

Trail & Bicycle Pump Track (BPT) – FAQ's

April 23,2021

Updated June 25th, 2021

1. What is a bicycle pump track?
 - a. A pump track is a circuit of rollers, banked turns and features designed to be ridden completely by riders "pumping"—generating momentum by up and down body movements, instead of pedaling or pushing.
 - b. Pump tracks are relatively simple to use, and cater to a wide variety of rider skill levels.
2. What will a BPT/Trail Project do for Vernon?
 - a. By building the BPT and Trail we anticipate the revival and growth of Town Center.
 - b. We see this project as a way to bring a centralized location for community in Town Center that will attract new businesses.
 - c. We see this as a way for existing businesses to grow with increased traffic and revenue derived from this plan.
 - d. It follows our Master Plan of Vernon being a recreational location for visitors year-round.
3. How much will it cost to do this BPT?
 - a. See Presentation on the breakdown of each part of the total project cost
4. Do we have a rendition / drawing of what the BPT looks like?
 - a. Yes, in the presentation.
 - b. The presentation and FAQ's will be available on the town website
5. Why are we building the BPT at Black Creek Drive?
 - a. This site was chosen for multiple reasons including
 - i. Location
 - ii. Safety
 - iii. Business Development of Town Center
 - iv. Ability to attract out of town visitors to local businesses
6. Why not Maple Grange or Veterans Park?
 - a. Neighbors of Maple Grange Park expressed concern about the increased traffic it would bring.
 - b. Maple Grange Park lacks sufficient parking for this additional amenity.
 - c. Veterans Memorial Park lacks sufficient parking and is prone to frequent flooding that could destroy the pump track.
7. How will the BPT/Trail and the DPW work site coexist?
 - a. The DPW worksite will be gated and secure from public access
 - b. The site will also be posted for trespassing
 - c. Security cameras are being investigated
8. Will the site have lights for night riding?
 - a. Current plans are for a Dust to Dawn program to evaluate usage and then decide if night lighting is required for the future.
9. How is the BPT and Trail going to help Vernon Township grow in the future?

- a. In many studies conducted by various states and associations, the benefits of trails and bicycling are well documented.
 - b. As noted in many of these studies (see sources in the presentation) revenue streams are both soft and hard values as well as wellness and family benefits.
 - c. Our expectations in building this project will be included:
 - i. Rebranding of Town Center as a good place to invest in businesses.
 - ii. Create a place for the community to gather that is accessible to all.
 - iii. Attract other events and activities that help create a more unified and flourishing Town Center.
10. Did you secure an independent appraisal of the Balwin property? It seems that if there truly cannot be any type of commercial construction on that site, the price is very high.
- a. The Municipality requested and received independent appraisals from two certified, reputable appraisal firms. One firm appraised the value of this property at \$304k and the other appraised it at \$290k. It is difficult to obtain reliable comps due to the unique properties of Vernon Township. The parcel is located in a state designated Town Center. Our Town has a municipal police department, the only ski and mountain bike resort in NJ; we are an Appalachian Trail Community and in the Highlands. There are 47 vacant properties located within the Town Center. Some have been dormant for over a decade.
11. Did you attempt any negotiation with the owners of the Baldwin property or did they present the price and we agreed to pay it?
- a. Yes, we did negotiate.
 - b. Negotiations began in October 2018 @ \$475,000 asking price based on our two previous appraisals. At that time the parcel was believed to be 11 acres. Further study determined parcel to be 7.4 acres triggering additional appraisals.
 - c. The owner requested the maximum appraised value of \$304k; however, after negotiations, the Municipality and the owner settled on a \$289k purchase price which is \$15k or 5% less than the owner's asking price and the highest appraised price.
12. Can the Open Space funds left over from the purchase be used to build the pump track and trail?
- a. No, not without another referendum.
 - b. Only 30% as passed by referendum can be used for amenities. Any additional costs require capital improvement funds, established capital reserves, budgeted operating costs, or financing.
 - c. The Sussex County Open Space Committee views the Municipality's purchase of the Baldwin property to be an outstanding use of Open Space Funds, and supported that view by providing Vernon Township a **\$75k grant** to purchase this property.
 - d. Ordinance #00-16 that created the Municipal Open Space Trust Fund said that the funds could be used for the purchase of "Farmland and Open Space Preservation", and the Baldwin property meets both of those requirements - - i.e., it is farmland assessed, and it is open space in that it does not have a building on it. The town's plan is to use \$214k from the Municipal Open Space Trust Fund, and combine it with the \$75k grant from the Sussex County Open Space Committee to purchase the Baldwin property.

