The work to reopen Ferns

Nearly 14 months of meetings, outreach, engineering and follow-through.

The Health Director recommended a Weston & Sampson capacity study on May 19. We commissioned it privately. The engineers found that a connection appeared feasible, with adequate treatment capacity. The next step was design and regulatory review. We brought those findings back to the Town. [09][21][36]

RESIDENT INPUT

500+ survey responses

Outreach helped shape the vision [03]

MONTHS OF TESTING

Environmental investigation

Groundwater and well testing [02, 07]

A FEASIBLE PATH

Privately commissioned engineering

Findings support the next phase [36]

THE RECORD ACKNOWLEDGES THE EFFORT

“the amount of information that you have provided is unbelievable.”

Environmental Sustainability Committee discussion • November 5, 2026 [39]

The speaker distinguished the information already supplied by the Pirris from deliberations still needed from other Town boards.

THE NEXT STEP: ARTICLE 6

The November 16 motion proposes $300,000 from Free Cash for further evaluation, engineering, planning, design and permitting. It moves the Town to the next stage of work; construction is a later decision. [45]

Public records

50 dated milestones on pages 2–6 • Supporting records on pages 7–8

SEPTEMBER 2025–APRIL 2026

Finding a workable path

The work began with the agreement, professional advice and direct requests for regulatory and Town guidance.

SEP 19 2025

Ferns goes under agreement

Ben reports that all parties have signed the purchase option agreement. This is the confirmed starting point for the timeline. [01]

SEP–NOV 2025

Residents asked what they want Ferns to become

The Pirris seek community input through a survey and website outreach. Amy compiles a survey summary in September; the November newsletter reports over 500 responses. [03]

OCT 6 2025

Environmental and legal advisers brought together

Ben connects environmental consultant Joe Jammallo and attorney Ron Ruth to coordinate the property's environmental review and regulatory path. [02]

OCT 20–NOV 5 2025

MassDEP contacts pursued

Ben follows up with advisers about reaching MassDEP, arranging a meeting and establishing what the agency needs to review. [02]

DEC 12–17 2025

Town licensing guidance requested

Ben asks the Town Administrator how to approach the liquor-license process and comply with Town requirements. The Administrator offers help with the licensing steps. [04]

JAN 7–16 2026

MassDEP meeting and written requirements

The project team meets with MassDEP on January 7. The agency subsequently issues written septic-authority guidance and the public-water-system sanitary survey. [05]

MAR 25–27 2026

Town Hall visit and meeting follow-up

After visiting Town Hall, Ben follows up by email. Ben and Amy seek a meeting with the Town Administrator to discuss a feasible reopening path. [06]

APR 3 2026

Three wastewater options put before the Town

After meeting with the Town Administrator, Ben sends a written comparison: Center Park septic, the Banta-Davis treatment facility and the police-station septic system. [06]

APR 10 & 15 2026

Follow-up produces permission to test

Ben asks for updates and offers more information. On April 15, the Administrator confirms Select Board authorization for a perc test; Ben immediately brings in the septic specialist. [06]

APR 22–23 2026

Groundwater and drinking-water testing documented

Laboratory results cover eight monitoring wells and the public-supply well, including petroleum compounds, VOCs and selected-well PFAS testing. Amy follows up on additional testing and well options. [07]

MAY–JUNE 2026

Following the recommended steps

Town staff direct the project toward a capacity study. Ben and Amy begin assembling the engineering and agency information.

