

Town of Sullivan's Island
Public Facilities Committee Minutes
2050-B Middle Street
January 27, 2016
8:30 a.m.

The Public Facilities Committee met on January 27, 2016 at 8:30 a.m., all Freedom of Information Act requirements being met. In attendance were Committee members Bachman Smith (Chair), Chauncey Clark and Mark Howard; Administrator Andy Benke, Fire Chief Anthony Stith, Zoning Administrator Joe Henderson, and Building Official Randy Robinson. There were five people in the audience.

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 8:30, and stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Station 18 non-functioning pump, stormwater issues at large; limiting vehicle access to the dump, and potential maintenance items at Station 26 boat landing.

Station 18 Pump – Chair Smith stated that although it is not unique to this area, the recent heavy rains caused acute flooding in the Station 18 pump area. Administrator Benke gave a brief history of the infrastructure. Stormwater has historically been the responsibility of the Department of Transportation, as it had ownership of the roads in the 1950's and 1960's. Ownership of the roads included the right-of-way for purposes of utility easements, public parking, and the stormwater collection system. The Department of Transportation owns approximately 97 percent of the roads and stormwater collection system on Sullivan's Island. The Town owns about 1900 feet of roads because the State no longer takes new roads into its system.

The Town's stormwater collection system philosophy has been the Town does not own it, and the Town is not going to maintain it. For the most part, if a municipality works on the stormwater infrastructure, the Department of Transportation views it as the municipality's responsibility going forward. The one exception is the Charleston County half-cent sales tax funding that is used for the maintenance of roads, paving, sidewalks, etc. The Town applies for this funding each year. If a stormwater project is done with these funds, the State continues to maintain the ownership.

Chair Smith stated the Town could apply for a grant to have an island-wide engineering study of the stormwater system. Because the stormwater basins can affect each other, if work is done in only one area, the problem might actually be exasperated. This pump issue has been spurred by a very generous proposal by Joe Blanchard. He has proposed to purchase a new

pump for Station 18 with the caveat that the Town pay for the installation, hookups and maintenance. His desire is to move the water more expeditiously; not to fix everything. Mr. Blanchard may file a lawsuit against the Town at the end of February if progress is not made.

Chair Smith stated he wanted the Committee to discuss some of Mr. Blanchard's proposal issues. Some of the issues have been answered (Attachment 1) in the agenda packet, but there are two other questions.

1. Who owns the pump at Station 18? It is not known who owns the pump. The Department of Transportation is not claiming ownership of the pump. The Town's assumption is the Army built the pump house when the bunker was built. The conveyance documents in Columbia would have to be researched to determine the answer.

2. For Committee members, is this an issue that needs to be addressed and remedied? Councilmember Howard stated it warrants being addressed because it is one of the worst drainage areas, as well as one of the more popular beach accesses. Councilmember Clark stated the Town could not afford a full stormwater program. Because the Department of Transportation will not take action, the Town needs to take action.

Chair Smith went over questions and concerns discussed with Mr. Blanchard as well as staff, as noted in attachment 1. These included – condition of wet well; ownership/long term maintenance of system; condition of flapper valve; where will water pumped out of pump station go; strength of pump; taking ownership of this one section ; SCE&G offered pump; did SCE&G run new line to marsh; who made 10" PVC connection to pump house.

Chair Smith stated that proposals from an engineering firm are needed to evaluate the wet well and flapper valve. At the same time, consider writing a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant application for an island wide stormwater system evaluation. Administrator Benke pointed out that the SC Department of Transportation has offered to be a joint applicant with the Town, but it is not yet known if FEMA will fund an engineering study. Councilmember Clark suggested the use of a half-pump to help move the water but does not overload the system. Chair Smith agreed that was a good idea, and proposed to ask an engineer what is needed to rehabilitate the wet well permanently, as well as design a temporary fix for a removable pump that will move water from the area into the force main. Administrator Benke added that the scope of work should be expanded to clean and TV the lines on the short Atlantic side.

