

City of Keene
New Hampshire

MUNICIPAL SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 8, 2015

6:00 pm

**City Hall, 2nd Floor, Council
Chambers**

Members Present:

James P. Duffy, Chair
Janis O. Manwaring
Sheryl A. Redfern
Robert J. O'Connor

Members Absent:

Philip M. Jones

Staff Present:

City Manager John MacLean
City Attorney Tom Mullins
Airport Director Ed Mattern
Public Works Director Kürt Blomquist
City Engineer James Donison

Others Present:

Councilor David R. Meader
Councilor Bettina A. Chadbourne
Councilor Terry M. Clark
Councilor Carl B. Jacobs

Chair Duffy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and explained the procedures of the meeting.

1. **MEMORANDUM – City Engineer – Bradford Road Sidewalk Project**

City Engineer James Donison stated that the project goes back to the fall of 2011 when residents requested the City look at traffic speed and volumes on Bradford Road. He continued that they hired a consultant to perform cost estimates and a survey of the road and determine sidewalk alternatives. Last July, they presented the findings from the engineering study and all the public comments to the Committee and the public voiced their comments. Since then, members of the Fire, Police, Planning, and Public Works Departments have met to look at alternatives. They recommend proceeding almost as a demonstration and doing a “road diet” approach. They want to put thicker lines on either side of the roadway, about six inches wide instead of the typical four inches. They would narrow the width of the travel lanes so people will get the impression that the road is narrower and see if that adjusts speed or not. The proposal is to do the work in the spring of 2015 when line painting is performed in the City.

Councilor O'Connor asked if the Engineer was referring to a fog line. Mr. Donison replied yes. Chair Duffy asked if folks on Bradford Road are aware of the staff's recommendation. Mr. Donison replied no, City staff has not met with the Bradford Road residents or the petitioners about this. Chair Duffy asked if something was recently erected where the rail trail is. Mr. Donison replied that there are stop signs for people on the trail so they know it is their

responsibility to stop and look both ways as they approach the road. He continued that there are warning signs on the road as well to alert drivers to the trail crossing coming up. Chair Duffy asked if it is correct that there is no painted stripe across the road itself. Mr. Donison replied that he does not think so, but it was recently paved.

Chair Duffy asked for questions or comments from the members of the public. Hearing none, he stated that this is a creative and hopefully effective approach.

Councilor Redfern made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor O'Connor.

On a vote of 4 to 0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends that staff move forward with the "road diet" on Bradford Road through additional striping to be part of the 2015 street line painting program.

2. MEMORANDUM – City Engineer – Bretwood Golf Course Waiver Request

Mr. Donison reported the Bretwood Golf Course has a water system that services the club house, snack shacks, and bathrooms throughout the golf course. He continued they are serviced by an onsite well owned by the golf course. The drinking water bureau of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) says if they continue with the well they will be considered a "small community" water system by DES and will need a licensed water operator. The owner will need to do annual tests for water quality and report back to DES. The golf course has submitted a letter and waiver request to the City to tie into the City's water system. It would extend from West Surry Road. There is currently a water meter that services one of their properties. They have a number of properties contiguous that they want to serve. A single water service typically only serves one property/house. That waiver would have to be obtained and approved to serve more than one property. All of the properties have the same owner.

Mr. Donison continued there are engineering or construction items that are not in conformance with City standards, such as the depth of the cover over the water main. It is not greater than five feet (which is the typical depth) because it is seasonal. Bretwood turns it off in the fall and back on in the spring. That is another waiver request to look at. One of the conditions they outlined in the memorandum is that the City still needs to do testing to confirm that they do have enough water going through. It is a three quarter-inch water line that goes 3000 feet from West Surry Road and then there is 1000 feet of a 1-inch diameter line continuing to the club house. Whether or not it can handle the appropriate flow rate needs to be tested and confirmed. They were going to do a test the previous week but the line was still frozen in places. Mr. Donison noted that Jim Phippard, the consultant, was available for further questions.

Chair Duffy stated he assumes the private well and water system will be discontinued. Mr. Donison replied yes, the private water system would be completely disconnected from the City system. He continued that on page 2 there are the three conditions that would be a requirement for the applicant to follow for the approval: 1), that the water service be allowed to be a ¾ inch diameter service line providing that the construction complies with the Public Works Department standards; 2) that there is a minimum 20 psi water service line pressure at all premises with

multiple water fixtures operating simultaneously; and 3) that the requirements of the NHDES have been met.