MAY 5–6

Health Department meeting sought

Amy and Ben ask to meet about compliant wastewater options and arrange time with the Health Director. Ben also discusses next steps with the Town Administrator. [09]

MAY 13

Alternatives explained in writing

Amy sends the Health Director the options being evaluated: Center Park septic, connection to the school system and the practical limits of an above-ground holding system. [09]

MAY 19

The Health Director identifies the study path

After consulting MassDEP, the Health Director advises working with Weston & Sampson to evaluate treatment capacity, then returning to MassDEP with the findings. [09]

MAY 20

Town land-use staff meeting attended

Ben, Amy and proposed operator Sam Patel meet with Town staff. That same day, the Pirris contact Weston & Sampson; the Health Director supplies operating reports. [10]

MAY 27

Board of Health presentation

Ben appears before the Board of Health to discuss a possible connection to the treatment facility. The discussion focuses on jurisdiction, capacity and next steps with MassDEP. [11]

JUN 1 & 8

MassDEP meeting followed by written guidance

The team meets with MassDEP June 1. On June 8, the agency recognizes the alternatives evaluated, seeks clearer Town commitments and corrects statements about jurisdiction and capacity. [12]

JUN 4 & 10

State assistance pursued

Ben contacts Representative Simon Cataldo’s office about the project and follows up to arrange a discussion. Further July correspondence explores possible funding assistance. [13]

JUN 11

Independent engineering review obtained

The Pirris supply background and the earlier Town Center sewer proposal to Beals Associates. Beals issues a written review identifying a sewer extension as the strongest long-term option. [14]

JUN 16, 18 & 22

Town Administrator meeting pursued

Ben continues contacting the Town Administrator to arrange a discussion of the wastewater path and the engineering information now available. [15]

JUN 23

Administrator meeting and engineering handoff

Ben meets with the Town Administrator and discusses feasibility work. He sends Weston & Sampson the Beals memo, earlier sewer history and the Administrator’s contact information. [15]

JULY–SEPTEMBER 2026

Commissioning the answers

The project moves from asking which route is possible to commissioning a study and seeking a coordinated Town process.

JUL 22

Written feasibility-study proposal received

Weston & Sampson delivers its proposal to evaluate Town Center wastewater connections, capacity, routes, costs and grants, with a fee not to exceed $55,700. [16]

JUL 23–30

Community and committee outreach continues

The Pirris publish a project update, respond to questions, pursue state funding guidance and contact Environmental Sustainability and Municipal Facilities Committee representatives. [13][17]

JUL 31

Select Board packet submitted

Ben requests an August 11 discussion and sends the Beals review, Weston & Sampson proposal, treatment-facility usage summary and project websites. [18]

AUG 3 & 10

Board of Health agenda request limited

Amy asks to present on August 13. The August 10 response says MassDEP matters will not be discussed with them; two minutes of community input is offered. [19]

AUG 11

Select Board presentation with the engineer

Ben and Weston & Sampson's Pat Cotton discuss the proposed feasibility study with the Select Board, including scope, cost, timing and Town coordination. [20]

AUG 20–21

Study commissioned with private funding

Ben returns the signed proposal and terms; the engineer confirms receipt. The Pirris publicly announce that they will fund the feasibility study. Ben also meets with the School Committee chair. [21][22]

SEP 3–4

Historical outreach and engineering kickoff

Ben contacts the Historical Commission. The project team meets with Weston & Sampson and Town representatives to discuss study data, routes, capacity and the schedule. [23][24]

SEP 15

Environmental due-diligence report delivered

Following months of investigation and testing, the environmental consultant delivers the due-diligence assessment report prepared with Goldman Environmental for the Pirris. [07]

SEP 16–17

Historical Commission presentation; Planning follow-up

Ben presents to the Historical Commission. The next day, Amy accepts an invitation to bring the project to the Planning Board on October 5. [23][27]

SEP 22–24

Town questions raised; joint discussion held

Ben raises zoning, future-user and funding questions, offers to fund conceptual work, then meets with Town officials and engineers to define the next steps. [25]

OCTOBER 2026

Returning with reports and answers

The outreach expands across Town boards, with repeated presentations and updated written materials.