- e. As to the funds for building the Municipal Walking & Biking Trail and the Municipal Pump Track, we currently have \$269k of Open Space funds dedicated for the construction of the Municipal Walking & Biking Trail and/or the Municipal Pump Track; the voters approved these funds for this purpose via a 2018 referendum.
 - f. We know that we can build the Trail for \$195k; that would leave the remaining amount of the dedicated Open Space funds for the building of the Pump Track.
 - g. While we have not yet done a detailed, point-by-point analysis of the cost to build the Pump Track, our Municipal Engineer estimates the cost to be about \$170k. At the appropriate time, we will perform a cost/benefits analysis and make a determination as to specifically how we will get the additional funds needed to build the Pump Track.
13. Will the trail be paved and handicap accessible?
- a. For budget reasons, the Municipal Walking & Biking Trail will be a gravel trail that will be topped with a stone dust material. This will provide a smooth and firm surface that will meet ADA requirements.
14. Will there be paved parking?
- a. Yes, paved parking will be located at the Municipal Center; and it is our plan to provide a paved parking area near the Pump Track. Whether the parking area is initially paved or gravel will be a future decision.
15. Will there be bathrooms?
- a. As part of our effort to be as economically responsible with the project as possible, bathroom services will be provided via Port-a-Johns.
16. Do you have cost estimates and from where will these funds come?
- a. Part of this will be paid for by the Open Space funds (the 30% approved referendum allotment)
 - b. We will take out debt for the balance of roughly \$600k.
 - c. The third ordinance regarding STR legislation is to dedicate a percentage of the revenue (as follows) to promote recreation and tourism. Vernon can become a destination for tourists and provide healthy activities for our residents by establishing amenities within our borders. Small business will capitalize on recreation infrastructure that attracts potential customers/clients. The STR revenue can provide funds to establish and maintain amenities. Such dedication of funds may make Vernon eligible for Green Acre contributions and Sustainable NJ points.
17. Do you have a projection of the tax revenue from the Short Occupancy Hotel tax? If so, please share it.
- a. The third ordinance regarding STR legislation is to dedicate a percentage of the revenue (as follows) to promote recreation and tourism. Vernon can become a destination for tourists and provide healthy activities for our residents by establishing amenities within our borders. Small business will capitalize on recreation infrastructure that attracts potential customers/clients. The STR revenue can provide funds to establish and maintain amenities. Such dedication of funds may make Vernon eligible for Green Acre contributions and Sustainable NJ points.

509-8 Dedication of
Hotel and Motel Room and Transient Accommodation Occupancy Tax

- b. No less than 18% of Hotel and Motel and Transient Accommodation Occupancy Tax revenue collected in the preceding year will be dedicated to a trust fund for the replacement of the artificial playing surfaces at Maple Grange Park.
- c. No less than 6% of Hotel and Motel and Transient Accommodation Occupancy Tax revenue collected in the preceding year will be dedicated in the annual budget for creation and maintenance of public pathways for hiking, biking and horseback riding trails; creation of amenities such as public gardens, disc golf, amphitheater and bike pump track; and the preservation and maintenance of cultural sites.
- d. No less than 1% of Hotel and Motel and Transient Accommodation Occupancy Tax revenue collected in the preceding year will be dedicated to an Open Space and Farm Land Preservation Fund for the acquisition of property for the purpose of open space and farm land preservation and the costs associated therewith including the costs of appraisal, economic and environmental analyses or engineering, surveying, or other professional services.
- e. Below are the tax projections from STR taxes and where they will be allocated to currently.
 - i. Pre COVID projections.
 - 1. Projected 2020 HOT – \$325,000
 - 2. Maple Grange - \$58,500
 - 3. Amenities - \$19,500
 - 4. Open Space - \$3250
 - ii. Projected 2021 HOT - \$400,000
 - 1. Maple Grange - \$72,000
 - 2. Amenities - \$24,000
 - 3. Open Space - \$4000.00
 - 4. Adjusted HOT Projected 2021 revenue \$323,000 not reflected in budget per accounting rules.

18. Can you respond to the letter from the DEP saying that the land is not a known habitat for bobcats?

- a. The Municipality knows of no letter from the DEP stating that the Baldwin property is not a known habitat of the bobcat. Per our review of NJDEP GIS data, the Baldwin property is located in an area that includes threatened and endangered species. The species that were noted of concern included the Bobcat and Timber Rattlesnake. The DEP has told us that this piece of property would require extensive studies possibly spanning multiple years for evaluation in order to be permitted to be in the town's Sewer Service Area. The expense would need to be taken on by the developer/property owner and the study is not guaranteed to find no threatened species present.
- b. See supporting documentation at the end of this file.