Councilor Manwaring asked if NHDES has signed off on this. Mr. Donison replied that they know the applicant is looking to tie into the City system and they would be okay with that approach. He continued that if not, the golf course would have to go through the process of being approved as a “small community” water system.

The City Manager asked if Mr. Donison could clarify the comment relative to “continuous ownership.” Mr. Donison replied that he was talking about “contiguous ownership,” meaning, there are properties next to each other, four of five of them.

James Phippard, of Brickstone Land Use Consultants, 185 Winchester Street, stated he is requesting the waiver on the golf course’s behalf. He continued t there are several golf properties that exist between East Surry Road and West Surry Road. It also includes the former Knight Farm property. Four of these properties are serviced by the water system. The well that has been servicing the properties has been in place for close to 100 years. It has been servicing the brick family house opposite the golf course and will continue to do that. It will not be disconnected from that house. That is fine with NHDES. If it is servicing less than 25 residents it does not need to be registered as a “small community” system. It has no public access. They are disconnecting the club house, outbuildings, snack shacks, and restrooms from the private spring. The golf course system would be disconnected from the private spring and then be turned over to the City’s water system.

Councilor Manwaring asked if Bretwood is connected to the City’s sewer system. Mr. Phippard replied no, they have their own licensed and approved septic systems. Councilor Manwaring asked if they will keep that setup. Mr. Phippard replied yes.

Councilor Redfern asked if the spring or well also waters their grass. Mr. Phippard replied no, the irrigation system has water pumped from the Ashuelot River. He continued that the backflow preventer has been installed since August. The golf course opened in 1968 and it was serviced by that spring for 45 years until NHDES contacted the owners with new regulations requiring them to be monitored as a “small community” system with standards they must meet. The golf course did indeed meet all of the standards and pass the tests, such as bacteria tests. They are choosing not to continue in that way because it is less expensive to use the City’s water.

The City Manager asked what Mr. Phippard means about the ownership being turned over to the City. Mr. Phippard replied perhaps he misspoked, but the intent is to use the connection to the City water system that exists at 89 West Surry Road. That was installed in 1934. It is a three quarter inch water service. For the system in place, the private, seasonal system, it will work just fine. The club house has a tank system with pressure tanks to maintain pressure during usage. It is a 500-gallon water tank with only 12 plumbing fixtures in the building. It will not be possible to use more water than what is in the tank, as long as it is connected to a water supply. They have no issues with meeting the City’s criteria or conditions.

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Mr. Donison stated that it will remain as a private water system from the backflow preventer and the water connection right at the edge of the right-of-way inside the property.

Chair Duffy asked if this means the City will send a water bill. Mr. Phippard replied that Bretwood Golf Course already receives a water bill because some of their properties are already on City water.

Chair Duffy asked for public questions or comments. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Councilor O'Connor made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Manwaring.

On a vote of 4 to 0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the waiver requests from Article III, Design and Construction of Streets and Utilities, Section 70-60 (f) of the City Code as outlined in a letter received from Brickstone Land Use Consultants, LLC, dated March 30, 2015, on behalf of Bretwood Golf Course, Inc., be approved conditional that the requirements meet with the satisfaction of the City Engineer.

3. MEMORANDUM – Public Works Director – Complete Streets Policy Update

Kürt Blomquist, Public Works Director, and Tara Germond, of the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC), introduced themselves. Mr. Blomquist stated this is an update on the Complete Streets work that City staff and folks from SWRPC have been working on.

Previously, there was a presentation to the City Council from Linda Rubin, Director of Healthy Monadnock 2020, on the grant Cheshire Medical Center received from the CDC. A portion of the grant was being made available, through the SWRPC, to do a Complete Streets process. A team has been meeting and working on this. They looked at policies from other communities, and worked to identify different types of streets as well as amenities on each street type. They are now pulling it all together. It is great having SWRPC's help and it is great that they can dedicate time to this.

Ms. Germond stated that the SWRPC is working with the City not just to create a Complete Streets Policy, but also to do a demonstration event. She continued that the grant gives funding to support education on the concept and benefits of Complete Streets, through an interactive, temporary, demonstration project. They have not yet picked a location, but for a day or two they will put Complete Streets elements in place in a segment of roadway. They would do education and outreach and try to make it fun for the community. In addition, they have funding for three workshops for the region, which consists of 34 municipalities in the southwest corner of the state. Staff members from these municipalities can attend the workshops to learn more about Complete Streets, which policies are relevant to this region, how communities can partner with NHDOT, and see what Complete Streets looks like on the ground.

