

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM

July 7, 2020 – 9:00 AM

Committee Members present: Councilor David A. Witham, Chair  
Councilor Martin P. Dumont, Sr. Vice-Chair  
Councilor Matt Gerding  
Councilor Kenneth Vincent at 9:10 AM

Administration/Staff present: City Manager Bob Belmore  
Finance Director Scott Smith  
Director of Public Works Michael Bobinsky  
City Engineer Gary Lemay  
Planning Secretary Dana Crossley

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Chairman Witham called the meeting to order at 9:04AM

Chairman Witham stated due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order#12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. This meeting will be held via Zoom online platform. The public is asked to submit comments via email to [kgagne@somersworth.com](mailto:kgagne@somersworth.com) or [bblmore@somersworth.com](mailto:bblmore@somersworth.com). Comments must be received by Wednesday, July 6, 2020 at 12 noon. The public can access the meeting and listen live by telephoning any of the numbers posted on the agenda.

Chairman Witham stated that all votes will be taken by a roll call vote.

Roll call attendance was taken, Councilors Witham, Dumont, and Gerding were remotely present and by themselves. Vincent joined the meeting remotely at 9:10 AM and was alone.

City Manager Belmore stated who was present in Council Chambers which is noted above.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

*Motion made by Councilor Dumont, seconded by Councilor Gerding, to approve the minutes of the May 27, 2020 meeting. Motion was approved 3-0 by a roll call vote.*

## WAIVER OF PAVEMENT MORATORIUM – STACKPOLE ROAD

Manager Belmore stated at the intersection of Stackpole Road (City owned) and Green Street (State owned portion) there is a City-owned water main and culvert that needs to be replaced. City staff has been working with the State to coordinate the projects. He stated Stackpole is under a moratorium and to move forward with the repairs a waiver needs to be granted. He stated they have experienced two water main breaks at this location over the past few years. He stated there have been temporary repairs but a complete repair needs to be completed. He stated it is part of the FY21 budget.

Manager Belmore stated the City has had discussions with the property owner at 93 Stackpole Rd. He stated the State will be clearing some trees and vegetation to improve the sight line at that intersection. He stated the City has offered to buy trees for the abutting property owner to be replanted in an area that does not affect sight line.

Councilor Witham stated he is in full support of this project, especially because it has been a problematic intersection.

Councilor Vincent joined the meeting at 9:10AM.

Councilor Gerding stated he is in support of this project and happy it is being completed.

***The Committee was in support of granting the waiver. The waiver of pavement moratorium for Stackpole Road will be scheduled on the City Council agenda under other, for a full Council vote.***

## RTE. 108 STATE DOT PROJECT UPDATE

Manager Belmore stated during earlier discussions of the Complete Street Project for Route 108, this Committee had been in support of a multi-use pathway along one side of portions of Route 108. He stated after discussion with the Project Engineers and DOT, they have stated their preference would be to install sidewalks on both sides of the road. He stated DOT's Engineer has provided a document justifying why they are requesting sidewalks on both sides of the road. He stated increased sidewalks will also mean increased maintenance for the City. He stated he is looking for a Committee recommendation.

Councilor Witham asked for clarification on how far along Route 108 sidewalks are being proposed. He stated it was his understanding that last year the Public Works and Environment Committee had recommended a single sidewalk would start at or across from Works Way and go south to the Dover line. He stated he did not recall the committee recommending sidewalks going all the way to the

Goodwin/Velcro area; he understands that there is a highly utilized bus stop near there and they were considering safety measures for pedestrian crossing there. He stated he supports sidewalk (or sidewalks, depending on Engineer's recommendations) from Works Way to Dover and understands there will be maintenance costs, but there is a need since there is high pedestrian traffic. He stated he does want to clarify where the sidewalks are extending to.

Manager Belmore stated he does recall the discussion that sidewalks would go from Works Way to Dover.

Councilor Dumont asked for clarification on who is funding the construction of the sidewalks.

Manager Belmore stated the State will pay for the initial construction with the understanding that the City would then take ownership upon completion of construction. He stated maintenance costs, including winter snow clearing, would be the City's responsibility.

Councilor Dumont stated his concern is whether the City's snow clearing equipment matches the proposed sidewalk width. He stated they have a hard time maintaining what exists now. He stated the Post Office trucks will drive on the sidewalks in many instances and they are not built for that.

Manager Belmore stated the City Engineer has provided a map that shows the sidewalk plow route schedule. He stated there are multiple routes and some sidewalks are not maintained in the winter.

Councilor Dumont stated he has some concerns with the sidewalks and feels there are a lot of issues.

Councilor Vincent stated if the State wants to build sidewalks then let them build sidewalks. He stated there is a lot of pedestrian traffic along Route 108. He stated he understands that there will be maintenance that becomes the City's responsibility. He stated it would do the people justice to construct the sidewalks and he is in support.

