

Seeking A Pipeline To Savings

Officials want to replace town water main while MWRA work is in progress.

Milton officials have proposed combining water-main replacement projects to save the town \$500,000.

State Rep. Walter Timilty, D- Milton, and Selectmen chairman John Shields met with House Speaker Robert DeLeo to seek his support for the plan, which would include replacing a nearly century-old town water main.

"It's the quintessential killing of two birds with one stone," Timilty said.

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority is planning to begin work this fall on the second phase of its "Southern Spine" project, which is aimed at increasing the water supply in many Greater Boston communities, including Milton.

Much of the first-phase work was done in Quincy, along with a portion on Granite Avenue in Milton. The second phase will continue down Granite Avenue and into Boston.

The MWRA work near Adams Street will involve the excavation, removal and replacement of two 24-inch water mains. Complicating the work is the presence of a 10-inch town water main, which is made of cast iron and was installed in 1912. Milton public works officials have said the town main is weak and sensitive to disturbance, and they worry that the nearby excavation may cause serious damage.



Timilty and Shields have proposed replacing the town main while the MWRA work is underway.

Doing both projects simultaneously, rather than one at a time, would save the town an estimated \$500,000.

"It only makes sense, particularly given the current economic climate, to try to limit spending any way possible," said Timilty, a member of the budget-writing House Ways and Means Committee.

"In this case, we have one big project that will improve water distribution in the region, and a smaller one to make an upgrade that is long overdue," the Milton Democrat said. "We figure while the ground is still broken by the MWRA, there is no better time to replace the old water main than now."

But how to finance the estimated \$1.3 million town project has not been resolved. The MWRA has offered \$188,000 to replace 1,000 feet of the municipal water main in areas the agency feels would be "directly affected" by the project.

Timilty, said critics of the plan, including the town's public works department, feel that only replacing hose 1,000 feet could cause breaks in the original structure.

The town has \$675,000 in an open account for water-main replacement; coupled with the MWRA offer, that leaves the town \$435,000 short of the project's cost.

Timilty and Shields said they are awaiting word from DeLeo on whether the combined project will be approved.

"Right now, all we can do is wait, but even having this conversation with the speaker is a step in the right direction," Timilty said. ■ *Reprinted from The Patriot Ledger.*

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