

Mr. Slater,

I write to conclude our assertion that the sewer line serving 2805 through 2915 Homehurst Avenue is and always has been public.

Baldwin Township Ordinance 234 of 1929 ordered this sewer to be built. Pittsburgh ordinance 343 of 1930 annexes this portion of land to the City of Pittsburgh.

We do not have records to indicate that Baldwin Township created this sewer line in order to bestow ownership on the future residents of Homehurst Avenue and/or build to a different municipality's hypothetical standards (what a unique policy decision that would have been!).

Should Homeowners be punished for the fact that after nearly 90 years, these sewer records from Baldwin Township--having been turned over to the City of Pittsburgh, then being turned over again to the PWSA--are now lost? Should homeowners keep historic municipal infrastructure maps on hand, in case they need to prove that a sewer line connected to their home before they were born was, in fact, public? What sort of burden of proof shall we place on these homeowners?

Homeowners should not have to bear the financial burden of records being lost or destroyed. PWSA is using a lack of records to shirk legal responsibility. Instead of taking responsibility for this public line when the issues first began, they have dragged these Homeowners through years of stress and sleepless nights; worrying that they will lose everything. PWSA's negligence has exacerbated their own costs and exposed residents of Overbrook to raw sewage. Homeowners and our City Council office have spent countless hours researching and compiling evidence to defend against the PWSA's avoidance of responsibility.

If this line, which has always been understood to be public, is suddenly declared private on the word of the PWSA, these homes will lose 100% of their value. They will not be able to be sold. These families will lose the wealth they have accumulated in these homes due to a map that may have existed, may have even been transferred to PWSA, and no one can produce.

In addition to this already significant evidence, we have the Multi List information for three of the properties in question. This public record indicates public sewer on each of them. These homes were obviously purchased with the knowledge that the sewer line serving them was public.

The PWSA leases the sewer lines from the City of Pittsburgh. This sewer line has been serviced publicly since its 1929 creation. In addition, the PWSA has serviced the line on multiple occasions since they characterized the line as "private" to the ACHD. At least one of these occasions was condition-free, meaning that even if the PWSA could have met the burden of proof to classify this line as private, the PWSA has accepted the line by default.

PWSA continues to fight this battle, despite their complete lack of evidence supporting any of their claims. Please consider the considerable evidence supporting the public ownership of this line and relieve the neighbor's of the burden of losing their homes because of PWSA's refusal to take responsibility.

Thank you.

-Bethani Cameron  
Community Relations Manager  
Office of Councilwoman Natalia Rudiak  
District 4  
City of Pittsburgh