

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

August 4, 2021 5:00 p.m.

Committee Members present: Councilor David A. Witham, Chairman
Councilor Martin Dumont, Vice Chairman
Councilor Matt Gerding
Councilor Kenneth Vincent

Administration/Staff present: City Manager Bob Belmore
Finance Director Scott Smith
Director of Public Works Michael Bobinsky
City Engineer Amber Ferland
City Clerk Jonathan Slaven

Guests present: Robert Stowell, President - Tritech Engineering

Chairman Witham called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON JUNE 15, 2021

Councilor Dumont made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2021 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0.

REVIEW OF ORDINANCE NO. 2-22, CHAPTER 12

Manager Belmore stated Ordinance 2-22 has been referred to this Committee for review. Councilor Witham stated he believes this Ordinance is far too detailed. Manager Belmore noted several instances where business have utilized public outdoor space without the need to have the rules memorialized in an Ordinance. In the past, he explained, if someone was obstructing the sidewalk, we would speak to the business owner using a common-sense approach. Manager Belmore stated that staff had been working on these changes to Chapter 12 prior to Covid, but it was still a working draft, and with the on-going pandemic the City has been authorizing temporary permits for outdoor dining. A copy of City staff's draft regulations was sent to the downtown roundtable improperly as Staff was not finished with the Draft. Ordinance 2-22 was prepared by City staff with the downtown roundtable's changes incorporated in it.

Councilor Gerding stated that he supports the idea to put outdoor dining and sidewalk sale regulations in Chapter 12 and said if businesses are asking for such language, we should move forward with it. Councilor Witham replied that he is not opposed to such regulations, just that the Ordinance before the Committee today is too detailed.

Councilor Dumont stated that this is a piece of legislation that could potentially disrupt infrastructure; adding that we just don't have streets that could be shut down. Dumont said businesses did not include the use of City property in their original business plan and said he is in no rush to look at this Ordinance.

Councilor Vincent made a motion to support tabling Ordinance No. 2-22. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dumont and failed. Councilor Witham and Gerding voted No.

Councilor Gerding asked if we currently allow outdoor dining through a permit process. Manager Belmore replied that due to the Covid emergency, a temporary approval application and approval process was developed to allow outdoor dining. Director Smith added that it was an annual permit that expires November 15. Councilor Witham stated that regardless of it coming from reasons pertaining to Covid, he is okay with the idea to codify. Councilor Gerding asked for clarity on where the changes came from. Manager Belmore explained Ch. 12 Draft changes came from City staff; however, the working draft was then sent to the roundtable group prematurely. Councilor Dumont stated that the permit is not going to release liability held by the City and said he would be more amendable to seeing permits for outdoor dining on specific individual dates. After a brief discussion on the next step for this process, the Committee reached consensus to have staff make edits to the document and bring back to Committee.

Councilor Dumont made a motion to have staff edit the proposed Ordinance No. 2-22 and bring back to Committee for consideration. The motion was seconded by Councilor Vincent and passed 4-0.

UNITIL EASEMENT FOR NEW NATURAL GAS STATION

Manager Belmore gave a brief history of the proposed easement and reasons for Unitil moving their current natural gas station on the corner of Bartlett Avenue & Maple St. to a new facility behind the Forest Glade Cemetery, on property where the City stores gravel and other such materials for Public Works. The City has been negotiating a cost for the easement with Unitil, as well as the possibility of providing a line for natural gas to the Police Station and Public Works Facility. Councilor Gerding asked what type of fuel do they currently use at these facilities, and staff responded propane.

Councilor Dumont made a motion to sponsor a Resolution to approve the easement for a new natural gas station as proposed. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0.

PROJECT UPDATES

Manager Belmore detailed highlights in a memo from City Engineer Amber Ferland regarding various projects going on throughout the City.

Continental Paving has completed Nadeau Street and will return in the next few weeks to complete the water trench repairs.

BETA will be providing a draft report regarding their sidewalk assessment in the next week or two.

The City has begun easement discussions with residents on High Street associated with the TAP grant project. Construction is anticipated to begin Spring 2022.

Draft Plans, Specifications, and Estimate Plans (PS&E) and ROW package have been submitted to NHDOT for review and approval regarding the CMAQ grant project.

Approximately 30% of the water and sewer lines have been installed on Cemetery Road. SUR Construction intends to have the road's binder pavement completed from West High Street to the school before school resumes.

The wastewater treatment plant upgrades are 86% complete. Director Smith informed the Committee that after change orders, there is approximately \$8,900 left in the project. Manager Belmore inquired if the Committee had the inclination to support having the Finance Committee consider adding contingency funds for the wastewater treatment plant. The consensus of the Committee was to forward this to the Finance Committee to review, and possibly make available some additional funding so the City Manager may respond to any future unanticipated issues without having to hold the project up.

Wright Pierce is working on the final plans and specifications for the Rocky Hill Road Culvert replacement project.

Councilor Witham stated Continental Paving did exceptional work and has heard positive feedback from residents. Witham also noted a number of complaints he has received regarding the timing of traffic signals. Director Bobinsky noted the comment and will investigate. Councilor Dumont also noted issues with traffic congestions caused due to ill-timed traffic signals.

MISCELLANEOUS

Robert Stowell of President of Tritech Engineering presented a plan for development at the end of Gator Rock Road. Manager Belmore explained that the proposed development would require the City to discontinue Caiman and Seamore Drives to create space for the proposed 150k square foot warehouse.

Councilor Dumont made a motion to support a Resolution discontinuing Caiman Drive and Seamore Drive. The motion was seconded by Councilor Vincent and passed 4-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Vincent made a Motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Slaven, City Clerk