

## History of Marlborough Municipal Water System

In 1995, under the leadership of First Selectman Howard Dean, the Marlborough Board of Selectmen and the Marlborough Planning Commission began working on a plan to improve the appearance and spur economic growth in the Marlborough Town Center. The early plans called for the development of infrastructure (sidewalks, sewer & water), creation of a Town Green, and growing the commercial base of the Town Center.

The development of a Town Center Water system started in 1999, with the discussions spurred on by the water needs for the upcoming School Renovation Project and the construction of the Senior Center. Then in 2000, in cooperation with the State Department of Public Health, the Town developed a plan to create the Marlborough Municipal Water System.

In 1999, the State Department of Health and State Department of Utilities Commission convened the Southeast Connecticut Water Utility Control Committee to assign Exclusive Service Area (ESA) boundaries for providing potable drinking water. The outcome of this process in 2003 was the Town had the right to service its own properties, and Connecticut Water Company had the ESA for the remainder of the Marlborough.

In 2002, the Town met with Eastern Connecticut Water Company to discuss expanding the water system in a public/private partnership. The cost to expand the system and develop new water sources for the immediate Town Center and Business Park area was estimated at \$2.6 million at that time. Then in 2006, the Town met with Birmingham Utilities, who had purchased Eastern Connecticut Water Company, to discuss the expanding the water system. The cost to expand the system and develop new water sources was then estimated at \$6.2 million for a plan that expanded the water system beyond the immediate Town Center area.

From 2002 through 2005, through the School Renovation Project and the Senior Center project, the Town constructed a water pump house and developed three new water sources to service the overall system.

In 2007, the first leg of the water mains were constructed to make the connection of the three municipal buildings on School Drive; the School, Senior Center, and Library, with a plan to later expand into the Town Center. This project was funded through a \$99,000 payment from CT DOT and \$67,000 in Town funds.

In 2011, the Town met with Aquarion Water Company, Connecticut Water Company, and the State Department of Health Drinking Water Section staff to formulate a private/public partnership to expand the water system in the Town Center and to service the Birchwood Water System (Roberts & Sherwood Roads).

In June 2012, the Town met with Connecticut Water Company (CWC) to discuss expanding the water system in a public/private partnership. The Town and CWC agreed to enter a partnership with the Town applying for a \$500,000 grant to expand the water mains, and CWC making a contribution of \$300,000 to develop new water sources. The second leg of the water mains were constructed going from School Drive to South Main Street to East Hampton Road (Village Green Plaza). During the construction of this phase CWC made a decision to opt out of the partnership after making their improvements and to transfer the ESA to the Town.

In 2015, The Town applied for another \$500,000 grant, used to construct an additional water storage tank at the pump house, and to construct additional water mains to complete the loop to School Drive from East Hampton Road, and extend the water main onto Independence Drive and Jones Hollow Road.

In late 2016, the Town began meeting with Aquarion Water Company to discuss transferring the operation and ownership of the Marlborough Municipal Water System to Aquarion Water Company. In 2017, the Town and Aquarion agreed to an Operation & Maintenance Agreement and transferred the daily operations of the system from the Town to Aquarion, while talks continued on the transfer of the whole system.

In late April 2019, The Town and Aquarion Water Company reached a tentative agreement to transfer the Marlborough Municipal Water System, pending Town Meeting and State approvals. The transfer of the water system will relieve the Town of all the liabilities of owning and operating a public water system, and from all future capital expenditures. As an example, the Town has planned and budgeted for \$250,000 of Capital expenditures over the next two years to develop new water sources and to make other required improvements to the water system. Upon approval of this sale by Town Meeting, we will no longer need to fund those improvements or future development.

Since the inception of this project, and throughout the past 24 years of planning, development, and construction of the Town Center Water System, it was our goal to eventually find a suitable water company to take over the ownership and operation of the system. During the past three years, our relationship with Aquarion Water Company has strengthened, and they have proven to be a committed community partner to the Town. We are confident that Aquarion Water Company is the right company to own and operate the system, and that now is the right time to sell the system and transfer the responsibilities.

Over the next couple of weeks we will be meeting with several Boards and Commissions to answer questions and seek their input as we continue to move forward towards the sale of this system, as long planned. There will be opportunities for residents to provide their input, as well, and all interested residents are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings as we head to a Town Meeting.

Twenty-four years and seven administrations. Thank you to everyone who helped get us to this exciting moment!