

**Public Works and Buildings Committee**

**November 16, 2017**

**Council Chambers**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Councilor Ralph Torr – Chairman

Councilor Sandy Keans

Councilor Donald Hamann

Councilor Thomas Willis

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Councilor Ray Varney

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Councilor James Gray

Daniel Fitzpatrick, City Manager

Peter C. Nourse PE, Director of City Service

**MINUTES**

Chairman Torr called the Public Works and Buildings Committee to order at 7:00 PM.

**1. Approve minutes from the October 19, 2017 Public Works & Buildings Meeting.**

Chairman Torr requested comments or a recommendation on last month's meeting.

*Councilor Hamann made a motion to accept minutes as presented for the October 19, 2017 Public Works Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Keans. The Motion passed unanimously.*

Chairman Torr asked if the the Committee would mind discussing the downtown lighting agenda item first as there are two people here for that topic. There were no objections.

- 2. Downtown Decorative Lighting Request** –Emily Pelletier stated that she is the Co-Chairman of the Rochester Community Vibrancy Group. She said that has come to the Public Works & Buildings Committee to discuss the lighting downtown. Ms. Pelletier stated that her group was looking to have the holiday lights in the trees left up until spring when the trees start to leaf out. Mr. Nourse stated that there is a downtown lighting project in progress. He stated this project is to replace the existing LED's with brighter and higher efficiency LED's and also to replace the globes which have become very yellow with age. He stated that there should be a significant impact to the brightness in the downtown area. Councilor Keans clarified the issue as not just safety but that this group was seeking an aesthetic benefit to leaving the lights up. Mr. Nourse stated that the lights that are used are not multi-seasonal lights. These are the simple lights that are the same as you would pick up for home use. He stated that they are run from the lamppost electrical fixtures to the trees and they would be difficult to maintain as they get blown around and the bulbs go out. Mr. Nourse stated that currently they are removed in early

January and that keeping them up much longer than that would be a maintenance problem. Chairman Torr asked if there were other lights that could be used. Mr. Nourse stated that there are some ornamental snowflakes used around the Central Square Park. He stated that these were mounted directly to the pole. He suggested that maybe the group could find something similar that was not just winter or holiday themed that might look nice and be easier to maintain. The Committee was in favor of some type of decorative lighting in the downtown area. Mr. Nourse stated that he would leave them up until they start to blow around or staff has to spend a significant amount of time to chase the outages. Councilor Willis stated that he is familiar with the process the DPW goes through with the current lights and he agrees that these types of lights might not be the best type for this application. Councilor Keans agreed that keeping them up as long as we can won't hurt. The Committee suggested that staff and the Community Vibrancy Group look into the pole mounted ornaments around Central Square park and bring it back for discussion next month.

***Councilor Hamann made a motion to postpone the discussion until next month's meetings after the holiday lights have been up and on a few weeks. Councilor Willis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

**3. Public Input - None**

- 4. 24 Stonewall Drive – Easement** – Mr. Nourse stated that a Mr. Lawrence of 22 Stonewall Drive had written a letter to the City requesting the City to extinguish its 50foot right of way across his property. Mr. Nourse stated that the right of way was originally intended for connectivity from this development to the next one which is on Smoke Street. Mr. Nourse noted that the Smoke Street Development has an 18 foot right of way connecting to the 50 foot one coming in from Stonewall Drive. Mr. Nourse further stated that there is a letter from Seth Creighton from the Planning Department in the packet. The letter states that from a Planning Department perspective there is little to no value in the City maintaining the 50 foot right of way and if the City agrees it could be extinguished, or modified to skirt the edge of the property rather than dissect it down the middle. Councilor Gray stated that if the Planning Board requested the right of way, then the Planning Board should be the ones to make the decision or recommendation to change the notice of decision or extinguish the rights. Councilor Willis stated that this development was owned by the Pray family during the time of Planning Board approvals and he remembered that the family was adamant about leaving a particular right of way at within this project because it was an old road that had historical value. Councilor Willis suggested that the files be looked into to see what was documented. Chairman Torr stated he also remembered a roadway that was in that area that the senior Mr. Pray wanted preserved.

