November 10, 2018

Harold Roberts

Cherry Hills North Metropolitan District Board

Harold –

Thanks for meeting yesterday to talk about Cherry Hills North undertaking sump pump inspections. We did not reach any conclusions, so the intent of this letter is not to recognize an agreement but to reiterate the hope of Mansfield Heights that your Board will consider inspections when you are not burdened by other major obligations, like slip-lining existing collector lines, and when the Board may see value in helping to reduce inflow into the outfall line that could find its way into basements downstream.

Considering the experience of Mansfield Heights and Hillcrest in implementing inspections, both districts offered to conduct an on-site inspection of each home at no added expense to homeowners. The cost to Mansfield was approximately $100/home, and we encountered limited resistance to the initiative. Hillcrest had mild to significant push-back from as many as 10% of its homeowners. An option you might consider for reluctant homeowners would be to allow them to hire their own inspectors to conduct a similar review. You might offer to reimburse them (for example, not to exceed $100) for an inspection that results in a letter indicting that no sump pump was found or that an illegal sump pump was found and was disconnected or rerouted to daylight.

Both Mansfield and Hillcrest had in place Rules and Regulations that allowed us to enforce our right to inspect and to initiate fines against homeowners who refused entry. Mansfield had only to mention fines to achieve compliance, while Hillcrest apparently exacted fines on some residents. I am reluctant to report that Hillcrest found it necessary to accept an affidavit from its most recalcitrant residents swearing that they had no illegal connection. The risk of this response was an exemption of some homeowners from any inspection, allowing possible illegal connections to remain undetected.

Mansfield Heights and Hillcrest found that approximately 5% of residents in each District had illegal connections. This led to at least 18 sump pumps being disconnected. Because Cherry Hills North may have a similar percentage, we hope that inspections will lead to more pumps being disconnected and less inflow during a time of ground saturation.

You mentioned that your Board may be unconvinced of the level of inflow created by sump pumps and uncomfortable mandating inspections, particularly if your current regulations do not allow that right. Mansfield feels a particular urgency because we are the likely recipients of another surcharge. The studies we conducted seem to point to the likelihood that sump pumps are creating high inflow into the outfall line at the same time that the line is suffering from high groundwater and unprecedented infiltration. Whether our study convinces your Board of this exact sequence may not be as important as asking you to accept that possibility and requesting your participation toward a reasonable solution.

Thanks again for the conversation, and please keep us advised of any further consideration Cherry Hills North gives to inspections.

Dick Fullerton