

**Environmental Committee
Draft Minutes October 10, 2006**

In attendance: Christine Lima-Foley
Gary Menchen
Joseph Fabio
Domenic Sinisi

Excused absent: Kim Carlo
Harvey Weber

Town Board Liaisons present: Linda Gabaccia
Robert Sacks

Audience: Thomas Foley
Diana Wilson
Veronica Fabio
Doug Goodhue

Guest Speakers: RJ Reynolds US Geological Survey Society
Laura Seger Col. Cty. Soil and Water Conservation

RJ Reynolds began speaking about the water survey process. We were referred to the New York State Rural Water Association which is in Commerce Park in Ghent as a potential resource. As regards the water study Mr. Reynolds informed us that federal matching money is available which should cover 30% of the cost of the project. Columbia County has a database of water quality of 1000's wells which is the largest water quality database in the state. Certain mandatory information is available from anybody's well. Drillers keep logs of what they go through, and get tests of quantity and flow rate numbers, although not quality. Currently in Dutchess County full analysis of water quality of a new well or the well of a house being sold is required, but there is expense associated with this testing.

TCE or trichlorethylene is a contaminant which is often noted.

RJ Reynolds pointed out that there are newly emerging contaminants in wastewater now

including caffeine and acetaminophen. You find these typically in municipal waste water.

In shallow aquifers you are more likely to find contaminants such as road salt, pesticide applications and septic seepage. NYSDOT has a black pavement policy which puts safety first. Massachusetts utilizes liquid calcium chloride. RJ Reynolds noted that NY has a big salt industry.

He continued with a discussion of buried valleys and suggested that the Roe Jan might be just such a valley. Also as regards our local composition he discussed that the Taconics are crisscrossed with faults. In Copake, most wells hit rock around 30-50'; closer to the Taconics that number goes to 180'.

Mr. Reynold noted that a shallow aquifer is more prone to contamination.

Typically a water study will take from nine months to a year to complete at a cost of \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Laura Seger discussed the soil aspects of the study and indicated that the USDA Soil Survey maps are available to help deduce water location from the presence of certain soil types. This Survey is digitized. Web soil survey is also available.

RJ Reynolds commented that water treatment plants create a net draft on the aquifer.

Laura Seger said that it is important to inventory your groundwater resources to look at ways of protecting them. You do not want development in critical recharge areas.

Reynolds noted that areas of recharge and discharge seek equilibrium without any influence by man.

Reynolds noted that currently there is not regulation on the sampling of residential wells on a state level.

There is a 305B program which looks at the quality of groundwater and aquifers by sampling domestic and supply wells. There is a Division of Water within DEC. Jim Gary founded this study.

Dale Rowe from the Columbia County Health Department who had also been invited to this October meeting of the Environmental Committee was unable to attend.

The Committee will meet again in November to begin discussion of the information provided by Mr.Reynolds and Ms. Seger and will begin considering a groundwater study.