Other options discussed included pumping water through a hose to the backside of the island to relieve flooding, such as recently used at Stations 24 and 25; and using the jet vac to

clean the pipes. The current jet vac cannot clean stormwater pipes. When the jet vac is replaced, a larger jet vac could be purchased to share between water/sewer and storm utility.

For the next Council Workshop, Administrator Benke will prepare a request for proposal for an engineer to determine the condition of the pipes in the area, a short-term or temporary fix of flooding in the area, and the rehabilitation of the wet well/determine how to get the pump station working on a more permanent basis.

Vehicle Access to the Dump – The East Cooper Land Trust approved the installation of posts along the roadway from Station 19 to the marsh line. The Eagle Scouts are interested in doing this project. Before staff contacts the Eagle Scouts to install the posts on the road to keep vehicles off the grass area, and possibly install “no vehicles from dusk to dawn” signage, the residents from the area will come talk to Council at the February Workshop.

Station 26 Boat Landing – The landing is in poor shape, and the high ground might be lost if it is not rehabilitated. Thomas & Hutton looked at the area in the past, and DHEC delineated the critical line. Thomas & Hutton’s past proposal could be used to ask a contractor for repair estimate. It will be discussed in the future whether to restrict motor vehicle traffic/trailers from the landing.

Motion was made by Councilmember Howard, seconded by Councilmember Clark, to adjourn at 9:54 a.m., carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Ellen Miller

Andy Benke

From: Greg Gress
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2016 12:43 PM
To: Andy Benke; Bachman Smith
Cc: Randy Robinson; A Stith
Subject: RE: Stormwater notes

My comments are embedded under Andy's.

Greg Gress
Manager
Water & Sewer Department
Sullivan's Island
Phone: 843-883-5748
Cell: 843-270-5717
Fax: 843-883-3662
Email: ggress@sullivansisland-sc.com

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-----Original Message-----

From: Andy Benke
Sent: Saturday, January 09, 2016 9:40 PM
To: Bachman Smith <BSmith@sullivansisland-sc.com>
Cc: Greg Gress <ggress@sullivansisland-sc.com>; Randy Robinson <rrobinson@sullivansisland-sc.com>; A Stith <astith@sullivansisland-sc.com>
Subject: RE: Stormwater notes

Bachman,

My answers are embedded below. The SCE&G force main was done before my time with the Town began but I have learned a little bit about it over the years. Greg was here at the time.

If I missed anything or stated something incorrectly Greg, Randy and Anthony please add your comments.

AB

-----Original Message-----

From: Bachman Smith
Sent: Friday, January 08, 2016 12:38 PM
To: Andy Benke <abenke@sullivansisland-sc.com>
Cc: Greg Gress <ggress@sullivansisland-sc.com>; Randy Robinson <rrobinson@sullivansisland-sc.com>; A Stith <astith@sullivansisland-sc.com>
Subject: Re: Stormwater notes

Andy,

Please see below for notes, questions, and comments as it concerns the Blanchard proposal at Sta. 18.

Concerns, questions, and thoughts include:

1) Condition of the wet well: Does this matter if the goal of installing a new pump is not to keep the location dry at all times but only to remove water in a reasonably expeditious manner such that it does not sit for days on end? (This is all Blanchard is seeking to do.)

AB: I do not know the structural integrity of the wet well or how much sediment may be in the bottom of the wet well. The top of the well where a pump would be mounted is in poor condition (see picture above) and it is not clear whether it would support a pump. An engineer might recommend a submersible pump anyhow.

GG: It does matter unless Mr. Blanchard is going to take ownership and long term maintenance of the system. I suspect not. Whomever takes ownership will likely have to put money in their budget for maintenance of this entire system. If it's not going to be the Town, then don't worry about it, but if there is a chance the Town will become or it's determined that the Town is currently the owner, It needs to be done correctly. Yes it does Matter

2) Condition of the flapper valve: How can we make this determination and why is it important? Is this something that SCE&G had to contemplate?

