

**Agenda Item Number:**

**ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH  
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

**Meeting Date: April 28, 2021**

**Agenda Item Subject: Gaines Chapel Road Study**

**Attachment(s): PPT Presentation**

**Staff or Board Member Reporting:**

**Purpose:**     \_\_\_ Action  
              \_\_\_ X Information only  
              \_\_\_ Information with possible action

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**Summary Information:**

Kojo Minta, UNCG graduate student, will present a study on the Gaines Chapel community.

A study model was utilized to diagnose the inequities experienced by Gaines Chapel residents still relying on well and septic systems. Out of the 18 households surveyed, 13 (about two-thirds) would consider having municipal sewer service. Of these 13 households, six of them mentioned the cost of the service being a barrier. All of the 51 properties in the area use an onsite wastewater system and less than 10 homes continue to use private water wells instead of the municipal Orange-Alamance community water supply. Not all of the properties are occupied. The study detailed the current state of septic systems and identified any wells that needed abandonment in Gaines Chapel.

The data supports any future efforts to connect these homes to integrate municipal sewer to the neighborhood while empowering owners who prefer septic systems.

**Recommended Action:**   \_\_\_ Approve  
                                  \_\_\_ Approve & forward to Board of Commissioners for action  
                                  \_\_\_ Approve & forward to \_\_\_\_\_  
                                  \_\_\_ X Accept as information  
                                  \_\_\_ Revise & schedule for future action  
                                  \_\_\_ Other (detail):

# Gaines Chapel Community

Municipal Sewer Provisions and Policy Dissemination



# Gaines Chapel Hill (GCR) Background

- About 50 properties between two highways
- Most homes served by Orange-Alamance Water
- Presence of improperly abandoned wells
- Orange-Alamance Sewer did not expand lines through Gaines Chapel
- Poor soil below the railroad tracks
- **Disparity** in sewage service (**Environmental Injustice**)



# Goals/Objectives

1. Determine need for sewer lines through community
  - Create a logic model of the current sewage resources and barriers
  - Review policies that contribute to environmental injustice
  - Collect qualitative data from GCR septic tank-owners
2. Identify wells that need to be properly abandoned
  - Collect qualitative data from GCR properties

# Collection Methods

- Seven question survey conducted on 2/17, 2/24, 3/12
  - Binary and open ended questions
  - Property records updated
  - System(s) condition recorded
- Mailed questionnaires prepared for unavailable respondents
- Recorded manually and recorded digitally in spreadsheet



# Analysis

- 67 percent of residents are interested in municipal sewer; 50% find cost of service as an **economic barrier**
- Couple of residents who would like to remain on septic tank
- 33 percent of residents did not know the last time they pumped their tank/ 10 years has elapsed
- Couple of wells need to be abandoned properly



# Relevant Policies

- Efland Sewer Resolution (2011)
  - Connection and stub-out service line fees
- Orange County Groundwater Protection Rules (2009)
  - “Wells contaminated with fecal coliform shall not be approved for rental use and shall be repaired or abandoned.”
  - “Any well that acts as a source or channel of contamination shall be repaired or permanently abandoned within 30 days of receipt of notice from the OCHD.”
- Orange County Sewer Rate Structure (2016)
  - \$13.39 as base; 2,000 gallon minimum per month



# Recommendations

- Base rate of \$13.12; 2,000 gallon minimum per month
- Collaborate with community organizations for education outreach
- Financial assistance disseminated to low-income stakeholders



# Summary

- Outcomes of program strategies
  - Address improperly abandoned wells to reduce environmental health risks
  - Make sewer service equitable for low income residents
  - Empower GC through community partnership and health education