19. Will there be a turf field or area ?

- a. While we have not yet done a detailed, point-by-point analysis of all aspects of the Pump Track, at this time we do not anticipate artificial turf being used on the Pump Track. If in the specifics of the design it needs to be incorporated and the use of artificial turf would be beneficial, we would attempt to limit it to the use of artificial turf left over

from the replacement of the turf at Maple Grange Park (if possible and economically feasible).

20. Do you have a cost analysis for yearly maintenance?
 - a. Yearly maintenance costs are projected to range from \$5k-\$14k, depending on weather and extent of paved construction. Funds for yearly maintenance are anticipated to come from the Hotel Occupancy Tax 6%.
21. I understand the insurance will be minimal, have you found out the exact cost from other towns that have a pump track?
 - a. We have done insurance and other types of inquiries about the cost/expenses related to the nearby pump tracks in Port Jervis and West Milford. Because the Port Jervis pump track is in New York and the West Milford pump track is made of dirt (which makes it more expensive to maintain and insure), we did not use these two nearby tracks as a basis for projecting our insurance costs.
 - b. However, what we do know is that under the Statewide Joint Insurance Fund & State Law, under which Vernon Township comes, Chapter 59 provides some tort protections which provides partial immunity for townships/government entities where the township is providing reasonable responses to hazard concerns.
22. Where can I find the data for the \$13 dollars for day guest and \$98 dollars for overnight guest?
 - a. You can find the reference data at ConservationTools.org
23. How was the \$5.77 annual tax increase for the bond calculation done?
 - a. The debt portion of the project will be approximately \$580K for 10 years 2021 to 2031 (see right side of chart)
 - i. The average estimated annual payout for the bond is \$68,776.25 (\$58k principle paydown + estimated average interest).
 - ii. Charts 20 & 21 on the presentation for the annualized payouts as reference.
 - b. Annual price of one tax point = \$245,964.
 - i. This is the total amount raised by increasing the tax rate by 0.01.
 - ii. One tax point is calculated by taking the equalized valuation (which can be found under the Tax Assessor tab on the Vernon Township website under the 2021 Ratable Base). **This will be updated once the County approves our valuation.**
 - iii. The formula is $(2,459,644,667/100) \times 0.01 = \$245,964$ OR 1 Tax Point.
 - c. The annual estimated cost of the project is equivalent to 27.96% of one tax point.
 - i. Take the estimated average annual payment of and divide by the amount of one tax point $(68,776.25/245,964)$
 - ii. $68,776.25 / 245,964 = .2796$ % of tax point (27.96% of one point). This is the calculations for the loan
 - d. The cost of one tax point increase is calculated by taking the Assessed value of your home. In this case the Average Home is assessed at \$206,351.
 - i. The calculation is $(\$206,351/100) \times .01 = 20.64$.
 - ii. Find the cost of this ordinance on the average home.
 - iii. Cost of one tax point on the average home multiplied by the percentage of tax point.
 - iv. $\$20.64$ cost of one point on average home \times 27.96% of one tax point = \$5.77 the estimated annual **cost on the average** home assessed at \$206,351

- e. To calculate your own estimated cost from this ordinance here is the formula.
 - i. $(\text{Your assessed Value}/100) \times .01 = \text{Cost on your home per Tax Point Increase.}$
 - 1. Example $\$320,000/100 \times .01 = \32.00
 - 2. Then take the assessed value of your home per Tax Point Increase X .2796 = This will equal the amount of increase from this loan for the year.
 - 3. Example $\$32.00 \times .2796 = 8.95$ on a \$320,000 assessed home annually

24. How were the Potential Revenue streams determined?

- a. These are some revenue streams that can be considered and create an increase in growing Vernon and attracting more development.
 - i. Tax revenue from new construction and business growth = \$18K - \$88k
 - 1. This is calculated by taking existing vacant properties and projecting tax revenue as they are developed and businesses open.
- b. New business opportunity and organic growth of existing business = \$15K
 - i. Simply stated. Local business will see additional retail revenues of roughly \$300/week over multiple businesses. This was a very conservative number that was far below what the reference material gave. If you take the restaurants, coffee shops, and retail establishment just in Town Center and each establishment sees 2 extra customers a week who are here for Trail & Pump Track experiences and they spend \$10 each.
 - ii. Some stores in the calculation include, Dunkin Donuts, Taco Bell, Wings, Hardware store, H & H Auto, Pizza Shop (3) Chinese, Ya Sushi, Mac & Lindy's, Tracks, Acme, The Daily Bean, Dairy Queen, and Burger King.
 - iii. 2 People per store x \$10 each x 15 establishments as note above (There are actually more) = \$300/week increased in business x 52 weeks - \$15,600
- c. Revenue streams come from HOT/STR, Visitors, Hotel, visit to Mountain Creek, visits to other amenities in the areas. It is probably more, but the team took a conservative view of the range.