AB: Not sure that the flapper has been exercised or maintained over the years - so condition unknown. The value of the flapper is to close the force main blocking water coming from the Sand Dunes Club so that the wet well could be pumped out (the wet well is filled by water moving by gravity from the dead end of Atlantic east of Station 18 Street; see notes diagram above). Similarly, the flapper closes to the wet well to prevent SCE&G water in the force main from back filling the wet well and eventually overflowing into the gravity collection system at the dead end of Atlantic Avenue.

3) Where will the water go that is pumped out of the pump station: I assume it will go to the same place where SCE&G is sending their water. If this is an incorrect assumption we need to know why and how we would make this determination. (It seems to me the water must be going all the way to the marsh and if this is not known then all we should have to do is activate their pump and have someone watch the outfall.)

AB: The water at the dead end of Station 18 will go into the wet well and then into the SCE&G force main and empties into the marsh at Station 18. It is important to note that there is a collection system from the pump house running west toward the Sand Dunes Club. This is the section of collection system which drains Blanchard, Poletti and the next house. It is my understanding the pipe is in bad shape and probably needs to be replaced (again see diagram attached above).

4) Strength of pump to open flapper valve and move water in desired direction: properly sizing a pump should be able to be accomplished by the pump vendor from whom the pump is purchased.

AB: That is an engineering question that would consider the size of the wet well, force to open the flapper and timing with the SCE&G pump cycle.

GG: The engineer would also need the pump specs from SCE&G. It would also likely require some historical pressure data from the force main as well. Again Engineering. When we hire engineers to design something there is a certain amount of liability to design correctly. If a problem is caused by bad design (flooding SCE&G property from poor designed flapper and or oversized pump) we would hold the engineer accountable. Does the pump mfg. have that kind of liability ins? Is there a contract document that someone (who?) would sign that spells out this liability?

5) Taking ownership of this one section: Hasn't this already occurred from the simple fact the Town paid for the electricity to run the pump until it was finally taken off line?

AB: By ownership if you mean SCDOT I would say no - there are no agreements for ownership and/or maintenance of the storm water collection system or pump. It is just a structure that no one claims. Look at the roof - it is made of slate which tells me the army put it there. I am truly not sure how to determine if the SCDOT owns it or the Town acquired it in the transition.

(I believe that any confusion with 2,3, and 4 could be cleared up by a call to SCE&G.)

AB: There is no question that any pumping into the force main would require coordination with SCE&G. As example, random pumping at Station 18 with the flapper closing off the SCE&G flow could cause back up and flooding on their property. It is my understanding that SCE&G offered or invited the Town to be part of the design but SI opted out because storm water a SCDOT matter (again I was not working for the Town at that time).

GG: The town required SCE&G to submit their plans to us for comment. The Towns comments is how the force main got to be a 10" and connected to the pump station with the flapper valve.

Questions I have:

1) Did SCE&G offer the Town a pump? Was it turned down for the ownership concerns or something else? If something else then what?

AB: I understand SCE&G offered a pump and it was turned down by the Town for several reasons: (a) Town did not claim ownership of the storm water collection system or pump house; (b) the pump offered was just a spare used pump SCE&G had in stock - there was no engineering to determine whether it was the correct size for the pump station/flapper and its condition was not known; (c) it was not known whether the top of the wet well would support the weight of offered pump.

2) Did SCE&G run an entirely new line all the way to the marsh?

AB: No - the force main was tied into the existing outfall line just short of the marsh to avoid SCDHEC permitting issues. It is unlikely DHEC would have allowed a new outfall then or now.

GG: short only by 5' - 10'

3) Who made the 10" PVC connection to the pump house and why?

AB: I do not know for sure but would guess SCE&G so that water would not backflow into the wet well. Greg???

GG: Yes it was done as part of their (SCE&G) project.

