

**TOWN IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
TOWN HALL – LUDLOW ROOM
January 26, 2010**

APPROVED MINUTES

PRESENT: Councilor William Herzfeld, Chair; Councilors Matthew Marci and Ronald Eleveld

STAFF: Town Manager, Peter Souza; Assistant Town Manager, Emily Moon; Town Engineer, Tom Lenehan; Project Engineer, Victoria Houle; Fire Chief, Bill Lewis; Director of Recreation Services, Paul Norris; Director of Public Works, Brian Funk

GUESTS: Sandy Fry, CRCOG, Transportation Planner; Ken Smith, Assistant Fire Chief; Mike Noga, Deputy Fire Chief

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None, although a letter from Mr. Bradshaw Smith, 23 Ludlow Road, regarding his comments on the proposed 2011-2016 Capital Improvements Plan was handed out to members.

3. DISCUSSION OF PROSPECT HILL ROAD RECONSTRUCTION

Town Manager Souza reminded the committee that this project was split into two phases in May 2009.

Mr. Tom Lenehan, Town Engineer, told the committee about the project's history and the past actions the Town Council has taken on the project. He then presented a PowerPoint presentation that was shown to residents in January 2010. He reviewed the purpose for the project, which included adding drainage, improving pavement and adding vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian safety amenities.

Ms. Sandra Fry, CRCOG, reviewed CRCOG's pedestrian and bicycle plan and CRCOG's goals of getting people to shift their travel habits to other types of transit. She discussed the reasons why a town might want to invest in bike/pedestrian facilities.

Ms. Victoria Houle, Project Engineer, continued the town's PowerPoint presentation, which showed the future sidewalk connectivity. Mr. Lenehan reviewed the safety improvements that are expected from the project. Ms. Houle reviewed some of the residents' concerns and how those would be addressed on Prospect Hill including installing traffic calming measures. Mr. Lenehan reviewed the next steps and timeline for the project.

Councilor Eleveld expressed that he felt bike lanes were a great idea, but wondered if a multi-use path would be a better option. Mr. Lenehan explained that Prospect Hill Road would not be an appropriate place to do this due to the number of conflicting driveways. Also, a multi-use path can create confusion with intersecting roads, which Prospect Hill

has several of. To receive federal funds, a 10-foot wide path would be required, which adds two feet of pavement to the cross-section. Also, some bicyclists will continue to use the road.

Councilor Marci asked what the road width is now. Mr. Lenehan stated that it is presently 23-25 feet in width with little to no base material.

Councilor Marci asked if the houses would be connected to the sewer system. Mr. Lenehan explained that this process of connecting has been explained and distributed to residents, but that none had contacted the MDC to start this petition process.

Councilor Marci wondered if the utilities would be placed underground. Town Manager Souza responded that the utilities would not be changed – if they are above ground now, they will be above ground after the project.

Councilor Herzfeld asked staff to review the cross-section widths. He asked about any takings. Mr. Lenehan explained that only three small and potential strip takings might be required, but that staff will try to design the project to minimize or eliminate that potential.

Councilor Herzfeld asked if we could feasibly get all residents to support the project. Mr. Souza said that he felt some residents would continue to oppose the project, primarily because of the sidewalk, but that very few projects have total consensus on all issues.

Councilor Herzfeld mentioned that a resident had suggested that the town did not own the road. Ms. Moon said that the town attorney had researched this question and clarified that the town had been given rights and responsibilities for the road in the 1920's.

Councilor Herzfeld asked if a bike lane needs to be on both sides. Ms. Fry stated that this is necessary for safety.

Councilor Herzfeld asked if the sidewalk width could be reduced from 5 feet to 4 feet. Mr. Lenehan and Town Manager Souza responded that it was a possibility but it is not recommended for safety reasons. Also, a 5-foot walk is our subdivision regulation standard. Staff will look at how to adjust the snow shelf, for example, to minimize property impacts.

Councilor Eleveld asked whether rumble strips would help improve safety. Mr. Brian Funk, Director of Public Works, responded that the noise may be unacceptable.

Town Manager Souza explained that some of the design features will be explored and determined during the design phase.

Councilor Herzfeld asked what the speed limit is on this road. Mr. Lenehan said it is presently 30 mph.

Councilor Marci asked what STP reimbursement we can expect and whether that has changed with the changes in scope. Ms. Houle and Mr. Lenehan explained that we still

expect to get the maximum allowable of \$2.2 million for Phase 1 and whatever is not received in Phase 1 will likely be received in Phase 2, for example if unit costs change.

The committee discussed inviting residents including surrounding neighborhoods to a Town Improvements Committee meeting to get input from them.

Councilor Herzfeld expressed his desire to hold the meeting at Northwest Park.

Town Councilor Herzfeld asked if the traffic signal had been approved. Mr. Lenehan said that information had been submitted to the Department of Transportation and that initial data shows it meets warrants. Additional data will be submitted during the design.

Staff will look into scheduling a meeting in mid-February.

4. DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED 2011-2016 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP)

Town Manager Souza started the discussion by talking about staff's goals in developing the 6-year CIP. He spoke about his desire to include some smaller cost but more numerous assets in the capital program (like streetlights). Many of these projects are shown as being cash funded. The debt service impact for FY 11 and FY 12 will be level. All six years stay within the debt management policy goal.

The Town Manager highlighted a few FY 11 projects, including the pavement management programs. He discussed how showing the pavement reclamation and sidewalk/curb replacement programs as being 'general funded' is a return to past practice.

Mr. Funk spoke about the town's streetlight replacement needs.

Councilor Marci asked if we could show how well the level of road funding is keeping up with the need. Town Manager Souza said that staff will work to show this. The pavement programs fund what is most feasible, not what is needed to reinvest and replace in those assets. Our contractor, VHB's, pavement condition assessment shows we have more needs than what is funded.

Mr. Funk explained the pavement line striping project. The epoxy should last 3-5 years while paint lasts only about a year. Town Aid for Roads money has been used to do line striping recently because the General Fund could not afford it.

Councilor Herzfeld asked if the Department of Public Works General Fund would be reduced by moving some of these projects to the CIP. Town Manager Souza said that not many of the new projects are using general funds, but any savings would be shifted to cover cost increases in other items.

Mr. Funk described the federal sign upgrade program.

Mr. Lenehan explained the State Routes to Schools project.

Councilor Herzfeld expressed his support for the Route 159 corridor enhancement project.

Councilor Eleveld asked for some more statistics and details on the fire apparatus replacement needs like hours, mileage, body quality, etc. Mr. Ken Smith, Assistant Fire Chief, described how Rescue 7 is a manual transmission and that the number of people who can drive standard vehicles are decreasing.

The committee discussed the Riverfront bike path project's timeline, scope and cost.

Assistant Town Manager Moon explained the Town Clerk's Office's ADMINS software replacement project.

Mr. Paul Norris, Director of Recreation Services, reviewed the basketball/tennis court replacement project.

5. STAFF REPORTS

Town Manager Souza stated that the upcoming Town Council meeting will include an authorization request for refinancing for approximately \$15 million in debt. The Poquonock School heating project might also appear on that agenda or on the next agenda for bonding authorization.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Councilor Marci, seconded by Councilor Eleveld, to approve the September 28, 2009 minutes.

Motion Passed 3-0-0

7. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councilor Marci, seconded by Councilor Eleveld, to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m.

Motion Passed 3-0-0

Respectfully submitted by,

Emily Moon, Recording Secretary