

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to ask you to make two changes to the Potomac Sub-region portion of the 10-year water and sewer plan that you will be considering this summer:

1. Remove the requirement for a DEP-verified septic failure before a septic survey can take place.
2. Resume the North Potomac Highlands Septic Survey that was stopped by Council action, even though it started well before the requirement for a verified failure was imposed.

In 2015, I and many of my neighbors in Potomac Highlands testified before the County Council about the serious concerns we had with the aging septic systems in our community. In response to those concerns the Council created the ability for residents to request septic surveys and encouraged us to have our concerns investigated by the county. In the summer of 2017, I and a group of neighbors in Potomac Highlands trusted the Council and the survey process it created. We wrote letters publicly disclosing and documenting our concerns with the performance of our septic systems and our concerns about the lack of suitable replacement options due to the nature of our area.

In response, the county created the North Potomac Highlands Septic Survey to investigate the situation. On 10 January 2018 Mr. Soukup held a public meeting and briefed the county's preliminary findings that the septic systems in our area were all aging pre-1975 systems and that all the properties in our study area were severely constrained for septic replacement.

The North Potomac Highlands Septic Survey was in the final stages but was halted because new hurdles were added to the process requiring a documented failure of a septic system to complete the survey. This left the members of our survey group in the worst possible situation, having publicly disclosed problems and concerns with our properties, having had those concerns publicly verified by the county in their preliminary findings, and leaving us with no means to address or remedy the situation.

I ask that the North Potomac Highlands Septic Survey be resumed under the rules that existed when it was started so that the county can release its final findings which will either clear the cloud the process has currently placed on properties or conclusively validate our concerns and provide us a means to remedy the issue.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brandon Beach