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# Stop the Sewer

By now I'm sure you've all heard about this preposterous plan to decrease our property values and hit us with an additional "tax" (they are calling it an assessment) of about \$5,000 a year for the next 10 years. Below is an article that was published in the Mount Olive Chronicle on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013. As the article states, the plan only benefits 15 of 103 homes that would incur this extreme hardship. We must make our voices heard at the very next Town Council "workshop" meeting, because the council will be voting at the meeting after that. Speak out to avoid this unnecessary financial burden.

I will be away at the time of the meeting. I went on the eve of Feb 19

Your support is needed.

Please email [stopthesewer@yahoo.com](mailto:stopthesewer@yahoo.com) for more information.

and attend

Town Council Workshop Meeting

March 19, 2013 7:00 PM

## Sewer plans are being considered for Flanders properties

By PHIL GARBER, Managing Editor | Posted: Friday, January 18, 2013 3:00 am

When it was cancelled, I am unalterably opposed to the sewers - it would cause

MOUNT OLIVE TWP. – The values of more than 100 properties are in danger of being flushed away by a web of regulations by the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the N.J. Highlands Council.

a financial obligation I could not meet. Kathleen Forsberg 22 Main St

The properties in Flanders are all served by septic systems or cesspools and the longtime concern is that the waste systems will fail or overflow and damage the environment, including Drakes Brook which runs through the area.

The township is floating a proposal to eliminate the septic systems and cesspools and extend the public sewer line from the Clover Hill plant to serve 103 properties in the area of old Flanders. Township Administrator Sean Canning said a preliminary report shows it would cost about \$4 million to extend the line. The township would buy the bonds to finance the construction and each property would be assessed an estimated of \$49,000 to pay off the bonds over 10 to 20 years.

A public informational hearing is planned 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 19, at town hall. The municipal engineer and other officials will attend not only to answer questions but also to gauge interest by the property owners in extending the sewer line.

The Township Council also will have to decide on how to assess properties in the event that not all property owners want to be connected to the new line.

If there seems to be sufficient public support, surveys would be mailed to each property owner asking for their comments and concerns about the possibility of extending the sewer line, Canning said.

The need for sewers is partly in response to environmental concerns but also to new state regulations governing the sale of homes with septic systems. The new DEP law requires that properties cannot be sold with cesspools. Instead, before any sale, cesspools must be closed and replaced with costly septic systems.

At least 15 of the 103 homes use cesspools but most of the properties are too small to accommodate underground septic tanks. Instead large, above ground systems would be needed, consuming much of the backyards and causing the values to fall, according to Canning.

Another factor is that 33 of the properties are in the Highlands preservation area where development is strictly limited and new septic systems can only be built or sewer lines connected if it can be shown that the current cesspools or septic systems are faulty and pose environmental threats.

Canning said there have been no reports of faulty cesspools. He said the potential financial ramifications of installing costly septic systems would likely not be enough to gain Highlands Council approval for the sewer line extension.

"Waivers (to the Highlands Act) would be very difficult to get," Canning said.

If the 33 properties in the preservation area are eliminated from the sewer plan, it would force fewer property owners to pay off the bonds and result in potentially larger property assessments.

Yet another limiting factor is that some of the properties are in wetlands where it would be difficult to gain DEP approval to install the sewer lines.

The areas under consideration for the sewer line are the old Flanders section including Main Road, North Road and Park Place. Another area is to the west along Beaver Lane and Clarks Lane. A third section is in the vicinity of Mountain Avenue and North Road.

Council President Colleen Labow said she believes extending the sewer line is the best way to both maintain property values and to protect the environment.

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