

WAUKESHA FREEMAN

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WAUKESHA GREAT LAKES DIVERSION **Franklin residents, politicians weigh in on proposed pipeline**

FRANKLIN — A handful of Franklin residents came to the first in a three-day series of information sessions geared toward communities affected by the route of Waukesha's Great Lakes water pipeline.

Most came equipped with a small arsenal of questions for the project specialists who came to the Hunger Task Force Farm in rural Franklin with diagrams and information graphics, ready to address concerns about the pipeline.

Dick Robinson, 71, of Franklin said he was curious how the plan to divert Waukesha's treated wastewater into the Root River would affect the Fox River, where the city has long put its wastewater.

Robinson said he wanted to know what would happen to the docks and piers on the Fox River, and whether they would be left "high and dry," when the millions of gallons of wastewater created daily in Waukesha are diverted to the other side of the subcontinental divide and back into the Great Lakes once the pipeline is built. But overall, he said, he approves of the plan.

Others, like Kirk and Mary Wesley of Franklin, came to look at maps of the three pipeline route options on display. All proposed routes will cut through New Berlin, Muskego and Franklin — the three communities that have information sessions this week.

The Wesleys said they are glad that Waukesha will be putting back the same amount of water that they take from Lake Michigan, but questioned what flooding could happen in the Root River with increased flow.

There is a reoccurring flood that covers the road with water after big storms near the sight where Waukesha wastewater will be piped into the Root, Kirk Wesley said. At times there is so much flooding that the city has gates to block traffic on that portion of road.

But Franklin Mayor Steve Olson said the pipeline will meet up with the river south of where flooding often occurs, which he said is caused by culverts and bridges that were built too small and low.

Olson said those issues will be fixed during the pipeline construction.

Waukesha Mayor Shawn Reilly spoke with a couple state legislators in attendance, including Rep. Chuck Wichgers, Muskego. whose district envelopes most of Franklin. Wichgers said he's glad Franklin can help Waukesha with its water problem and be part of a solution that has been in the works for over a decade.

But for some locals, like Fran Boucher of Greendale, the water diversion project is believed to be a major threat to the waterways. Boucher said she suspects that the outflow into the Root would increase flooding and, "I would expect in the long run [the project] won't happen."

There will be another information session in Muskego tonight and in New Berlin on Thursday. The Muskego session will be in room 243 at Muskego High School, W185-S8750 Racine Ave. The New Berlin session will be at the New Berlin Public Library, 15105 W. Library Lane. Each session will take place from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.



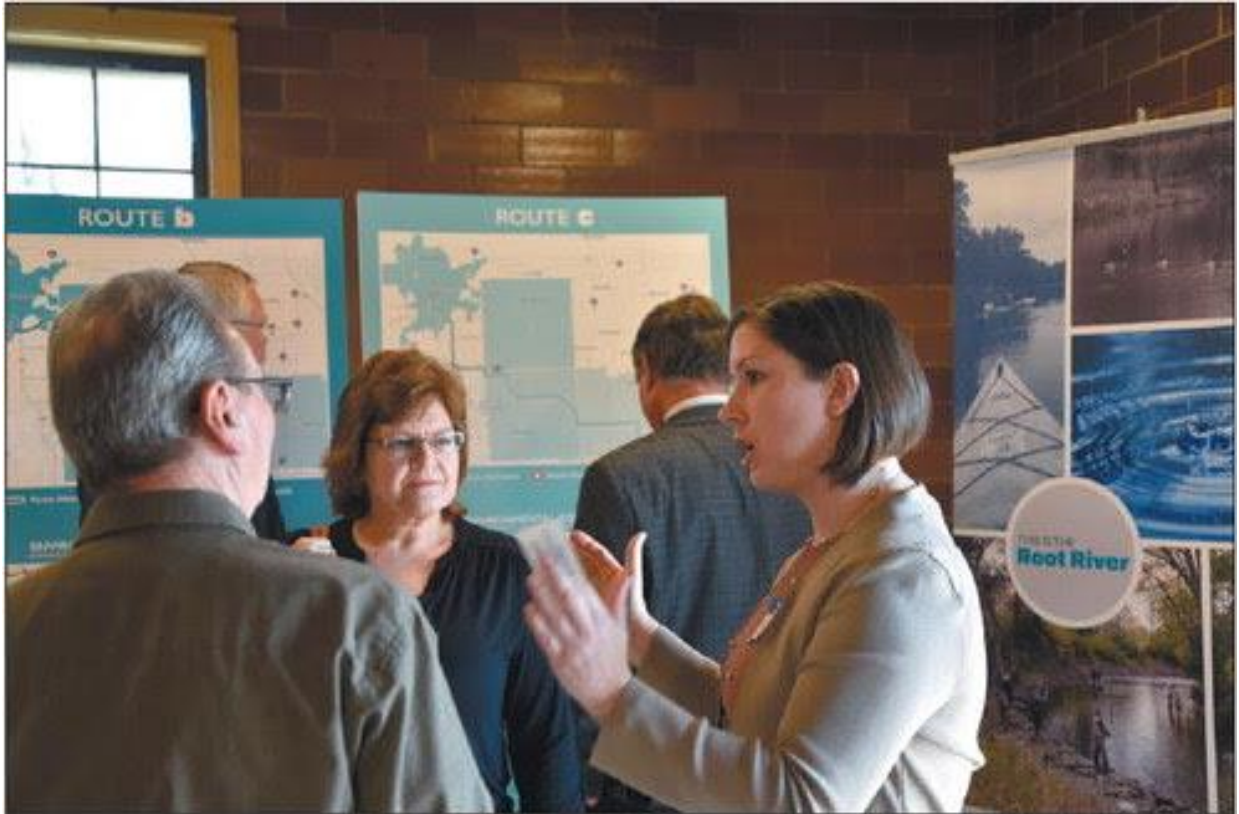
(Hannah Weikel/Freeman Staff)

Waukesha Water Utility General Manager Dan Duchniak talks about the city's pipeline project at a public discussion in Franklin on Tuesday afternoon.



(Hannah Weikel/Freeman Staff)

Jars lined up at the first Waukesha water pipeline discussion in Franklin on Tuesday show the degree of Root River water quality from treated wastewater to tap water.



(Hannah Weikel/Freeman Staff)

Nicole Spieles, Waukesha pipeline project manager, talks with two Franklin residents about the project during a public discussion on Tuesday afternoon in Franklin.