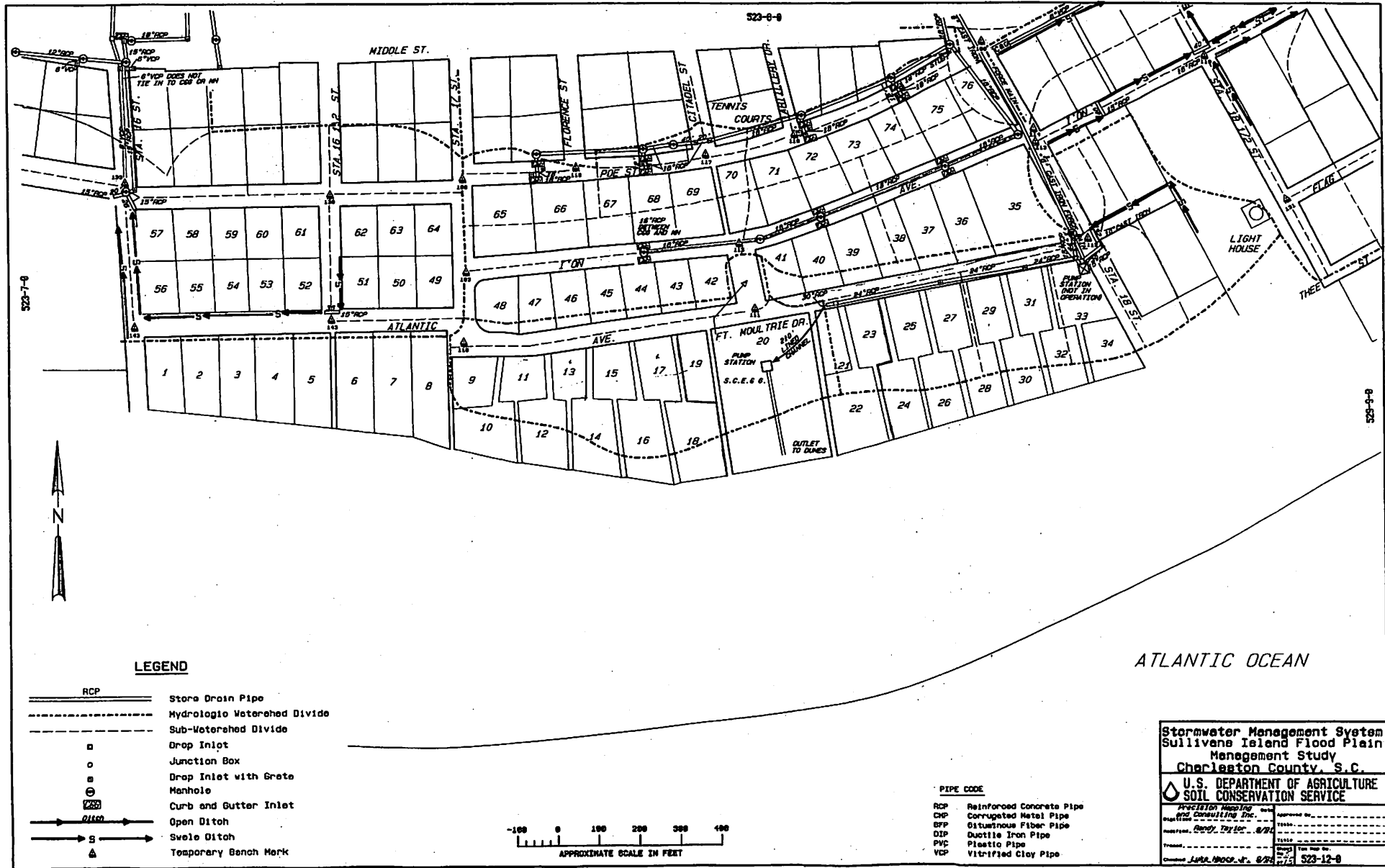
I am sure these questions will raise new ones and I am good with a brief meeting among us (or some of us) to discuss before the Public Facilities meeting if needed. In general terms, no one is looking to keep water for ever sitting in this area. They are looking to move water that collects there as standing water is the problem rather than the water itself.