OCT 1 & 6

MassDEP requirements clarified

The team meets with MassDEP and the Town Administrator on October 1. MassDEP follows with written requirements for permanent connection and any potential interim reopening. [26]

OCT 5–6

Planning Board and Select Board appearances

Ben presents to the Planning Board on October 5 and returns for the Select Board's October 6 wastewater discussion. [27]

OCT 9

Personal outreach to the Health Board chair

Ben requests a meeting with Patrick Collins, asks for his input and seeks a Board of Health representative for a wastewater working group. [28]

OCT 13

Library Trustees and Select Board discussions

Ben and Amy meet with Library Trustees. Select Board minutes also document Ben's participation in the discussion of scope, estimates and the engineering-and-design article. [27]

OCT 16

Materials sent to ten board or committee contacts

Ben sends tailored follow-ups, presentations and supporting records across ten Town bodies. The Health Board email requests an agenda slot and offers to bring the engineers. [29]

OCT 19–20

Public explanation and Finance Committee Q&A

Ben gives a newspaper interview October 19. On October 20, the Pirris participate in a resident Q&A at Ferns and a separate Finance Committee discussion. [30][31]

OCT 22–23

Study finds the connection appears feasible

The Phase I findings support a feasible connection. Ben circulates the updated memo to Town boards, seeks questions and clarifies preliminary capacity assumptions and scope. [32]

OCT 27

Council on Aging and Select Board appearances

Ben discusses Article 6 with the Council on Aging and Human Services and returns to the Select Board. Both bodies vote to recommend the article. [33][45]

OCT 28

School Committee presentation

Ben presents the proposed connection and design phase, discusses protecting school capacity and invites the committee's questions. [33]

OCT 28

Another Health Board agenda request

Amy asks to be included in the November 5 Board of Health discussion of Article 6, following the October 9, 16 and 23 outreach. [34]

NOVEMBER 2026

Still showing up. Still answering.

The final weeks bring more written responses, further meetings and another request for a coordinated working group.

NOV 1

Health Board presentation request declined

The Health Agent conveys the chair's decision: the Pirris will not be included as presenters in the Article 6 discussion; two minutes each of public comment is offered. Amy replies. [34]

NOV 1–2

Finance Committee materials and return visit

A written Finance Committee memo is sent November 1. Ben returns for the committee's November 2 discussion of the proposal, costs and unresolved questions. [35]

NOV 2–5

Revised study confirms the preliminary feasibility finding

The November 5 memo addresses MassDEP comments and concludes that a connection appears feasible, with adequate treatment capacity. Amy sends it to MassDEP; design and regulatory approval remain ahead. [36]

NOV 3–4

Briefing offered to Town Meeting presenters

Ben asks for a short explanation of the project's history, offers to coordinate wording and requests an hour with the Select Board presenters to review the work. [37]

NOV 5

Board of Health appearance and written follow-up

Ben and Amy speak during public comment. The Board votes not to recommend Article 6. That evening, Amy sends a detailed written response addressing the discussion. [38][45]

NOV 5

Environmental Sustainability Committee discussion

Ben explains the study and requests support. A committee speaker acknowledges the volume of information provided and distinguishes it from deliberations still needed from other Town boards. [39]

NOV 9–10

Planning Board return; collaboration requested again

Ben speaks to the Planning Board November 9. After consulting Tony Mariano, he asks the Select Board November 10 to reconsider a focused wastewater working group. [40][41]

NOV 12

Direct meeting with a Health Board member

Ben and Amy meet with Justin Harrison at Ferns to discuss the constraints, the proposal and concerns following the Board of Health meeting. [42]

NOV 12–13

School support and facilities discussion

Ben attends the School Committee meeting; it votes to support Article 6. The next day, the Municipal Facilities Committee discusses implementation and remaining Town responsibilities. [43]

NOV 14

Resident stories recorded

Interviews document what Ferns means to residents and why reopening a gathering place matters, continuing the work to explain the project before Town Meeting. [44]

Sources & verification

Numbered references identify the records behind the timeline. Public reports are linked; original emails and meeting recordings are retained by the authors. This is a resident-prepared account, not an official Town publication.

