

Stony Creek Crossing Wastewater (sewage) Treatment Plant Controversial

The proposed Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), that many would call a sewage treatment plant raised many questions from residents and the Commissioners. Lombardo has an NPDES permit granted by the State of Michigan MDEQ. The township has no say in granting or denying this permit. State Law cuts us out. Planning Commissioner George Platz asked Lombardo to find some examples of this actual design and membrane technology working in real life.

Lombardo Homes seeks preliminary approval to build this development. After about 2-1/2 hours of presentation, public hearing, questions and discussion, Planning Commissioners voted to tell them to come back with some detailed answers and drawings about how they decided that 143 lots are allowed by our Zoning Ordinance. According to residents Kathy Thomas and Richard Borghi who live adjacent to this 260 acres, Lombardo requested 115 lots in a previous rejected submission. When no one from Lombardo recalled where the 115 number came from, and some suggested it may be figment of residents' imagination, Mr. Borghi pulled a document from his files to prove it.

This WWTP, is proposed to be run by a licensed operator and will be totally the financial responsibility of Lombardo and then eventually the HOA. That is, until someone changes the state law to stick taxpayers with any problems. It would release 45,000 – 60,000 gallons per day into the swampy area that forms the headwaters of the West Branch of Stony Creek. Lombardo said this is about 4 garden hoses running 24/7. I verified this with my hose, 5 gallon pail, stop watch and calculator. The garden hose water flow has to be turned up almost to maximum flow. This poorly drained area is either dry or flooded many times during the year.

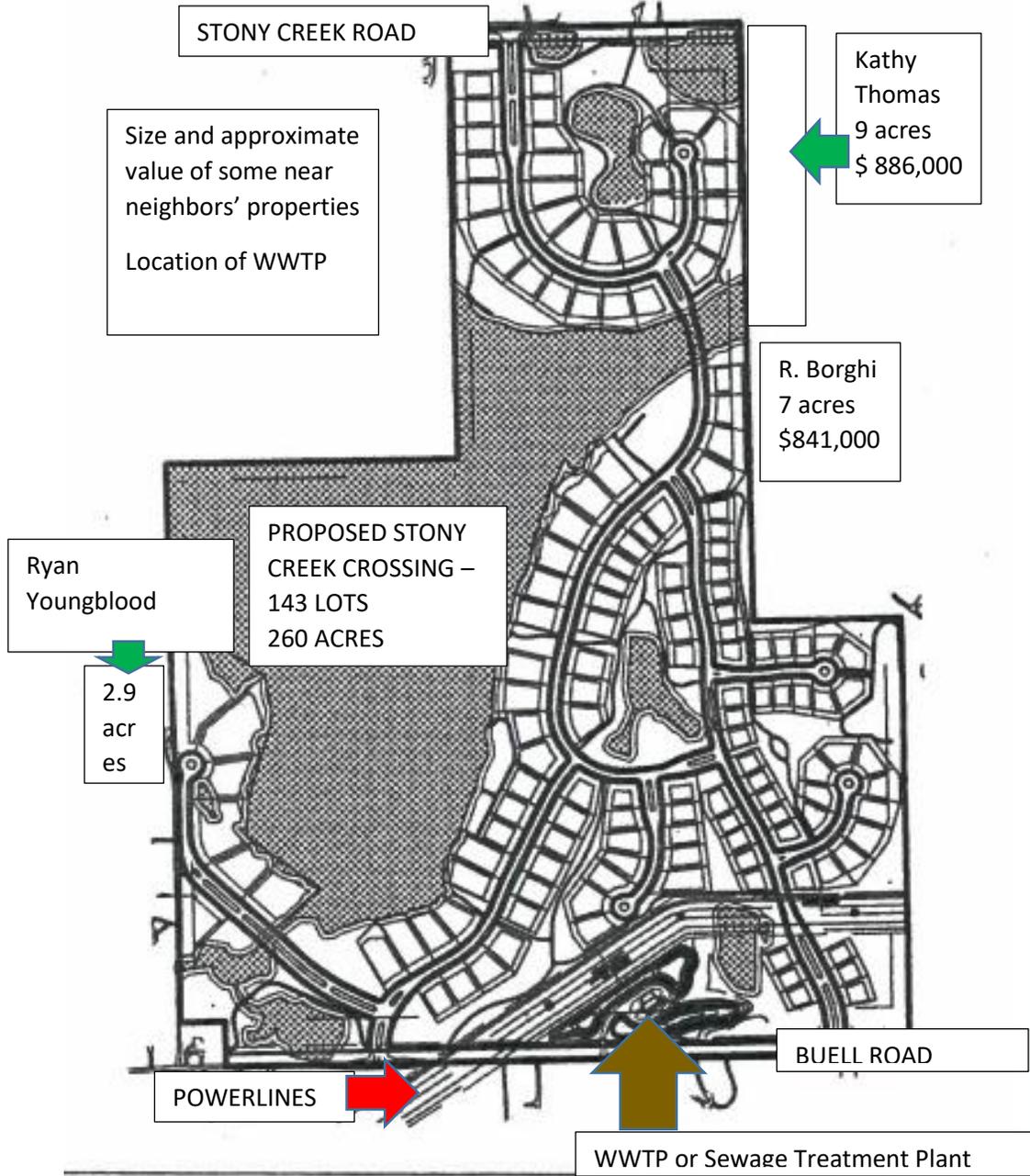
Residents had these ideas

- Don't do it at all.
- Run the effluent, not the raw sewage, from the WWTP in sewer lines under Buell road into the sanitary sewer servicing Oakland Hunt (possible?)
- Have a complete second back-up WWTP plant in case of catastrophic failure

Former Township Treasurer Marc Edwards told me he has heard of a case of WWTP equipment failure costing \$30,000 per homeowner to correct. That figure makes sense. Lombardo says the initial cost of the WWTP is \$3,500,000, "baked into" the sales price. That would be approximately \$25,000 per lot in case of 143 lots and \$30,500 in case of 115.

Poor drainage and seasonal flooding of the site currently impacts neighbors whose property abuts or is just downstream. Lombardo felt that the seven retention ponds would actually improve the situation for neighbors. Township Planning Coordinator Don Mende explained that our engineer Matt Hocking of PEA always scrutinizes drainage engineering closely to make sure proper sizes of retention/detention ponds are built to prevent flooding.

I was impressed with how Planning Commission Chairperson Gary Kwapis ran the meeting. He took pains to explain what is going on and to answer questions, even bending public comment rules to allow resident Richard Borghi to answer questions raised about lots in 2015 and the WWTP permit renewal from documents in the files he brought with him.



Complete site engineering drawings can be seen by asking at the Building window at Township Hall. Louise Crane or another of our outstanding Township Hall employees will almost fight each other to be first to help you if you show up at any of the three windows, Building, Clerk, Treasurer.

Below is an existing WWTP of different type at Wynstone (east of North Rochester Road North of Predmore). This discharges the treated water to a sand bed like a giant septic tank. There is no discharge to a stream.



My earlier articles of February 28th and March 1st can also be seen by going to our website and scrolling down to these titles.

<https://oaklandtownshipsentinel.com/>

New 143 Home Development proposed on 254 Acres on West Buell Rd by the power lines – “Stony Creek Crossing” by Lombardo and Cranbrook Homes (2/28/20)

Letter to Township Planning Coordinator Re: Stony Creek Crossing MDEQ Wastewater Treatment Permit (3/1/20)

Bob Yager – Editor – Oakland Township Sentinel, 3-5-2020