**Phase II Sewer Project**

**Frequently Asked Questions at the Health Department**

1. **I need to figure out where I want my sewer connection to be, how do I do that?**

*The first step is locating where your existing septic system is and where the pipe exits your foundation. The Health Department keeps records of septic system plans and can assist you with this information. We are working on scanning and uploading the documents to the website in order for homeowners to access them from home, however this process may take many months. If you need the plans before they are accessible online, please call or visit our office and we will provide them to you.*

1. **I just recently installed a new septic system, will I still have to connect?**

*Yes, connection to the sewer system is mandatory, however the Board of Health is able to allow extensions. The Board of Health will review each situation on a case by case basis to determine the granting of extensions.*

1. **My septic system needs to be replaced, what are my options?**

*The Board of Health will review the situation on a case-by case basis taking into account the reason why the system needs to be replaced and the period of time before the sewer will be available to serve the location. A request to be heard before the Board of Health is required for this review.*

1. **Once I connect to the sewer, what happens to my septic system?**

*The existing septic system can be abandoned in place or removed by a licensed installer. Abandoning the system typically involves pumping the tank and other components dry, crushing the concrete and filling it with sand to avoid settling or sink holes in the future.*

1. **How will I know when I have to connect?**

*After the sewer mains are placed in the street and the system is ready to receive sewage (connection has been made to the Chatham Treatment Plant), the Board of Health will send a letter to the homeowner indicating that it is time to connect. A timeframe of* ***at least one year*** *will be given to property owners to connect to the system, possibly more depending on certain variables such as availability of contractors, etc.*

1. **Can I hire anyone I want to design and install my sewer connection?**

*You can hire a Professional Engineer that is licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to design the sewer connection. We will provide a list of Licensed Utility Installers who will be able to install the line and abandon the existing septic system as soon as possible. LUI’s will be licensed through either the Sewer Commissioner or the Board of Health and many currently licensed septic installers will likely apply to be LUI’s.*

1. **How long does it take to make the connection? Will I be able to use my house while construction is going on?**

*When the time comes to connect your home to the sewer system, the Licensed Utility Installer will dig a trench to install your sewer line from the street to your house. The existing plumbing will be disconnected from the septic system and re-connected to the new sewer line. Once the new connection is made, your existing septic system will be abandoned. This work can typically be done in one day, with an interruption of service of a few hours or less. You do not need to shut the water main off during the connection, however there will be a short period of time when the installer will ask that you do not use any water (toilets, sinks, washing machines, etc.) so they can re-connect your plumbing properly.*

1. **I am restricted to the number of bedrooms I can have right now, can I add bedrooms once I connect to the sewer system?**

*All of the properties connecting to the sewer in Phase II are located in a water recharge area, the Zone II rule of 1 bedroom per 10,000 square feet of property will not change. Connecting to the sewer will not allow for increases beyond what the current zoning and Title 5 regulations allow. The sewer system is designed for a maximum number of gallons per day to be piped to the treatment plant in Chatham, this number is based on current zoning and build-out parameters (flow neutral). No plans are in place to allow for increased density at this time.*

1. **I am selling my house soon, do I need to have my septic system inspected if I will be connecting to the sewer?**

*Until you are connected to the Sewer, existing regulations remain in effect, including a Title 5 System inspection prior to transfer of property. Waivers can be requested of the Board of Health and will be reviewed on a case by case basis.*

1. **I can’t afford this, what are my options?**

*Barnstable County offers a low interest-long term loan program for this type of work, including the engineering and design work. You are able to apply for a sewer connection loan from the County even if you already have an existing septic system loan. Also, many banks will also have different lending options such as home equity loans.*

*It is important to start budgeting for this sooner rather than later. The timeline for connection to the sewer system is projected to begin in June of 2021. Connecting to the sewer system is mandatory, and the Board of Health and Board of Selectmen have the authority to enforce the regulations. Non-compliant properties will be subject to fines and/or other legal action if necessary.*