01 Agreement signed. Ben Pirri, “Update,” September 19, 2025. Same-day email reports that all parties signed the purchase option.

02 Environmental and MassDEP coordination. “Carlisle Property” and “DEP” email threads, October 6–November 5, 2025. Ben, environmental consultant Joe Jammallo and advisers.

03 Community survey. September 25, 2025 website response; September 30 “Ferns Survey Summary” sharing email; November 2 “A First Look at the New Ferns” newsletter reporting over 500 responses.

04 Town licensing guidance. “Ferns” correspondence with Town Administrator Ryan McLane, December 12–17, 2025.

05 January MassDEP work. January 16 email, “Carlisle – Ferns Country Store – SS Report,” explicitly confirms January 7 meeting. January 14 authority determination and January 16 sanitary survey are in the public document collection. Open public source.

06 Town Hall, options and perc testing. “Walkthrough” email thread, March 25–April 29, 2026. April 3 same-day meeting follow-up; April 10 and 15 requests; April 15 Town authorization.

07 Environmental investigation. Jammallo’s April 22, 2026 laboratory update: monitoring-well and public-supply-well testing, petroleum compounds, VOCs and selected-well PFAS. Amy’s April 23 follow-up; September 15 due-diligence report delivery.

08 Land-use coordination. Town Administrator’s “Introduction” email to Town Planner Julie Mercier, April 30, 2026; related scheduling correspondence.

09 Health Department direction. “Ferns Property” correspondence, May 5–19, 2026. May 19 Health Director Kelli Calo email recommends the Weston & Sampson capacity review.

10 May 20 staff meeting and follow-through. May 20, 2026 land-use staff meeting recording/transcript; same-day emails with Weston & Sampson and Health Director Calo.

11 May 27 Board of Health. May 27, 2026 Board of Health meeting recording/transcript, including Ben’s presentation and discussion of jurisdiction and capacity.

12 June MassDEP meeting and clarification. Eric Worrall, “Meeting followup,” June 8, 2026, confirming June 1 meeting and correcting jurisdiction/capacity statements. Public agency correspondence. Open public source.

13 State assistance. “Checking in – Ferns Project” correspondence with Representative Simon Cataldo’s office, June 4–July 28, 2026.

14 Beals wastewater review. “Ferns Market, Carlisle” correspondence and Todd Morey’s June 11, 2026 wastewater-disposal review. Public copy of engineering memo. Open public source.

15 June Town follow-ups and engineer handoff. June 16, 18 and 22 meeting correspondence; June 23 Town Administrator meeting recording and same-day email to Pat Cotton with supporting records.

16 Feasibility-study proposal. Weston & Sampson, July 22, 2026 proposal, including scope and $55,700 not-to-exceed fee. This is a proposed fee cap, not a claim about total expenditures. Open public source.

17 July community and committee outreach. July 24 email confirms public update the prior day. July 30 correspondence reaches Environmental Sustainability and Municipal Facilities Committee contacts.

18 Select Board materials. Ben’s July 31, 2026 agenda request and follow-up; supplied Beals review, engineering proposal, usage summary and websites.

19 August Board of Health request and reply. Amy’s “BOH Agenda for August 13,” August 3; Jennine Blum’s “IMPORTANT! BOH Meeting on August 13, 2026 – topics,” August 10.

20 August 11 Select Board. August 11, 2026 Select Board meeting recording/transcript, including Ben Pirri and engineer Pat Cotton.

21 Study commissioned. “Signed Proposal” emails, August 20, 2026, including Pat Cotton’s acknowledgment; August 21 public update announcing private funding (Ferns correspondence compilation).

22 School Committee chair meeting. August 20, 2026 meeting recording/transcript with School Committee chair Scott Jamison.

23 Historical Commission. September 3–9 scheduling correspondence and September 16, 2026 Historical Commission presentation recording/transcript.

24 Engineering kickoff. September 4, 2026 project kickoff recording/transcript with the project team, Weston & Sampson and Town representatives.