***Councilor Hamann made a motion to have the full City Council send this item to the Planning Board for review. Councilor Willis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

5. **Strafford Square NHDOT Funding** – Mr. Nourse summarized the current NHDOT funding participation in this project. He stated that originally the actual participating construction costs were capped off in the amount of \$700,000. Mr. Nourse explained that this original \$700,000 in federal funds is from a program although it is still available to us, that program is no longer in operation. He stated that through conversations with NHDOT he has learned that there may be additional grant funds available for construction. Mr. Nourse stated he has sent a letter on behalf of the City requesting an additional amount of 2,166,230.00, which is the estimate for the participating portion of the project. He stated that NH DOT has determined that first part of the project for underground utility work with Fairpoint, Metrocast, and Eversource, are non-participating for grant funding. Mr. Nourse stated that he will keep the Committee updated on NHDOT's response. Mr. Nourse also stated that he is still pushing for the utility work to be completed next construction season but he is concerned for delays due to Fairpoint's delay in engineering their portion of the project which is quite complicated. He stated Fairpoint has contracted with a private engineering firm in hopes determining the scope and designing their underground network. Mr. Nourse stated that if the utility work is completed next season as planned then the roundabout construction should happen in the construction season of 2019. He stated he would continue to give the Committee updates. Councilor Keans asked if the underground work was just in the roundabout area. Mr. Nourse stated that it is just in the roundabout area and reaches out about 100 yards out from each roadway into the roundabout.
6. **20 Spaulding Avenue** – Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that as this property owner and the City are still in negotiations regarding this property and he advised that this subject not be discussed in a public forum tonight. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that the City Attorney would be updating the full Council at the next City Council Workshop meeting on November 21, 2017.
7. **Chestnut Hill Rd – Service Connection** – Mr. Nourse stated that this item is on the agenda because of an inquiry Councilor Gray made through the City Manager's office regarding tying in a private property to the City's water main on Chestnut Hill Road. Mr. Nourse stated that this is in regards to the PFOA concerns with the property at 137 Chestnut Hill Road. Mr. Nourse stated that the State of NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) is supplying this home with bottled water and working on releasing the report regarding the completed testing of the area. Councilor Gray stated that this is the only property tested that was positive for PFOA contaminates above the acceptable limits and he believes that the City should connect the property to the City's water main and worry about collecting the funds to do so at a later date. Councilor Gray stated that the first step should be for the City to contact Lydall to make them aware of the process to get the water tied in. Mr. Nourse stated that he has had discussions with NHDES regarding the issue and he believes that either the property owner or the tenant does not want to have the water connected. Councilor Keans suggested that the City

Manager meet with all parties to determine the status of the issue and to determine the plan moving forward. Councilor Gray stated that he could not discuss the issue in a public forum but he has been updated and kept in the loop due to his Senate position in the State of N. Councilor Keans stated that she is not ready to spend public funds to connect the water to a private property if we do not know how it is going to be paid back. Councilor Gray suggested tabling the discussion for a month pending the report. He also suggested that the City should contact Lydall to see how the negotiations are going. Councilor Keans asked if by postponing or tabling the discussion that would limit the City Managers ability to discuss this issue with any of the parties. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated it would not. Councilor Hamann asked if NHDES was taking the lead on this and if it would be appropriate to allow them to do so. Councilor Gray stated that there are things happening on both the NHDES side and the Lydall side and that they are in contact with each other.

