

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
September 20, 2023 – 3:00 p.m.

Committee Members present: Councilor David A. Witham, Chairman
 Councilor Denis Messier, Vice-Chairman
 Councilor Kenneth Vincent
 Councilor Martin Pepin

Administration/Staff present: City Manager, Bob Belmore
 Finance Director, Scott Smith
 Director of Public Works, Michael Bobinsky
 City Engineer, Amber Hall
 Deputy City Clerk, Ammy Ramsey

Others present: Britt Eckstrom, PE – Wright-Pierce

Councilor Witham called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF JULY 27, 2023

Councilor Messier made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2023 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pepin and passed 4-0 by voice vote.

CONSTITUTIONAL WAY COMPLETE STREET DESIGN

Britt Eckstrom presented an update on the Constitutional Way Complete Streets Project which included a project summary of replacing existing sanitary pipes and services, replacing existing water mains and services, installation of new storm drains and stormwater treatment improvements, roadway construction, sidewalk reconstruction, and streetscaping consistent with High Street. Engineer Eckstrom also mentioned the roadway components that will be implemented, and the utility project components. She also described the streetscape components that will include benches and trash receptacles.

Councilor Messier inquired about implementing a bike lane and Engineer Eckstrom stated that the utility poles would make that a challenge.

Councilor Vincent inquired about contacting the natural gas company to inform them that this project will be happening in case they have any work they would like to do during the project. City Engineer Hall stated they have reached out to Unitil and Eversource to notify them of the project.

Councilor Pepin expressed his concern with the tree placement being under power lines and the issue of trees growing into the power lines and having to be trimmed in the future. Engineer Eckstrom stated she will talk with the landscaper to ensure they plant the appropriate size and species of tree. Councilor Messier mentioned that two existing trees have significant damage on the side of the Legion and would like to have them looked at to see if they should be taken down. Public Works Director Bobinsky stated they will look at them and determine if they are in the City's ROW or on private property.

Councilor Pepin mentioned contacting Coast Bus to see if there would be interest in putting up a bus stop shelter at the corner at Washington Street. Public Works Director Bobinsky stated he will inquire about that.

Engineer Eckstrom continued her presentation with the proposed cost estimate and schedule update. There was discussion pertaining to the easement that was obtained and the retaining wall that may need to be addressed with the property owner. Councilor Vincent inquired about the additional stormwater being diverted down to Washington Street, Engineer Eckstrom stated there should be no issue with the current storm drain in place.

The Committee thanked Britt for the updates and looks forward to the presentation that will be provided to the full Council.

ROUTE 108 CITY SEWER EXTENSION CONCEPT

City Manager Belmore informed the Committee that City staff provided a cost estimate to extend the sewer lines during the construction of the NHDOT Route 108 Complete Streets project. Director Smith provided the cost for a betterment district for a sewer main extension. The estimated cost of the project is \$5,500,000, using a 20-Year Bond Issue with no City contribution therefore the costs will be recovered by the Betterment Assessment Fee for each property estimated between \$26,000-final year at \$15,000.

Councilor Witham stated that this sewer extension would be for 19 properties. There was continued discussion pertaining to possibility of the properties being able to tie into the sewer line from cross country Willand Drive in the future if a sewer line need arises.

The consensus of the Committee is not to pursue the sewer extension at this time.

ROAD RESURFACING AND SIDEWALK PROJECTS

The Committee was presented with the City's Road Surface Rating Report for all City streets. Councilor Witham stated that the High Street sidewalk was just completed and suggested looking into doing the sidewalk on the westerly side and resurfacing High Street from West High to South Street.

He mentioned that this High Street section is the gateway into the City's downtown. Witham also suggested the Committee consider including Parkview Terrace for resurfacing. Councilor Vincent mentioned widening that section of High Street to introduce a turning lane but is not sure that is possible. Councilor Messier is fine with the work but believes that there will need to be some engineering on this section of High Street because of the grade levels. City Engineer Hall stated there are grades and retaining walls that were considered in the cost estimate she prepared which is approximately \$700,000. There was some discussion pertaining to the extent of the scope of work.

Finance Director Smith stated that there are some ARPA funds available along with other funds available of approximately \$1.3 million. City Engineer Hall will come back with revised estimates.

Public Works Director Bobinsky stated that Kelwyn Drive has a low rating but most of that roadway is in Rollinsford so partnering with them would be ideal to do a complete project. There was some discussion pertaining to contacting Rollinsford to see if they are interested in doing this combined project.

Councilor Vincent mentioned that Rouleau Drive is in need of repair as well. It was discussed and stated that Rouleau Drive could wait for another year/s.

STATE DOT 10-YEAR PLAN/CIP

Public Works Director Bobinsky mentioned the State of NH DOT 10-Year Plan has a project that is coming up for the intersections of High Street, Blackwater Road, and Indigo Hill Road. The City portion of the project is in the amount of \$600,000 of the \$3.4-million-dollar project. Director Bobinsky stated that the State is inquiring if the City of Somersworth would like to move forward and put this project in the queue to happen in the next 2 years.

The consensus of the Committee is to move forward.

PROJECT UPDATES

Public Works Director Bobinsky mentioned that the TAP Grant Project is finished with some ornamental lights at the High School campus that are on backorder that will be installed once they are received.

MISCELLANEOUS

Councilor Witham mentioned a repair that still needs to be completed at the intersection of High and Verona Street. Director Bobinsky stated that staff have had some discussions pertaining to that intersection.

Councilor Witham stated that the gas company has done some nice work cleaning up their project areas and inquired about the street markings at the intersections and if they are responsible for that. Director Bobinsky stated that they are working through that with some other work that needs to be done at that intersection as well.

Councilor Witham mentioned the storage units that were built in Rollinsford with access from Tri City Road and the project consisted of finishing the sidewalk and that work has not been completed yet. Director Bobinsky stated he will look into what was agreed upon and check to ensure the work is complete.

Councilor Pepin mentioned that he received a phone call from a resident, Jessica Paradis, concerning the sidewalk on Hamilton Street by her home. There was some discussion concerning some sidewalks not being repaired. The Hamilton Street sidewalk needs complete reconstruction and City Staff will look at the sidewalk to evaluate what can be done now.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Vincent made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Messier and passed 4-0 by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ammy Ramsey, Deputy City Clerk