposed water system would include the area now covered by the present McKownville Fire District, which includes the Witbeck, Best and Farley developments.

How large should the system be?

Large enough to serve a future population of 2000 to 3000. Present population somewhat less than 1000.

What features did the Committee consider necessary for McKownville Water System?

A pure, adequate and dependable drinking water supply delivered through a proper distribution system incorporating all requirements of the New York Fire Insurance Rating Organization for adequate fire protection to assure reduction in fire insurance rates from the present "C" rate schedule to a "B" rate. These requirements include mains of such a size as to provide 500 gallons per minute fire flow at any point in the system with a residual pressure of 40 pounds when using a pumping engine of less than 500 gallons per minute capacity; the proper number of fire hydrants spaced not to exceed 500' located on mains at least 6" in diameter; and elevated storage tank of 200,000 gallons capacity.

What did the Committee find to be the most satisfactory and desirable source of water for domestic use and fire protection?

Either drilled wells or improvement of present system.

Were other alternatives considered?

Yes, purchase of water (1) from Guilderland, (2) from Colonie and (3) from Albany. The first was abandoned because the present facilities there are inadequate to provide for sale of water to McKownville.

Cont'd. on page 2

The same applied to Colonie. Purchase from Albany was also abandoned when it appeared that the cost would be considerably greater than under the alternatives of a drilled well supply or improvement of the existing system.

Can anyone be certain that a drilled well supply will be adequate and satisfactory?

No, not until exploratory wells have been drilled and the quality and quantity of the water determined.

If exploratory wells should show water of adequate quantity and suitable quality, would this supply be more economical than by improving the present system?

Yes.

If the exploratory wells failed to indicate an adequate supply of good water, what can we do?

Develop and improve the present supply, by the addition of proper pumping, filtration and storage facilities and an adequate distribution system.

While the possibility of bringing in satisfactory local wells is good, your Committee believes it wise not to completely discard the idea of using the Whitbeck Supply, until exploratory test well drillings have actually been completed.

Approximately how much will it cost under present conditions and at present prices to provide the water system described above?

Approximately $19.00 per $1,000. of assessed valuation.

Would this be a net increase to the property owner?

No. To determine the net increase to the property owner at least two items should be deducted, the amount he now pays for water rent and the insurance savings which would result from improved fire protection.

If you are now paying for spring water, this expense should also be deducted.

What will these insurance savings amount to?

Construction of this water system would result in an immediate reduction in fire insurance rates on buildings and contents of 10 cents per $100. of insurance, annually.

How can I estimate the approximate cost of improved water for domestic use and fire protection?

Here is a typical example for a property assessed for $2,500. which carries $6,000. of fire insurance and pays annual water rent of $23.00.

Cont'd. on page 3

Estimated cost of improved system ($19. per thousand X $2,500 assessed value)		$47.50
Deduct: Insurance saving of 10¢ per hundred (.10 X 60)	$ 6.00	
Present water charge	23.00	29.00
Net increase in annual cost for this property		$18.50

What is included in the above estimated cost?

A. Operation and maintenance charges.

B. Interest charges and payment on principal of the 30 year bond issue by which this project would be financed. The bond issue includes the cost of acquisition of existing facilities as well as the cost of all new construction and equipment.

How did the Committee arrive at these figures?

On the basis of preliminary estimates by the engineering firm of B. L. Smith and Associates of Albany.

Have any costs been incurred for the work of the Committee or for these estimates?

Virtually none. The work of the Committee was entirely voluntary and without charge. There has been no charge for the engineering estimates thus far. The only expense has been for the reproduction of tentative maps and for reproduction and distribution of the Committee's reports.

Who has paid this expense?

The Improvement Association.

How can the community go about the improvement of the water system along the lines reported by the Committee?

By establishment of a water improvement district under the town law on petition to the Town Board signed by more than 50% of the resident property owners of the proposed district and also representing more than 50% of the assessed valuation of the proposed district.

Who approves the detail of the formation of a water district?

The Town Board
The State Department of Audit and Control
The State Water Power and Control Commission
The State Department of Health

Has the Committee conferred with these agencies?