25. Can you share the reference material?

- a. Yes, see links below.
 - i. [Economic Benefits of a trail – We Conserve PA](#)
 - ii. [The Economic Benefits of Trails - American Hiking Association](#)
 - iii. [The Economic Impact of Greenways and Multiuse trail.pdf](#)
 - iv. [NJ Trail Plan Update 2020](#)

Supporting documentation and correspondences regarding Question #18

Minutes and notes that reflect DEP concerns are as follows:

VTMUA ANNUAL REPORT

To: Honorable Mayor Victor Marotta, Council President Pat Rizzuto and members of the Vernon Township Council

Re: The Vernon Township Municipal Utility Authority 2015 Annual Report

Date: APRIL, 2015

In June of 2012, the County of Sussex Planning Department and the New Jersey DEP sent a revised Sewer Service Area Map to the Township that proposed to reduce the sewer service area in Vernon Township. This map was reviewed by Mayor Marotta and the Township Planner for reductions to the sewer service area. Mayor Marotta expressed to the County and DEP that a reduction of these areas would put an undue burden on the present VTMUA customers and the Vernon taxpayers as a whole. Also, significant reductions to the sewer service area would have a significant impact on the build-out of the sewer service area and possibly threaten existing approved projects. Upon review of the comments from the Mayor, the County and NJDEP revised the Sewer Service Area Map to one that was acceptable to the Township. This map was presented to the VTMUA in December 2012. The revised sewer service area map removed properties that were wetlands, environmentally sensitive or unbuildable areas. The lots being removed from the 2008 map will not create an economic loss to the community because they were unbuildable parcels.

Council June 22, 2015

In June of 2012, the County of Sussex Planning Department and the New Jersey DEP sent a revised Sewer Service Area Map to the Township that proposed to reduce the sewer service area in Vernon Township. This map was reviewed by Mayor Marotta and the Township Planner for reductions to the sewer service area. Mayor Marotta expressed to the County and DEP that a reduction of these areas would put an undue burden on the present VTMUA customers and the Vernon taxpayers as a whole. Also, significant reductions to the sewer service area would have a significant impact on the build-out of the sewer service area and possibly threaten existing approved projects. Upon review of the comments from the Mayor, the County and NJDEP revised the Sewer Service Area Map to one that was acceptable to the Township. This map was presented to the VTMUA in December 2012. The revised sewer service area map removed properties that were wetlands, environmentally sensitive or unbuildable areas. The lots being removed from the 2008 map will not create an economic loss to the community because they were unbuildable parcels.

Once again in 2015, the County is updating the Sewer Service Area Map and we have included areas for consideration where there are currently failing septic systems and areas which are natural extensions from existing infrastructure. We look forward to receiving the appropriate approvals.

Council Minutes: June 13, 2016

Mr. Benneyan said it would be beneficial to all to have a work session because it is difficult to move forward and make investments until Sewer Service area map expansion is approved and all current obligations with SCMUA are weighed. He added that Mountain Creek is confident that they can meet the obligations of 166,000 gallons in early 2020s by combination of projects should the area be expanded. The map does have some distortions as Hamburg Mountain is totally colored in the area but

only a small portion would in fact be of interest for improvements. Mr. Benneyan comments that he is available for the council should they have any further questions on this subject.

Council Member Rizzuto stated this is a proposed expansion, the MUA must go before the NJDEP, the Council is not endorsing a plan just a study. Council Member Murphy described the two areas on the Mountain on the bottom map on display from 2015 that was voted on, is different than the map submitted to the Council on Feb 8, 2016 which is why Council is having a problem approving the study. Council Member Rizzuto commented Council had meeting about sewer contracts and posed questions and added the maps are for potential expansion and only a study and the areas on the Mountain are 2 acres in size not the whole mountain. Council Member Murphy states the engineer will review this expansion to other areas and advise.

Council Minutes: April 10, 2017

Council President Murphy states the Resolution does not contain a map of expansion area, the plan or letter from Sussex County endorsing expansion and feels council should wait until after joint meeting. Council President Murphy asked which MUA approved this resolution as there are many new members and there had not been a discussion on this item with the new members. Council President Murphy requested a copy of the plan and map as well the letter referenced in the resolution. Council President Murphy questioned how the council could vote on something blindly. Council Member Rizzuto stated the Township has been waiting over a year to get this done.

