

Emergency Meeting • Chatham Community Center • 8:30 a.m Friday, January 22
Learn the TRUTH About Chatham's Big Dig Sewer Project:

110 Miles of Entrenched Sewer Pipe

20 Years of Constant Digging, Road Blocks, Traffic Snarls

80 Pumping Stations

No Impact on Nitrogen for 23 Years

\$500 Million Cost to Chatham Property Taxpayers!

How Much Do You Really Know About Chatham's Giant Sewer Project?

Town officials in Chatham are patting themselves on the back for obtaining \$40 million in federal grants and low-interest loans to launch the biggest and most costly municipal project in Town history — a town-wide centralized sewer system.

But do you really know what this enormous project will truly cost you — as a taxpayer, resident and home owner?

Have you thought what living in Chatham will be like for the next twenty years or more, as huge trenches are dug for 110 miles of sewer pipe, our main roads and stores are blocked off to traffic, and up to 80 sewer pumping stations are installed in our neighborhoods?

Like everyone in Chatham, we want to curtail the nitrogen flows that harm our coastal waters. But Town officials insist their costly centralized town-wide sewer plan is the only way to go. They say it's all been approved by voters. They insist the time for debate has passed, and the matter is closed.

We disagree.

And we urge you to read on to learn about the true local impact and potential \$500 million cost of Chatham's Big Dig. We further urge you to attend an emergency citizens meeting on Friday, January 22 (8:30 a.m.) to join with concerned citizens before digging begins next month.

Your Cost in New Property Taxes: Huge!

Town officials projected in 2007 a total sewer construction cost of \$300 million — nearly 10 times more than our current Town operating budget. ⁽¹⁾ Yet one Town official says the average home owner's property tax bill will increase by only \$175 per year. ⁽²⁾ Another Town estimate projects a high-end per-property tax hike of \$276 per year. ⁽³⁾

This can't be true. A \$175 tax increase would deliver only \$26 million over twenty years. Even a \$276 tax increase produces just \$41 million. Most alarming, that obsolete \$300 million project quote utterly fails to include any bond financing or interest costs, inflation, or possible construction and maintenance cost increases over twenty years.

Fact is, Town officials have not been forthcoming with any financial projections showing the entire true cost to taxpayers over the twenty-year construction phase or debt service during the 50-year bonding period.

But using available sources, we've done our own calculations. Our most conservative independent financial estimate indicates the total cost, including financing, bond maturity and inflation costs, will be a staggering \$501,000,000.

That's right — HALF A BILLION DOLLARS!

For the average Chatham homeowner on the sewer line, this means a likely tax hike of \$2,000 per year! Even if your home is not connected, you'll still pay for the sewer.

Here's our projected comparison of what the owner of the average Chatham property will pay in new taxes to cover the half-billion cost of a town-wide sewer:

CCT PROJECTED SEWER TAX INCREASE	
Average Property Value:	\$840,000
Tax Increase Per Sewered Home:	
\$2,200 Per Year x 20 Years:	\$ 44,020
Tax Increase for Non-sewered Home:	
\$1,130 Per Year x 20 Years:	\$ 22,600

Sewer Hook-up Cost Per Home: Up to \$13,000+ From Your Pocket

Big new property taxes are just the beginning — because that huge increase in your property taxes won't cover your out-of-pocket expense to connect your home to Chatham's sewer system, as required by law.

The Town tells us the estimated cost to hook up will average \$6,500 per house. ⁽¹⁾ But if you live on a hill or a hollow, or your home is more than 75 feet back from a road, you could pay \$13,000 or more.

About 1,200 residents may be forced to pay thousands to buy and install costly grinder pumps in basements or outdoors. You may have to pay thousands more to have your septic tank removed or collapsed. Plus all the post-digging costs to replace trees, shrubs and re-landscape your property will come from your pocket.



Roadblocks and detours will become a way of life in Chatham for 20 years, hurting Chatham's economy.

