



TOWN AND COUNTY OF NANTUCKET

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March 1, 2016

Dear Nantucket Property Owner and Interested Resident:

We all, each of us, have a financial and emotional investment in Nantucket - financial as represented in our homes and businesses; emotional as represented in the love we have for this unique tract of land thirty miles at sea. Obviously, anything that negatively impacts the quality of life on our island, diminishes those investments.

For years, we have seen the slow erosion of the water quality in our harbors and ponds due to seepage from septic tanks that do not properly treat certain pollutants. Yes, the installation of sewers on selective segments of the island has helped reduce, and even in some cases eliminate, septic tank sourced pollution. But more has to be done - and done now - especially in those areas adjacent to the harbor where septic pollution, specifically in the form of nitrogen, continues to be a problem.

As Nantucketers, we are being asked to vote for a new sewer project at the Saturday, April 2, 2016 annual town meeting. The upside of the project is that the property owners whose homes are hooked up to the new sewers will find they have increased the value of their properties. At the same time, they will have helped improve the water quality in our harbor to the end of assuring the preservation of our fisheries and the jobs and recreational opportunities it provides.

The downside is that the sewer project(s) won't be free. That, of course, is an unavoidable fact. But even at that, there is an upside. The State has offered us financial assistance if we act now. With the help of zero interest loans from the State Revolving Fund loan program, the Town will save millions of dollars (read "Town" as "Taxpayers") over the next twenty to thirty years. For a full explanation of how, please review the attached FAQs.

Unfortunately, the State's offer of financial help will not be available to us indefinitely. If we should elect to ignore, or even postpone, moving forward with the sewer project, the state has said it will be forced to step in and issue a sewer installation mandate that will require us to fund the project without their (financial) help. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, (MassDEP) under the jurisdiction of the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is mandating that Nantucket eliminate the pollution of water resources and restore water quality to established standards, which is enforcement of the Clean Water Act.

As residents of Nantucket, we all share in the responsibility - and desire - to do whatever is necessary to manage and administer those civic needs that we **can control** before the State issues mandates that we **cannot control**. A vote to approve the sewer project is a vote to assure that we will not find ourselves financially handcuffed by a state mandate.

May we suggest you take time to read the enclosed FAQ's which, we believe, will answer most of your questions. If you have additional questions, please feel free to utilize a dedicated email address we have established for the project, sewerproject@nantucket-ma.gov; and/or we encourage and welcome you to attend either of the following upcoming meetings scheduled in the near future:

1. The Nantucket Civic League-sponsored forum on Saturday, March 5 from 10:00 am to Noon in the community Room at the 4 Fairgrounds Road Public Safety Facility
2. A Selectmen's Sewer Workshop meeting on Wednesday, March 9 beginning at 6:00 pm in the Community Room at the 4 Fairgrounds Road Public Safety Facility

If you are in an area proposed to be sewerred and you would like Town representatives to meet with your homeowner's association or group of neighbors, we would be glad to meet.

Please attend the April 2nd town meeting to cast your vote on this important project. We hope that the information in the attached FAQs and/or at the upcoming meetings will give you the information you need for your vote.

Sincerely,

Nantucket Board of Selectmen