

September 10, 2020
Sterling Board of Health Meeting
Butterick Building, Lower Level Conference Room
1 Park Street, Sterling, MA 01564

Meeting Minutes

6:31 PM Chairman Cathie Martin called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Gary Menin, Member - present, remote connection
Allen Hoffman, Member - present, remote connection
Cathie Martin, Chairman - present on site
David Favreau, Health Agent - present on site
Elaine Heller, Administrative Assistant - present on site

Attendees: Via Video-conferencing - Steve Sears, Kerriann Blair, and Arden Sonnenberg

General Business Updates:

Approve Any Available Minutes:

A motion to approve revised minutes of the August 13, 2020 meeting was made by Gary Menin and seconded by Cathie Martin. Roll call vote: Menin - aye; Martin - aye; Hoffman - aye. Unanimous vote.

Correspondence: None

Health Agent Report:

Follow-up to 6 Goulding Road Complaints:

The homeowners are now maintaining growth of vegetation around the property.

Rabies Clinic October 17, 2020:

The Clinic is scheduled to be held at the Sterling VCA on Clinton Road.

Flu Clinic October 1, 2020:

This Clinic will be held at the Senior Center and is a drive-by clinic, appointment only.

Public Beach Testing 2020:

According to the Health Agent, there have been no reports of bacteria in the water at Lake Waushacum. The Conservation Commission and Lake Association have been doing a lot of work regarding water quality.

Signatures Required: Disposal Works Installers Permit - A.J. Pittorino Patriot Excavating Corp.
Signature completed.

Other Items:

Health Agent Favreau reports one patient at Sterling Village has tested positive for Covid-19 and also one resident of the town.

Public Session: None

Appointments and Agenda Items:

Variance Request: 174 Newell Hill Road: Sterling Subsurface Sewage Disposal Regulations - Reg. IV.a., Leach beds to be 1000 square feet minimum, with 12" of stone beneath the pipes (600 sq. ft. Sand bed provided with the use of 12" stone beneath pipes).

Steve Sears of Ross Associates represented the homeowner on this variance request, to replace a failed leach pit on this 2-bedroom home. After review of the plans by Board members, Gary Menin suggested a 2-bedroom deed restriction and both Allen Hoffman and Cathie Martin agreed. Mr. Menin then made a motion to approve the variance request with the 2-bedroom deed restriction and Ms. Martin seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hoffman - aye; Martin - aye; Menin - aye. All in favor, motion carried.

12 Jewett Road Appeal of Health Agent Refusal to Sign Building Permit for 12 Jewett Road:

Board members reviewed the most recent designs submitted by the homeowner, Kerriann Blair, for a major addition to a 2-bedroom home. The original design included adding an additional bedroom. The 2nd design relabeled the bedroom as an office. The present design eliminates the interior walls that were previously labeled as a bedroom/office. It calls for an extension to an existing bedroom, rather than a separate room, which had been requested in the previous designs. In a review of all of the plans for the property, Mr. Hoffman noted the home had been modestly expanded in the middle front portion of the house, since approval of the original septic system. It was also noted that the lot size is too small for a 3-BR home.

Mr. Menin commented that, as the current septic system was designed for a 2-bedroom residence and the proposed (revised K. Blair submitted) plan is for two bedrooms, the current system meets the criteria for a 2-bedroom home and as such should be allowed, though a 2-BR deed restriction would be appropriate.

Mr. Hoffman disagreed with the assessment of Mr. Menin. Mr. Hoffman was a member of the Board of Health in 1996 when the present septic system was approved and installed. That system barely met the requirements for a 2 bedroom home. No reserve area was identified for use if the present system fails. Mr. Hoffman believes the lot size may be too small to upgrade the present septic system if it fails, either with the present owner or any future owner of the property given the history of the submitted plans. He felt that the next step would be to insure that a repair consistent with the proposed size of the house is possible. This could entail a redesign of the septic system in the front of the house for an extra trench, or a possible reserve area to meet additional flow in the back yard.

After further discussion, Chairman Martin observed the Board cannot move forward on the proposal at this time. An engineer needs to determine what can be done before the BOH can make a determination. She advised the homeowner to investigate an additional trench or reserve area and report back.

Ms. Martin suggested an additional Board meeting in approximately 2 weeks to allow Ms. Blair time to contact an engineer. Ms. Blair said they may wait until after winter to continue this process. There is the option to place this subject on the next agenda if Ms. Blair decides to move forward.

Mr. Menin believes further review is not necessary as he had already emphasized that the plan, in his opinion, was acceptable as is and should be approved by the BOH with a caveat for a two-bedroom deed restriction. As such, he would opt not to be involved in any further discussion on this request. Mr. Hoffman is open to any additional meeting needed to address the subject.

Set Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2020, at 6:30 PM in the Lower Level Conference Room of the Butterick Building.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Gary Menin and seconded by Allen Hoffman. Roll call vote: Hoffman - aye; Martin - aye; Menin - aye. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Materials: Minutes