Yes. Their suggestions and advice have been sought in advance and have been considered by the Committee.

THE SANITARY SEWERAGE SYSTEM

Who owns and is responsible for maintaining the present sewer system?

This is difficult to answer. The sewers in most cases were built when streets were developed.

How are sewer line repairs paid for now?

Repairs have been paid for by the individual property owner, by voluntary contributions from property owners affected by the breakdown, and by the McKownville Improvement Association.

Has any money been spent on the sewer system recently?

The Improvement Association recently spent $150. for a single repair to the main sewer outlet running under Hillcrest Avenue.

Where is the outlet of the present sewer system?

In the Krum Kill on the Helme Farm.

Does the present system conform to requirements of the State Department of Health?

No. The State Health Department realizes the conditions existing in McKownville and is likely at any time to insist on an entirely new system similar to the one planned.

Why is the question of improvement of the sewer system being considered at this time?

For three reasons: (1) Because no one seems to be responsible for the present system; (2) Because the condition of the present system is such that an emergency might develop at any time; and (3) Because if the system is to be improved, this may be done at less expense while water mains are being installed.

What did the Committee find to be the most satisfactory answer to the sewage disposal problem?

Replacement of practically all existing sewers and construction of a sewage disposal plant.

Were other alternatives considered?

Yes, connecting to the Albany sewer system. This plan was abandoned as it was determined to be physically and legally impossible.

How could this improvement be accomplished?

By establishment of a sewer improvement district similar in character to the proposed water district.

What would be the size of this district?

Approximately the same as the present fire district. It would provide for a population of from 2000 to 3000. The present population is somewhat less than 1000.

What features would an improved system include?

Replacement of virtually all existing sewers; discontinuance of use for sewers of 14 inch drain from the hollow at the northerly end of Glenwood Street to Arcadia Avenue, and use of this for storm water only; construction of a sewage treatment plant with grit chamber, primary and secondary clarifiers, a trickling filter, covered sludge digestion tanks, a covered sludge bed and pumps.

Where would such a plant be situated?

Possibly near the Krum Kill east of Hillcrest Avenue and south of Western Avenue.

Would the location of such a plant be objectionable to nearby residents?

No. Experience with such plants in other communities has shown that there are no objectionable odors.

What would be the estimated annual cost per thousand assessed valuation for such a sewer system and disposal plant?

If the system were to be financed by a 30 year bond issue, it is estimated that the interest could be paid, the bonds retired and the annual operating costs of the disposal plant, including personal service, paid at an annual charge of $14.00 per thousand assessed valuation. This is based on the 1945 assessed valuation of $650,000. for the McKownville Fire District.

How did the Committee arrive at these figures?

On the basis of preliminary estimates by the engineering firm of B. L. Smith and Associates, of Albany.

Would property owners be charged for this improvement on a basis of assessed valuation?

Probably not. Some other basis of distributing the expense equitably would be worked out by the Town Board after public hearings.

Who would be responsible for the operation and maintenance of such a system?

The Town Board, under the Town Law, has jurisdiction over all new improvement districts.

What would be the next step in carrying out these improvements to the sewer system?

Preparation of a petition to the Town Board for the formation of a Sewer District, similar to the petition previously mentioned in connection with the Water District.

Who are the members of the Water and Sewer Committee?

D. K. Wilson, Elmwood Street, Chairman
W. J. Embler, Glenwood Street, Co-Chairman
W. J. Fitzmyre, Norwood Street
C. A. King, King Street
August Lux, Elmwood Street

Conclusion

It is the desire of the Association that all members give this report serious consideration, and it is hoped that they will lend their support to this project.

After the distribution of this report to members has been completed, the Association plans to send copies to all property owners in McKownville.

All detailed information collected by the Committee, including tentative maps of the proposed system, is open to inspection.

The next step in the program as previously stated in the Question and Answer section, would involve the preparation of petitions to the Town Board for the formation of Water and Sewer Districts.

Respectfully submitted by the Water and Sewer Committee, at the direction of the Officers and Directors of the McKownville Improvement Association.

June 1, 1946.