Ms. Germond continued that the first workshop will probably be in early summer, and probably in Keene, as there are Complete Streets already in place that they could use as an example. In years two and three they will build off of the concepts learned in year one. Year two would be more focused on policy development, implementation, and how to measure success over time.

They have been getting great input from Mr. Blomquist on how to make the workshops useful and practical.

Mr. Blomquist stated that the policy is one piece, and the other piece is community outreach, which had been missing. He continued that it is great to have this grant and to work with the SWRPC. People will learn what road diets are and other elements of Complete Streets. They are looking to complete a draft Complete Streets Policy for Keene by June. In July they will introduce it to the MSFI Committee. In July or August they can look at that and work with staff to finalize it for the City Council's consideration in September. Simultaneously in that June to September timeframe they will look at putting together the demonstration project and doing workshops. The importance of September is that is when the Federal fiscal year ends. Some of the work has to be completed before October 1. He continued that one possible area for the demonstration is Marlboro Street where they recently did some work and re-zoning. They may be able to try out some concepts in a small area there. Another possibility is Gilbo Avenue, since there are long-term plans to bring more of the Main Street theme into Gilbo Avenue as it continues to develop. Internally they have been considering those two areas. They look forward to having a workshop here to break it down for towns so it is not so daunting. Maybe they can implement these things as part of their regular routine, like how they are implementing the Bradford Road "road diet" as part of routine line painting.

Councilor Manwaring stated that she hopes the practical aspects are included. She continued that not too long ago Chair Duffy was asking for a bike lane on Marlboro Street and they did not really get it. The City Council can support something, but then is it done? Can it be afforded? Mr. Blomquist replied that the funding question will be answered. He continued that one thing they are looking at is whether there are Complete Streets elements and techniques that can be done as part of the regular, routine processes. For example, during the regular street line painting process, there might be the opportunity to paint 10-foot lanes instead of 12-foot lanes, or provide enough space to do a bike lane. Marlboro Street has sharrows, with enough space to allow biking, and a reminder to motorists that there are bicycles to be aware of. The street classification is part of the process. If an overlay is being done, they are not rebuilding the street, but maybe they could do a road diet, for example. There will be guidance that helps the implementation and helps people look at considering all users.

Ms. Germond stated that in terms of the classification of different roads, one example is Hurricane Road which is fairly rural. They have been working on defining what Complete Streets looks like in a rural area versus something like Marlboro Street, which is very different. She continued that Marlboro Street is currently classified as a street to be considered to be made into a full Complete Street, with a bike lane, sidewalk, and so on and so forth. They are creating a checklist of optimal and minimal conditions for Public Works to consider.

Chair Duffy stated that when he learned that Marlboro Street is the widest street, and did not understand why it could not have bike lanes, he found out it is because of the existing parking allowed there. He continued that he is still disappointed there is no bike lane but at least there are sharrows.

Chair Duffy stated that constituents sometimes ask him, knowing that the City passed a Complete Streets resolution, what the difference is between a policy and a resolution. He asked for clarification between the two. Mr. Blomquist replied that the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) talks about what the community is moving towards, and that includes Complete Streets. He continued that the City passed a resolution, saying basically, they support Complete Streets and let's move forward with more detailed information. Sometimes the City Council uses Resolutions as policy, for example, their fiscal policies are set through a Resolution process. Resolutions have been used as a policy guide, and also as support, or other documents stating the City Council's position. A Resolution can be used in either way. It is ultimately how the City Council lays it out. The City Attorney agreed with Mr. Blomquist's explanation.

Chair Duffy asked if it is correct that Complete Streets only deals with bicycle, pedestrian, and automobile infrastructure or concepts, and does not include things like bio-retention concepts. Mr. Blomquist replied they can probably work something in for the green infrastructure component. He continued that in general, Complete Streets in most communities has dealt more with the physical attributes for the full range of users, such as vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, elders, youth, and public transit. Keene has an inner city bus system, which raises questions of where to provide space or shelters for pickups. Some communities have integrated green infrastructure concepts into Complete Streets and others have not. They can look at that, and talk about it when they come back in July or August. Chair Duffy replied that Keene has some rain gardens. Mr. Blomquist replied yes, and there are other techniques, and Keene has a number of them. Chair Duffy replied that he would be interested in talking about the possibilities more, from a planning and budgetary point of view.

