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SUGAR GROVE CLOSES IN ON NEW SEWERS

By Lisa Miller

“Just get it in.”

That’s what Wanda Bukovich told the Crawford County commissioners about building a new sanitary sewer system for nearly 30 homes in the Sugar Grove Lake area.

She was among 15 residents who attended a second public hearing on the \$669,062 project Wednesday night in the county administration building.

Commissioner Ron Hoeft assured the residents that many people in the county were working “to make this possible” and dealing with “each hoop we’ve got to jump through.”

Residents have been meeting with the board since April 2002 in hopes of replacing the inadequate on-site sewage treatment systems in the area.

The residents were interested because the system would help with health and safety issues in the area and have a positive impact on property values.

Founded decades ago as a summer resort, Sugar Grove is located in the southeast portion of the county. Only a few of the homes in the area are on record as having septic systems.

Eldon Bauer of KE McCartney of Mansfield, the company designing the sewer system, and Roberta Acosta, an Ohio Rural Community Assistance Program field agent who has been helping find funding for the project, each addressed the group.

Bauer explained that the pre-cast concrete sewage treatment plant will handle 10,000 gallons a day with discharge into the Olentangy River. The design has been completed and submitted to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency with a permit to install granted in September.

Acosta explained that a Community Development Block Grant for \$375,031 is the piece of the needed funding that also includes a \$117,703 Ohio Public Works Commission grant and \$176,328 from the county’s revolving loan fund. If the CDBG grant comes through, “You are basically getting your system for free,” Acosta said.

Commissioner Carl Watt said obtaining that much grant funding for the project was “almost unreal.”

Residents will be charged a \$45 a month user fee for operation and maintenance of the system.

Some residents who live just outside the project’s service area appeared upset that they had not been included. County administrative assistant Julie Bell and Acosta said some other grant money may be available to help them get sewer systems and possibly tie in with the rest of the project.

Other residents were concerned about the state of private roads in the area that one woman said were “really, really poor.” Bauer said the easements for constructing and maintaining the sewer system would mean “The roads will be at least as good or better as what they are now.”

Construction is expected to start May 1, 2004, with an expected completion date of May 1, 2005.

“We are as anxious as you are to get this project going,” Commissioner Mo Ressallat said.

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