

# East Lyme lacks sewage capacity for development

By **Kimberly Drelich**

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## Commission says Oswegatchie Hills needs too much

**East Lyme** - The Water and Sewer Commission unanimously determined Tuesday that the town does not have adequate sewage capacity necessary to meet the amount Landmark Development Group and Jarvis of Cheshire requested to develop housing in the Oswegatchie Hills.

The companies had sought confirmation of a sewage disposal capacity of 118,000 gallons of flow per day for a proposed housing development, which would include some units of affordable housing, on a 236-acre parcel of land in the hills.

The commission determined that the requested capacity represented "a disproportionately large allocation of the Town's remaining sewage treatment capacity," according to a resolution passed at Tuesday's meeting.

In addition, the resolution stated that less than 60 percent of the applicant's Oswegatchie Hills property is in a designated sewer district. Other properties in sewer districts have not yet been connected to sewers, though the town has already levied assessments on them, it stated.

The town's available sewage capacity is between 130,000 and 225,000 gallons per day, depending on how the flow is measured. If the flow is measured based on average daily flows, the town has 130,000 gallons per day of sewer capacity available. If measured based on the highest average of daily flows per month, the town has 225,000 gallons per day available, according to a Weston & Sampson sewer capacity evaluation table.

The gallons per day requested for the Oswegatchie Hills development represent either 52 percent or 90 percent of the town's remaining sewage capacity, depending on how the capacity is measured, according to the resolution passed.

Developer Glenn Russo had applied several times for more than a decade to develop housing on Oswegatchie Hills. The hills along Niantic River are also home to a 420-acre nature preserve that the town operates with the nonprofit organization, The Friends of the Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve.

The determination of sewage capacity for the Oswegatchie Hills development came before the commission after several public hearings this year. In June, Landmark Development

Group and Jarvis of Cheshire applied for confirmation that the town's sewer system had adequate capacity for the development.

In previous public hearings, Landmark and the commission disagreed with the town's determination of sewer capacity.

Meanwhile, the town's Zoning Commission revised its zoning regulations governing affordable housing last week in light of a 2011 state Superior Court ruling. The commission had denied parts of a 2005 application to develop housing in the hills, but the developer had appealed the decision in court.