

## **H-5 WET WEATHER PUMP STATION ADDITIONAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

February 23, 2015

### **Q. Why is the H-5 pump station so important?**

The wet weather pump is both an essential component of our long term Rebuild by Design flood solution to protect against the next Sandy-type storm and also an essential component to protect our City from the high tide and heavy rain flood events that occur in the Northwest H-5 drainage area multiple times every year. As a part of an overall strategy to minimize wet weather flooding in the City, the H-5 pump station will address the chronic flooding in the ShopRite and surrounding neighborhoods. Now that the H-1 pump station is in place, serving the Southwestern neighborhoods, the ShopRite neighborhood is the area of the City that floods the most severely and most often.

Even before Hurricane Irene and Super Storm Sandy, Hoboken suffered from severe flooding problems, particularly in the western side of the City. Sandy flooded 80 percent of Hoboken. The flooding that plagues the Northwestern part of our City on a more regular basis impacts many thousands of Hoboken residents, creating an enormous public safety problem as well as a quality of life and financial problem for residents, businesses and the City itself. Also, the potential to flood electrical substations and North Hudson Sewerage Authority's facilities puts the entire City, and even the region, at risk.

### **Q. Why was the 11<sup>th</sup> Street location chosen for the pump?**

NHSA considered possible alternatives but concluded that this was the only viable location due to engineering, financial and environmental constraints. First, in order to alleviate the flooding in the Northwestern neighborhoods around ShopRite, the pump station had to be sited along the existing 11<sup>th</sup> Street outfall. Second, because of environmental regulations, the pump station had to be sited east of the existing underground solids/floatable facility at the intersection of 11<sup>th</sup> and Hudson Streets. Within these confines, a location under Maxwell Place Park was considered but would have cost an estimated \$5 to \$10 million dollars more because it would have required building an entirely new outfall. It was also determined that this likely would not have been approved by the State because of a policy goal to reduce the number of outfalls, not to increase them. In addition, building under the park would have required approval from the State Historic Preservation Board which would have delayed the project for at least another year, even assuming the environmental approvals could be obtained. Again, based on engineering, financial and regulatory issues, the current location under 11<sup>th</sup> Street was determined to be the only viable location.

### **Q. Why is this road owned by Maxwell Place and not the City? Why is an easement necessary for the construction of the pump under the roadway?**

Under a development agreement that permitted Maxwell Place to be built, the roads are private and an easement is supposed to be provided for public access after the buildings are all built out. From a legal standpoint, title technically rests with Toll Brothers. This unusual legal structure provides Toll Brothers/Maxwell Place with a highly unusual property right in a street that functions as a public roadway. This structure is the reason why an easement is necessary for the pump to be installed under what functions as a public roadway.

**Q. Will the Maxwell Place Condo Board be paid for the easement?**

Maxwell Place will be paid the fair market value of the easement. NHSA has obtained an appraisal for the easement valued at \$523,000 and that amount has been deposited with the court as a purchase price for the easement from Maxwell. The final purchase price is under negotiation under rules governing the eminent domain process. NHSA is bearing the full cost of the easement.

**Q. Will the Maxwell Place HOA be responsible for environmental costs?**

The HOA would only be responsible for environmental costs if, during the course of construction, new contaminants are discovered that were not found and certified by the NJDEP when the site was originally remediated. The original contaminants are listed in the NJDEP "No Further Action" letter. It is not anticipated that this will occur. In the unlikely event that new contaminants were discovered, the clean-up costs would be deducted from the easement payment. All environmental costs related to the original contaminants are covered in the construction costs.

**Q. What will the H-5 pump station do for Maxwell Place residents?**

Maxwell Place residents are lucky that their building is on high ground and does not flood. In reality, however, every Hoboken resident is in some way affected by the flooding. Along with having a responsibility to each other, the cost of dealing with the flood events every single time they occur is borne by all of Hoboken's citizens.

Furthermore, since the H-5 pump station is also an integral part of the Rebuild by Design flood solution, it will protect the PSE&G electrical substation, located in the Northwest area, which powers Maxwell Place. During Sandy, that power station was flooded and Maxwell Place lost electricity. Also, some Maxwell Place residents will soon be included in the flood zone and will also have to pay for flood insurance. By implementing our City's comprehensive flood plan, which includes the H-5 pump, we can all be protected from the flooding and the skyrocketing flood insurance costs.

**Q. Are there environmental concerns related to the construction of the pump?**

The NJDEP has very strict standards for construction on previously capped sites, and the NHSA is experienced in this type of construction. All construction will be subject to the oversight of the Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) who represents the NJDEP and with whom NHSA will coordinate construction activity. Based upon the original Site Remediation Plan and Vapor Intrusion Guidance Documents approved by the NJDEP, there is no reason to anticipate any environmental problems related to the construction. Further, the NJDEP does not require air quality monitoring for this construction. Despite this, however, the NHSA and the City have agreed to go beyond NJDEP requirements and have entered into a shared service agreement to ensure that air quality monitoring is conducted throughout the construction process.

**Q. Will the pump be visible after it is built?**

The pump itself will be under the street and not visible. The only visible elements of the pump station will be two cooling condensers (approximately 36" high, 36" long, 14" depth) and one vent pipe (approximately 42" high). These will be located on the island east of Hudson on 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Under the shared service agreement with the City, NHSA is required to work with the community to landscape around the condenser units and vent pipe to minimize visibility.

**Q. Will there be odors from the pump station?**

No. There are no open exits for air from the combined sewer or pump to escape. The vent pipe vents air only for the two cooling units. Exhaust from the below grade facility will be discharged back into the CSO outfall pipe when the pump is operating.

**Q. Doesn't the NHSA's own report (Emnet, December 2013) contradict the assertion that no other sites were available for the H-5 pump station?**

On the contrary, the report's findings were an important preliminary step towards the decision to construct the H-5 pump station at its current site. The 2013 Emnet study was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the H-1 pump station and provide preliminary options for dealing with severe flooding in the H-5 drainage area. The study presented four preliminary options, three of which included the H-5 pump station. The fourth option, which included the construction of a conveyance sewer the length of the city and major upgrades to the H-1 pump station, was deemed not viable for reasons of constructability, effectiveness and excessive cost (\$40 - \$50 million). The Authority pursued the option of building the H-5 pump station. In order to impact the worst flooding in the H-5 drainage area, the pump had to be sited along the 11<sup>th</sup> Street outfall, east of the underground solids/floatable facility at 11<sup>th</sup> and Hudson. The Emnet report specifically stated that it was not recommending locations or sites for pump stations (page 29, Figure 16) and that all options had to be subsequently reviewed for constructability (page 32). Taking constructability (cost and effectiveness) into consideration, the Authority engineers determined that the H-5 pump station along 11<sup>th</sup> Street was the only viable option to deal with the flooding in the H-5 drainage basin.