Council Member Ooms stated the approval of this Resolution will allow MUA to go forward and all the information will come back to Council at future date when current that Council will be gone. Council Member Kadish opined the map from February was being used. Council President Murphy stated that is irresponsible as no map was attached to which Council Member Ooms stated the MUA will make up the map. Council Member Kadish stated the Council endorsed a non-plan.

Council Member Kadish expresses nonbelief of resolution passing with no attachments and information. Council Member Wetzal opined Vernon wasted \$10,000 for a financial study for information Vernon already had and waited a year to move forward and asks Mayor Shortway if he is for expansion. Mayor Shortway answers he is for the expansion in certain areas noting that the Remington and Vernick study stated it is not financially feasible to expand in residential areas.

Council President Murphy stated she was abstaining because there was no map or letter or information which was the same as the previous resolution.

Council Member Ooms stated the approval of this Resolution will allow MUA to go forward and all the information will come back to Council at future date when current that Council will be gone. Council Member Kadish opined the map from February was being used. Council President Murphy stated that is irresponsible as no map was attached to which Council Member Ooms stated the MUA will make up the map. Council Member Kadish stated the Council endorsed a non-plan.

MUA Minutes: February 21, 2019

Ceren (MUA Engineer) showed the board the Wastewater Management Plan Map by way of explaining questions raised by the DEP. These questions and comments from the DEP were minor. The changes to

answer the question and comments generated by the DEP have been reflected in this updated map. The map shows buildings not lots. Orange areas are new wastewater management areas. Green are the existing MUA areas. With the Town Center lots there is a habitat issue. DEP said further studies are needed so those lots were taken off the map as they are not material to our objective at this time. The Map showed the golf course lot. This was recommended by the DEP as there are no habitat issues and no flow from this lot. All was submitted to the DEP and hopefully all goes well. There were comments in October, map just resubmitted in February. May not be finalized before the end of the year.

Friday, May 08, 2020 12:03 PM E-Mail Furrey to Mayor
Howard:

I heard back from MM. The original SSA Map submission was April 30th, 2018 by Alice Brees and Ceren Aralp. A revised map based on NJDEP comments was re-submitted in February 2019. It has been over two years that the NJDEP has been reviewing this critical documentation with very little response and movement. I agree with everyone that we need to forge a great relationship with NJDEP to help receive final approval. This is critical to the Township and the MUA to move forward with a sewer system upgrade and expansion.

I will continue to seek out answers from NJDEP and report back our findings.

Please let us know how the VTMUA can help with this process.

MUA Minutes: July 16, 2020

A. Sewer Service Area and the Asset Management Plan

Ms. Aralp informed the board of the conference with NJDEP regarding the sewer service area ("SSA"). The reviewer advised that the MUA needs to update the HUC analysis table and there was no need for a nitrate dilution model. The MUA may have to do a build-out analysis and she hoped the information for the current area and remainder of the township was on file with the land use board. The bigger issue is the habitat map and the NJDEP is suggesting these areas be removed from the sewer service area and the property owners be notified. Ms. Aralp advised this needs further discussion and the area largely encompassed the Legends golf course and Sand Hill Rd. In response to Mr. Furrey, Ms. Aralp explained that the HUC analysis table can be used to update the state's nitrate dilution model. In response to Mr. Furrey, Ms. Bright confirmed she would check with the township engineer regarding the build-out information for Ms., Aralp and would also touch base with Jim McDonald.

From: Ceren Aralp
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 4:25 PM
To: DeMuro, Paul <Paul.DeMuro@dep.nj.gov>; Michael Furrey <mfurrey@vernontwp.com>
Cc: Donelle Bright <dbright@vernontwp.com>
Subject: RE: Vernon WQMP Amendment Review/ Web Teams Meeting/ 07/13/20

Thank you, Paul.

Below is a summary of my notes from our meeting today,

It is my understanding that, due to new NJDEP policy, submission of the amendment triggered review of the existing sewer service area. The Landscaping Program 3.3 shows the sensitive habitat area and NJDEP request and areas that are vacant and is in the sensitive habitat area per Landscaping Program 3.3 must be taken out of the sewer service area. It is my understanding also that if the vacant lot has development plans that can be demonstrated with TWAs or planning approval etc., area can be reviewed again. We have noted that VTMUA will review the available data and bring it to the Town's attention as well. If the said areas are agreed to be removed, VTMUA will submit a new map showing one shapefile with existing and proposed sewer service area and label it as "Proposed SSA" with the latest submission date.