***Councilor Willis made motion to table this item for discussion at the December Public Works & Buildings Committee Meeting. Councilor Hamann seconded the motion.***

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**Strafford Regional Planning Committee (SRPC)– Review of ten year Plan –** Mr. Nourse stated that the City Council had received a briefing at the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting from the Director of SRPC. The City Council asked that the SRPC Director put together a summary of the projects and long range plan that pertains to Rochester. Mr. Nourse stated that he has received the list with all of the projects. He stated that these projects were rated and scored and that there are no Rochester projects that made it into this cycle which runs through 2027-2028. He stated that the 125/Lowell Street Intersection plan is in there and it appears to be an error but he was not sure as to how or why it was put in the plan. Mr. Nourse stated that he intend to become much more involved with SRPC to ensure a solid link between the City and SRPC so that the City Councils goals are conveyed. Councilor Gray stated that Councilor Varney had requested that Rt 11 Corridor and traffic issues be submitted within the comment period. Mr. Nourse stated that this did not get submitted and that it would have to be in the next cycle. Chairman Torr and Councilor Willis stated their concern for safety in the area. Councilor Willis stated that as any future development in the Rt11 corridor will require driveway and other permits from NHDOT, the City staff should make sure that the State is on the same page as to the safety concerns and the timing of future projects in the area. Mr. Nourse stated he had written a letter to NHDOT regarding the concerns expressed by Cocheco Estates Community and the timing of the lights at Exit 15. The letter also discussed the high traffic volume and the need for sidewalks. Mr. Nourse stated he had received a letter back basically stating that any lights to be added would be the responsibility of the property owners or developers and that current traffic volumes were close but do not meet the criteria that would mandate a traffic light at Nashoba Drive (Cocheco Estates). He said the letter also stated that the sidewalks would be the City's responsibility and the

letter did not address the timing issue of the lights at Exit 15. Mr. Nourse stated he had two calls into the state regarding the light timings and he has not heard back from them as of today. Councilor Gray requested a letter from City Staff addressed to him regarding the timing of the lights and lack of NHDOT response to that item of concern. He stated he would forward this on to the NH DOT Commissioner for a response.

8. **Other**

**Irish Street Sidewalk** – Councilor Gray stated the Public Safety Committee (PSC) had discussed sidewalk to Irish Street and removing a utility pole at the intersection of Irish and Charles Street. He stated there is a sidewalk from Columbus Avenue on Irish Street that ends about half of the way to Charles Street but that they do not connect. Councilor Gray stated that the Public Works Department does sidewalk funds and the PSC is going to recommend to the full City Council that this section of sidewalk be added. Councilor Keans stated that there is no traffic on this street and that she did not feel this would be a good use for the sidewalk funding. She further stated that there are areas with much more traffic all over the City without sidewalks that have kids walking to schools and busses. Councilor Keans also stated that the utility pole should not be moved.

**Sullivan Farm Lane St Light** – Councilor Gray stated that the PSC will also be recommending the moving of a street light on Sullivan Farm Road.

**Winkley Farm / Fiddlehead Lane Water Quality Issues** – Councilor Willis stated that he is bringing this issue up stimulate discussion and long range planning. He stated that the City was made aware of the water quality issues on Winkley Farm Road and the surrounding area about a year or two ago. He stated that the results from the testing done showed no Mtbe contamination but extremely high iron and manganese. Councilor Willis suggested that the staff stay up to date on the rules that are being established on the Water Supply Trust Funds as this may be a project eligible for funding when the State is ready to start looking at projects. He suggested that in order to solve the water quality problem in the area the City would need to run the main line up Walnut Street to the intersection of Estes Road & Meaderboro Road. Councilor Willis suggested that this would be a multi-million dollar project in the area of 8 figures. Councilor Keans asked if the Water Supply Trust Funds were being set up for just Mtbe issues. Councilor Hamann stated that there are two funds being set up. One is for Mtbe issues and one is for other water quality issues. Councilor Keans asked where these funds came from. Councilor Willis stated that it was part of the Exxon settlement. Councilor Gray suggested that if this project would be so costly the City should try to think outside the box to engineer the solution for this issue.

***Chairman Torr made a motion to adjourn at 8:07. Councilor Keans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa J. Clark, City of Rochester Administration and Utility Billing Supervisor.