The Impact on Chatham's Quality of Life

Proponents of this town-wide sewer insist we must begin this project immediately to halt nitrogen loading and protect Chatham's seashore environment. Yet there is no deadline or court order forcing us to start immediately. Studies in Harwich have just begun. And even Stearns and Wheler (the Town's engineering consultant) admits the town-wide sewer won't begin to reduce nitrogen levels in our coastal waters for 23 years! ⁽⁴⁾

What's more, you've heard nothing from Town officials about the impact on our economy or the quality of our daily lives that constant construction will cause for the next twenty years or more.

Starting next month, and for the next two years, enormous trenches — 6 to 12 feet wide and 12 to 20 feet deep — will be dug along Route 28 from Sam Ryder Road to the Main Street village. And that's just the beginning.

The entire sewer system will require 110 miles of entrenched sewer piping to reach neighborhoods in every section of Chatham. Over time, 80 sewer pumping stations will be installed in neighborhoods all over town, changing the look and character of Chatham forever.

Major roads will be blocked frequently, worsening our traffic problems and threatening Chatham's tourist economy. Hotels, motels, and home rentals may suffer along with shops, galleries and restaurants when summer visitors avoid the constant 20-year construction.



Starting next month, digging begins on the first of 110 miles of sewer pipe trenches for Chatham's Big Dig.

Did We Vote For The Entire Sewer Project at the 2009 Town Meeting? NO!

Debate over the town-wide sewer proposal was originally envisioned for the 2010 Town Meeting. Then Chatham officials learned last year their sewer project might qualify for millions in federal "stimulus funds" if it were presented as "shovel-ready" in 2009. So, they fast-tracked a warrant requesting voters to approve just \$60 million in sewer bonds at the May 2009 Town Meeting. In the brief flyer mailed to property owners just days before Town Meeting, the obsolete \$300 million cost estimate is mentioned only once.

Voters at the 2009 Town Meeting were not told the total true cost of the entire proposed system, which we project at a minimum of \$501,000,000. In an untallied voice vote, only about 500 of Chatham's 6,500 year-round residents voted in favor of the \$60 million bond. Despite what some Town officials will tell you ...

There has been NO TOWN MEETING VOTE or referendum on the entire scope and true 20-year construction cost and debt service of Chatham's sewer project.

There has been NO TOWN MEETING VOTE or referendum to place this huge new tax burden on Chatham property owners.

There has been NO public forum or Board of Selectmen discussion on the economic impact that constant construction will have on Chatham businesses or our quality of life for the next twenty years.

Time to Take Back Chatham. For Us.

We think it is unfair and irresponsible for our Town officials to ignore citizens who question the need and expense of a 110-mile town-wide sewer system or belittle those who urge further study of cheaper alternatives. We are dismayed the Town makes it so difficult for citizens to access the facts and data on the biggest and most costly public works project in Chatham history. We believe elected Town officials should be first — not last — to schedule a debate at the 2010 Town Meeting on the merits and true total cost of a project that may require HALF A BILLION DOLLARS from Chatham property taxpayers.

If you agree ... if you're now alarmed by the facts revealed here ... then we urge you to take action now in two ways:

1. Phone or email each member of the Board of Selectmen to tell them you're concerned about this project:

- Ronald J. Bergstrom: ronbergstrom@comcast.net
- Leonard M. Sussman: len@crowspound.com
- Florence Seldin: florencecape@comcast.net
- Sean D. Summers: srsummer@comcast.net
- David R. Whitcomb: davidwhitcomb@comcast.net

2. Then, please attend an emergency meeting hosted by Chatham Concerned Taxpayers at 8:30 a.m. this Friday, January 22, at the Chatham Community Center.

It's your town. It's your money. Come learn more of the startling facts we've unearthed about the \$500 million, 110-mile sewer plan. This is your chance to do something about the Chatham Big Dig. Contact us now at:

email: ChathamCT@ChathamCT.org
web: www.chathamct.org

Chatham Concerned Taxpayers

⁽¹⁾ May 2009 CWMP Planning Project Fact Sheet, Page 2
⁽²⁾ Dr. Robert Duncanson, Cape Cod Times, December 7, 2009
⁽³⁾ May 2009 CWMP Planning Project Fact Sheet, Page 3
⁽⁴⁾ Executive Summary CWMP/DEIR, Page ES-16