GG: In summary, I think a council decision should be formally made to either except/take or deny ownership of the storm water pump station. (Andy this may turn into a discussion of the entire Island wide SW system) Once that is done we can move on. If the decision is to except/take ownership, then I would suggest Mr. Blanchard make a donation to the Town in a way that he could get a tax deduction (not sure how). Then we can begin to properly design this area. Council would also have to decide where SW fits in the Organization chart. The other thought is to put this in as a request to Charleston County. Much like the Station 24 storm drain project taking place now and let them redesign this area.

Be well,

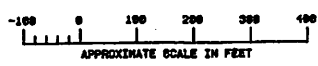
Bachman Smith

> On Jan 7, 2016, at 4:44 PM, Andy Benke <abenke@sullivansisland-sc.com> wrote:
>
> Sorry misread the first message. Mornings usually open for me. Will confirm when I return to office later.
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
>> On Jan 7, 2016, at 3:11 PM, Bachman Smith <BSmith@sullivansisland-sc.com> wrote:
>>
>> I must not have been clear. Those are the only 2 dates I cannot make a meeting.
>>
>> I will get a summary of all info and questions I have gathered out tomorrow and we can decide if we need to meet briefly to get up to speed after I send my notes.
>>
>> Be well,
>>
>> Bachman Smith
>>
>>> On Jan 7, 2016, at 1:30 PM, Andy Benke <abenke@sullivansisland-sc.com> wrote:
>>>
>>> Bachman,
>>>
>>> Either 01-22-16 or 01-28-16 will work for me. I have copied Anthony, Greg and Randy as those are the other two who have had experience with the Station 18 Street flooding and the pump.
>>>
>>> If you would like to decide on a date and the agenda I will communicate it to the other members of the committee. Additionally, would you like to meet briefly before then with us to get up to speed on the pump or do you have the background on it.
>>>
>>> AB
>>>
>>> -----Original Message-----
>>> From: Bachman Smith
>>> Sent: Thursday, January 07, 2016 12:41 PM
>>> To: Andy Benke <abenke@sullivansisland-sc.com>
>>> Subject: Public facilities meeting
>>>
>>> Andy,
>>>
>>> I need to schedule a public facilities meeting as soon as we can make it happen.
>>>
>>> I prefer 8:30 a.m. and am free any day but 1/22, 228, and the date of our next W&S meeting. If we need to look into Feb. we can do this but the focus of this meeting will be Blanchard's offer to buy the pump for the Sta. 18 pump house.
>>>
>>> There will be other agenda items but we now have an end of Feb deadline to make a decision on the pump.
>>>
>>> Please let me know the best way to handle scheduling as I do not want to get in trouble with communicating with too may council members at once via email.
>>>
>>> Be well,
>>>
>>> Bachman Smith



LEGEND

- RCP Store Drain Pipe
- Hydrologic Watershed Divide
- Sub-Watershed Divide
- Drop Inlet
- Junction Box
- Drop Inlet with Grate
- Manhole
- Curb and Gutter Inlet
- Open Ditch
- Swale Ditch
- Temporary Bench Mark



- PIPE CODE**
- RCP Reinforced Concrete Pipe
 - CMR Corrugated Metal Pipe
 - DFP Glasshouse Fiber Pipe
 - DIP Ductile Iron Pipe
 - PVC Plastic Pipe
 - VCP Vitrified Clay Pipe

ATLANTIC OCEAN

**Stormwater Management System
Sullivan's Island Flood Plain
Management Study
Charleston County, S.C.**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE**

PROFESSIONAL SEALING

Engineering Consulting Inc.
 PROJECT: Sullivan's Island Flood Plain Management Study
 DRAWING: 523-8-8
 DATE: 12/15/15
 SHEET: 1 OF 1
 CHECKED BY: JAMES BRUCE, JR., P.E.
 523-12-8