

The Daily Item

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LYNN RESIDENTS VOICE CONCERNS ABOUT KING'S BEACH TO LWSC

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LYNN — More than 50 residents showed up to City Hall to address their concerns with the bacteria levels in Kings Beach.

Lynn City Council President Darren Cyr held a neighborhood meeting in the Council Chambers Tuesday night to address the ongoing concerns. He told Lynners that, according to the Lynn Water and Sewer Commission, the issues revolve around the combined drainage from Swampscott and Lynn, confined in an old, decrepit pipe, that makes its way into Stacey Brook and oozes onto the beach.

The higher levels of bacteria tend to happen after large amounts of rainfall occur in a short period of time, said Cyr, citing what the LWSC had told him.

"After it rains, the stormwater runs off from Lynn and Swampscott," said Cyr. "That's 740 acres of land draining into one system, which includes overflows of stormwater with pesticides from people's front lawns, animal feces from their backyards, and waterfowl ... "I'm being told, in their (LWSC) opinion, that there are no resident or business sewer lines feeding into that."

Last year there were four total occurrences where the wastewater volume in the city's combined sewer

system exceeded its capacity, which forced drainage into the brook and then into the ocean, said Cyr. Seven months into 2019, and there have already been five of those occurrences, he said.

Many residents spoke up at the meeting and identified the issue as raw sewage going into the water. Cyr told them that, according to the LWSC, the bacteria level counts must be over 24,000 in order to be raw sewage. The most recent count levels that were shown to Cyr, he said, were typically in the mid-100s range, and the highest one he saw was 2,500.

Representatives from Friends of Lynn & Nahant Beach and Save the Harbor/Save the Bay each got up to the podium and told them they conducted their own bacteria counts and they were much higher than the LWSC has stated.

"We can agree and we can disagree on the data but I am telling you that's what has been told to me by our engineers over at the commission," said Cyr.

Residents also addressed the lack of understandable signage advising swimmers not to go in the water, that officials from Swampscott should be involved in these conversations, and a few mentioned their child or pet

getting sick just a day after going into the Kings Beach water. Cyr told them he has been working with the state Department of Conservation & Recreation to get better, and more universal, signage.

"This is not just about public health," said Bruce Berman, of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay. "This is also about letting these residents be able to enjoy their own beach."

Extending the drainage pipe out to the harbor is the safest and quickest way to start the process of fixing the problem, said Cyr. But, state permitting for it will take three to five years and cost \$1,000 a foot, totaling nearly \$4 million split between Lynn and Swampscott, he said.

Many residents asked Cyr what they could do to help. He suggested writing letters to Governor Charlie Baker's office as well as the offices of state and city officials.

"We aren't going to solve this problem where the pipe stands right now," said Cyr. "This is our first public meeting about this issue. We're looking to make the beach as healthy as we can."

A second neighborhood meeting on the issue will be held at 6 p.m. on Aug. 20 in the same chambers at City Hall.