



The Chairman's Corner

by

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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN FOR 8/16/2022

SEWER PROJECT

This is part two of a two-part series.

On the heels of an early 2010s New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Order on Consent to evaluate the existing county wastewater treatment facility at the Gerald R. Simons Commerce Park on Route 66 in Ghent and make necessary improvements to the discharge permit limits, the Board of Supervisors Public Works Committee, chaired by Stuyvesant Town Supervisor Ron Knott, swung into action.

A number of options were explored, as previously outlined. When all was boiled down, it seemed replacing the old plant might be the only real choice. Then, another option presented itself, that of connecting the Commerce Park's and airport's wastewater needs to the existing Town of Greenport wastewater treatment facility. This became the solution.

Ray Jurkowski, as of January the county's new commissioner of the Department of Public Works, noted that the initial project cost for connecting 4.5-miles worth of pipeline from Commerce Park and the airport was estimated at \$8.7 million, whereas the actual cost, including engineering and other associated soft costs, came to \$6.8 million. And not only did the project come in under budget, but was also completed on time.

A state DEC grant in the amount of \$1.5 million and a separate grant of \$1 million from the Environmental Facilities Corporation helped defray the project cost.

Additionally, Commissioner Jurkowski explained, the county was fortunate in several ways when it came to the final project cost. One, he said, stemmed from a very competitive construction pricing environment, while the second was primarily a matter of luck.

"We were fortunate in respect to the pandemic," he said. "Bidding was done just as the pandemic was hitting. From a pricing standpoint, we were lucky enough that pricing was still good. We were, as others, affected from a supply chain standpoint in terms of some slight delays with equipment needed, such as generators and for the four pump stations."

The pump stations are the only items along the way that will require ongoing maintenance – past county maintenance and personnel requirements for the old wastewater facilities have been eliminated. Nor, as Commissioner Jurkowski said, will the county be in the position of dealing with future changes that DEC may hand down in terms of water quality.

At the end of the day, the county was able to do away with two wastewater discharges, one into Mud Creek and

another into a tributary of the creek, making it an environmentally project in that regard.

The use of trenchless technology when installing the pipeline also meant that the project would not disturb wetlands and traditional water bodies that would have been involved with traditional trenching, making it possible instead to go underneath them.

“The Town of Greenport has been a great partner,” Commissioner Jurkowski said. “Not only has a viable, long-term solution been reached for wastewater at Commerce Park and the airport, but by implementing this project it offers an opportunity for future connections for future growth.”

Chairman Knott added he would like to thank original committee of Ray Jurkowski, Ed Stiffler, Ken Flood, Jim Guzzi, Kippy Weigelt, Ed Nabozny, Sarah Sterling, Pat Grattan, Rob Fitzsimmons, Ron Caponera and Mike Tucker, and many staff and fellow supervisors who supported this project along the way to improve the commerce park sewer district, both environmentally and financially.