Councilor Witham stated as part of the original sidewalk discussion there was the understanding that the City would need to purchase additional sidewalk snow clearing equipment, and potentially additional staffing. He stated he believes some of the Planning Board exaction fees from projects have been put into the sidewalk account for that purpose. He stated the Master Plan further articulates that we want Somersworth to be a walkable community. He stated he would support the installation of sidewalk and would refer to the State's Engineer in regards to one or two sidewalks.

There was a brief discussion on the details of the Complete Streets project.

Councilor Gerding stated he would be in favor of two sidewalks. He inquired if they would be required to plow both sidewalks in the winter since there is typically less foot traffic in the winter.

Manager Belmore stated the DOT expects the City to plow both sides. He stated if they did not plow them all it would likely become a safety concern.

Councilor Witham stated they would have a few years before this project is completed to plan and budget. He stated by having the correct equipment for sidewalk clearing would speed up the clearing process. He stated he believes if someone is going to build the sidewalks for the City it over shadows the maintenance costs. He stated he would be in favor of the sidewalks as submitted from Works Way south to the Dover line.

***Councilor Witham, Seconded by Vincent made a motion to support two sidewalks along Route 108 starting at Works Way going south to the Dover line. The motion passes by a 4-0 roll call vote.***

#### SRPC METRO PLAN FOR DOT 10-YEAR PLAN

Manager Belmore stated he is seeking the input of this Committee before they submit their recommendation of projects to SRPC to send to NH DOT for their 10 Year Plan. He stated currently in the plan are the following projects:

- Sidewalk on W. High from Cemetery to High Street, High Street from W. High to Memorial Drive.
- Route 108 Complete Streets Work (Construction in 2024/2025)
- Feasibility Study for Exit 10 (2022 Preliminary Engineering)
- Intersection Improvements- High/Blackwater/Indigo Hill (Preliminary Engineering 2022, Construction 2025)
- High/W. High Street Sidewalk (2028 Preliminary Engineering, 2030 Construction).

Councilor Witham stated he knows that the State struggles to fund even small portions of projects. He stated he is hesitant to add more projects to the list even if they are important projects. He stated he felt they should focus their efforts to chip away at the current list.

Councilor Dumont stated he concurs with Councilor Witham. He stated his frustration is that the projects do not always get completed within 10 years.

Councilor Vincent stated he is also in agreement.

Councilor Witham stated the consensus of the Committee is to stick with the current projects on the 10 Year Plan and not add any more.

## ROAD RESURFACING/PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT

Manager Belmore stated they are seeking more feedback to zero in on the roads the Committee wants staff to include in the FY2021 Road Resurfacing Request for Bids (RFB). He stated that there was discussion to complete more crack sealing again. He stated they have estimated about \$18,000 worth of crack sealing to be completed. He stated the TAP Grant is addressing the East side of High Street and there has been discussion to add the West side of High Street to complete granite curbing installation, sidewalk repairs and a possible overlay from Washington to Memorial.

Director Smith reviewed the road resurfacing budget available.

Manager Belmore stated including money from the transportation fund, to complete all road resurfacing, crack sealing and High Street projects on the list would put us over budget.

Councilor Witham stated he likes the list they have been presented and the streets listed are in great need of resurfacing. He suggested that High Street be included as a bid alternate so that in the case of additional funds becoming available, the project may be completed.

There was a brief discussion about the road assessment values.

Councilor Gerding stated he is in support of including High Street as a bid alternate. He inquired if the intersection of Franklin and High St was going to be addressed.

Councilor Witham stated it will be part of the TAP Grant project. Staff noted for the Committee that the Finance Committee has recently approved funding from the special Highway Block Grant funds to address the tie in of the intersection between High Street and Franklin Street.

There was a brief discussion on the time frame of the TAP Grant completion.

***Councilor Witham, Seconded by Councilor Dumont, motion to support a Resolution outlining the submitted plan to be presented to the Council at the August meeting. The Motion Carries by a 4-0 roll call vote.***

## MISCELLANEOUS

City Engineer Lemay updated the Committee on the Pike pavement punch list. He stated they are still coordinating to receive the final price quote. He stated they expect Pike to mobilize in the next 2-3 weeks.

Manager Belmore stated at the last meeting there was discussion of debris within the wetlands along Memorial Drive. He stated staff went to inspect the area and it appears to be clean. He stated they will keep an eye on it moving forward and address if the situation escalates in the future.

Gerding stated he appreciates that staff looked into the issue. He stated he would relay that insight to the resident who brought it to his attention.

Witham stated he thought the pavement long line striping work was well done. He stated the company they hired for the hand work (cross walks, arrows, etc.) also did a good job. He stated if they use the same hand work company next year, he would suggest adjusting their approach to address the larger and busier streets first and then move onto the small quiet streets.

#### ADJOURNMENT

*Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Dumont seconded by Councilor Vincent, motion passed 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:51AM*

Respectfully submitted,

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Dana Crossley, Planning Secretary