Chair Duffy asked for questions or comments from the public. Hearing none, he stated that this is exciting, and thanked Mr. Blomquist and Ms. Germond for their presentation and thanked Linda Rubin for helping secure the grant that makes this possible.

Councilor Manwaring made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Redfern.

On a vote of 4 to 0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee accepted this report as informational.

4. MEMORANDUM - Highway Superintendent – City Hall Front Entrance Repair/Enhancement

William Byrnes, Superintendent of the Highway Division, stated he is here to discuss plans to repair and refurbish the entrance to City Hall and the adjacent sidewalk and patio area. The plan is for City Hall to have one door as an entrance during the repair work, with the ramp to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The area will be petitioned off to differentiate the entrance and the work zone and they should have no problems with people accessing City Hall. The plan is to remove and completely replace the arch steps. The red brick pavers will be removed and instead they will pour in four inches of red dyed concrete with a brick patio stamped on it. It will be safer and require less maintenance. He continued that there are three trees – the two small ones will be transplanted and relocated, and the large one will remain. The other three tree wells will be concreted and stamped, or maybe just be plain

concrete. They will do minor landscaping in front of the evergreen hedge. Weather permitting, they anticipate doing this project in the middle or end of May, once they are sure the concrete will not freeze.

Councilor O'Connor asked how long the project will take. Mr. Byrnes replied one or two weeks. He continued that it is a mystery to everyone what is under the steps. As long as they do not run into any surprises there, the project will take two weeks at most.

Councilor Chadbourne asked if “removing and replacing” the arch steps means they will maintain the arch form. Mr. Byrnes replied yes, it will be replicated. Councilor Chadbourne asked if the concrete will be less expensive and require less maintenance. Mr. Byrnes replied that in front of the steps, there are red brick pavers and some are missing or loose. He continued that those will be removed. Instead, they will install four inches of red concrete stamped with a brick pattern. Councilor Chadbourne asked if that is in addition to and separate from the steps. Mr. Byrnes replied yes.

Chair Duffy asked if any members of the public had questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Byrnes for his report.

Councilor Redfern made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor O'Connor.

On a vote of 4 to 0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee accepted this report as informational.

5. MEMORANDUM – Airport Director – Environmental Assessment Phase 2 – Runway 20 Obstructions

Mr. Mattern stated that late last year they did Phase 1 of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and received a significant number of public comments about that work, mainly from people in the Edgewood area. They categorized the comments into four groups: noise quality impact, air quality impact, socio-economic (property value) impact, and visual impacts. They reviewed the comments with the State and believed that significant issues were being raised. They petitioned the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to support a second phase of the EA to investigate those four categories. They believe the information will be significantly helpful when they get to the design phase to address the issue. They have been working with the consultant and folks from NHDOT and the Edgewood neighbors to develop a scope of services. They are close to that, and looking to move forward with the grant application for Phase 2. Once that grant is offered he would come to the City Council for consideration and acceptance and then move forward. Phase 2 of the EA would take about five months to complete. When it begins would depend on when the FAA offers the grant, when it is accepted by the City Council, and when it is accepted by the Governor and Council.

Chair Duffy asked if he means the actual exploration of the four areas would take about five months. Mr. Mattern replied yes, once they have the grant and can begin.

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Councilor Manwaring asked if the grant application he is writing is for a grant funded by the FAA through the State. Mr. Mattern replied that it would be 90% Federal funding, 5% State, and 5% local. He continued that NH is a block grant state, so the NHDOT acts as a subcontractor for the State. Councilor Manwaring stated that the State is having trouble with their budget. Mr. Mattern replied that he is sure that the State's share for this project is in hand and would not be impacted by the other woes of the State.

Chair Duffy thanked Mr. Mattern for his report. He continued that he is impressed with this initiative. It shows due diligence on the City's part. He knows from experience there have been many concerns.

Chair Duffy asked if any members of the public had questions or comments. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Councilor O'Connor made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Manwaring.

On a vote of 4 to 0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends acceptance of the Airport Director's report as informational.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted by
Britta Reida, Minute-taker