Sources & verification

Dates were checked against correspondence, meeting records and public documents. This condensed timeline groups related actions; it does not count every email, preparation session or hour of work.

25 Town questions and joint coordination. “Ferns and library wastewater questions,” September 22–23, 2026; September 24 Town–engineering meeting recording/transcript.

26 October MassDEP guidance. October 1, 2026 meeting recording/transcript; October 6 written regulatory requirements. Public copy of agency correspondence. Open public source.

27 October Town presentations. Planning Board October 5 and Select Board October 6 recordings; official Select Board minutes October 13. October 16 Library follow-up confirms October 13 visit; September 17 email accepts Planning invitation. Open public source.

28 October 9 Health Board outreach. Ben, “Would Appreciate Your Input,” October 9, 2026, sent to the Board of Health for Chair Patrick Collins.

29 Ten October 16 outreach emails. October 16, 2026 sent messages to contacts for: Environmental Sustainability, Historical, Library, Finance, Conservation, Health, Planning, Municipal Facilities, COAHS and School Committee.

30 Newspaper interview. October 19, 2026 interview with Mary Lynne recording/transcript. Included as an interview, not a Town board appearance.

31 October 20 public and Finance discussions. Separate October 20, 2026 recordings/transcripts of the resident Q&A at Ferns and Finance Committee discussion.

32 October engineering updates. October 22–23 Weston & Sampson memo correspondence; October 23 distribution emails and “FinCom Follow Up – Phase 1 Feasibility Study” clarifications.

33 October 27–28 presentations. COAHS and Select Board October 27 recordings/transcripts; School Committee October 28 presentation recording/transcript. Official recommendations also appear in source 45.

34 Health Board agenda limitation. “BOH Meeting 11/5” thread: Amy’s October 28 request; November 1 reply conveying the chair’s restriction; Amy’s November 1 response.

35 Finance Committee return. “Ferns Finance Committee Memo,” November 1, 2026; November 2 Finance Committee meeting recording/transcript.

36 November engineering revisions. MassDEP correspondence November 2–5; Weston & Sampson’s revised November 5 Phase I memo and Amy’s forwarding email to MassDEP. Open public source.

37 Town Meeting presentation outreach. “Article 6 Presentation” email thread, November 3–4, 2026; Ben’s requests to Scott Triola, Rebekah Vieira and Moderator Wayne Davis.

38 November 5 Health Board and response. November 5 Board of Health recording/transcript; Amy’s detailed email sent that evening. Official non-support recommendation appears in source 45.

39 November 5 Environmental Sustainability. November 5 evening recording contains a transition from the Health Board to the Environmental Sustainability Committee. Relevant discussion: ~24:26–41:33; quotation on page 1: ~40:32–40:39. The speaker distinguishes Town deliberations from material supplied by the Pirris.

40 November 9 Planning Board. November 9, 2026 Planning Board recording/transcript, including Ben’s public statement.

41 Working-group request. November 10, 2026 Select Board recording/transcript, ~65:28–67:40. Ben references the previous day’s meeting with Tony Mariano and requests reconsideration of a working group.

42 Justin Harrison meeting. Calendar invitation for November 12, 2026 at 1:30 p.m., corroborated by the contemporaneous Ferns meeting recording/transcript.

43 School and facilities discussions. School Committee November 12 discussion and motion recordings; Municipal Facilities Committee November 13 recording, ~9:16 and ~20:16, confirms School Committee support. MFC discussion concerns implementation and its role.

44 Resident interviews. November 14, 2026 documentary/interview recording. Included as community communication, not a government meeting.

45 Official Article 6 motion and recommendations. Town of Carlisle, November 16, 2026 Motions Book, printed page 5. Proposed $300,000 Free Cash appropriation for evaluation, planning, design and permitting; lists board recommendations. Open public source.

Public document collection: **fernscarlisle.com/documents**