

City of Keene
New Hampshire

MUNICIPAL SERVICES, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 22, 2017

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

Members Present:

Janis O. Manwaring, Chair
Randy L. Filaault, Vice-Chair
Stephen L. Hooper
Gary P. Lamoureux

Staff Present:

Rebecca Landry, Assistant City Manager/IT
Director
Thomas P. Mullins, City Attorney
Kurt Blomquist, Public Works Director
Donald Lussier, City Engineer

Members Not Present:

Robert J. O'Connor

Chair Manwaring called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and explained the procedures of the meeting.

1) Attorney Thomas R. Hanna - Request for Licenses - Proposed Development of "Hillside Village" on Wyman Road

Rob Hitchcock, representing SVE Associates, explained the developer's request for licenses to allow utilities and an underground walkway to be installed within and beneath the Wyman Road Right-of-Way for the proposed Hillside Village project.

Using a site map on display, Mr. Hitchcock pointed out where an underground walkway would run between buildings and where sewer lines would run. In addition, he noted that a fire main would be installed that would run from the community building to the health care facility, pointing out the location of a fire pump. He stated that the lines were all private lines.

He said there will be some accommodation for electric and communication cables run between the two sides of Wyman Road, but the details haven't been worked out yet with Eversource and Fairpoint.

Mr. Blomquist said the developer is seeking licenses to place the private utilities and facilities in the right-of-way, related to Item D on the agenda: alteration of Wyman Road. Mr. Blomquist explained the anticipated schedule for approvals and the start of construction as follows:

- March 2: MSFI site visit and public hearing in the evening
- March 8: Action by MSFI on the developer's request
- March 16: Action by the full Council on MSFI recommendation.

Mr. Blomquist stated that the timetable provides enough time for the developer to identify any additional utilities that may be needed.

Chair Manwaring asked how this request differs from Item D Alteration of Wyman Road (on the “More Time” part of the agenda). Mr. Blomquist explained that Item D relates to proposed changes to the roadway, adding width and creating slopes, but this request deals specifically with the private utilities within the public right-of-way.

In response to a question from Councilor Jones about whether the communication utility lines would be above or below ground, Mr. Hitchcock said that he believed they would be below ground, but that this was not within his scope of work. Councilor Jones stated that in most new development, the city is encouraging underground installations. In addition, he said that in all new private and public development the city is pushing for the inclusion of broadband conduit. Mr. Hitchcock said fiber optic is already on the road.

Councilor Lamoureux made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 4-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee placed this item on “More Time.”

2) Rt. 12 / Main Street over Beaver Brook - Bridge Replacement - Public Works Department

City Engineer Donald Lussier, said this item relates to the construction of a Route 12/Main Street replacement bridge over Beaver Brook, just south of Route 101 (near Martell Court) as part of the City Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement Capital Improvement Program (CIP). He explained that the bridge is one of 14 red-listed bridges in Keene, and that the project will be paid for through the cost-sharing State Aid Bridge Program: with 80 percent of the costs covered by the state and 20 percent by the city.

Mr. Lussier said the design consultants and the DPW previously came to the city with design alternatives, from which the City Council took action, deciding upon a preferred alternative. He said the design consultants then took that preferred alternative and developed final designs for the project, which were approved by the state Department of Transportation (DOT), with construction expected to take place during the summer.

Mr. Lussier said this item is on the agenda for two reasons:

1. To receive a report by the city’s design consultant on the traffic control plans for the project, recognizing that this is a very busy and complicated intersection. The goal is to get as much information as possible to the public about how traffic will be managed at the intersection.
2. To correct a formality. The project has received staff approval to complete the design, and the next step is to negotiate and execute agreements for temporary construction access, and to begin putting together construction contracts putting the work out to bid so the project can move forward.

Mr. Lussier stated that the project will have minimal impacts temporarily on private property rights-of way and no permanent impacts or limits on use of private property. He said the city is seeking agreements with three private property owners: Tire Warehouse, the Citgo station and an

oil service company. In the case of Tire Warehouse, he said the city is looking for a temporary construction easement for the parking of a crane, and a permanent easement to maintain a drainage basin. In the case of the Citgo station, the city is seeking a temporary construction access easement to allow work to be done on the stream channel. Regarding the propane company, the city is seeking a small permanent slope easement to maintain the embankment once it's restored.

The design consultant, Michael Pillsbury, Director of Civil Engineering for Louis Berger, used maps on display to show the area to be affected by the construction project to begin his presentation on traffic flow. The current twin culverts made of corrugated metal built in 1961 will be replaced by twin precast concrete structures that are larger and will accommodate greater flow.

He explained that the construction will proceed through three phases of traffic control:

Phase 1: The intent is to construct the part of the structure to the east, shifting traffic to the west side of Route 12. When approaching from Main Street, the traffic will be separated out, with a left-hand turn lane; a separate single lane going forward will be narrower and moved to the west, and a right turn lane. A temporary sidewalk will be constructed, and some of the concrete island and curb removed. Culvert sections, as well as some utility, water lines and underground telephone ducts will be installed.

Phase 2: Traffic will be moved to the east side of Route 12. When approaching from Main Street, the traffic will again be separated out with a left hand turn lane, a straight lane and right turn lane.

Phase 2a: The construction of a small section in the middle to allow the temporary sidewalk to be extended in the next phase into that small section to accommodate pedestrians.

Mr. Pillsbury said that the goal of the design is to maintain traffic flow to businesses throughout the construction, with the one exception being Martell Court, which will have its access closed during the first phase. To remedy this, he said, a temporary driveway connection will be constructed between Route 101 and Martell Court across DOT property.

Mr. Lussier said the consultants have been focused on moving traffic through the work zone, while the city has been looking at how to move people through the region. Regarding Martell Court, it will be closed off at Main Street, and there will be a right turn in and right turn out from 101. He said that there would be signage in the area directing traffic to and from Martell Court.

In addition, Mr. Lussier said that trailer-mounted message boards would display information for drivers at key areas so they can decide the best route to take to their destinations.

Mr. Lussier explained that the Swanzey Factory Road intersection with Route 101 is a concern because of the configuration of the bridge and the curve in the road. He said he is concerned that drivers wanting to avoid the construction site will take a left off Swanzey Factory Road against oncoming traffic. In an effort to discourage that use of the road, he said, his department has

worked with the police department on a plan that would prohibit left turns on a temporary basis during construction. Drivers coming off Swanzey Factory Road will have to take a right-hand turn. Signs would warn drivers to watch for increased traffic coming off Swanzey Factory Road.

Chair Manwaring asked where drivers who want to make a left turn off Swanzey Factory Road will be able to turn around. Mr. Lussier responded that they could use the parking lot of a business. He said the goal is to prevent northbound traffic from using Swanzey Factory Road as a cut-off to avoid the work area.

In response to Chair Manwaring's question about duration of the project, Mr. Pillsbury explained that the intent is to have the contract awarded by June 1st with a completion date in October. It is anticipated, he said, that the bulk of the work will be done between the Fourth of July and Labor Day.

Mr. Filiault expressed concern about the left-turn prohibition, saying that it would be safer to continue to take an existing left at the intersection rather than having drivers turn around in areas not designed for that purpose. He suggested that it would be a better idea to have a police presence at the intersection, directing drivers, or as an alternative one of the companies the city hires to help with traffic control.

Mr. Lussier said that vehicles from the south actually should use the route through the construction site because the sight lines at the Swanzey Factory Road intersection are so limited.

In response to a question about traffic lighting from Mr. Lussier, Mr. Pillsbury said that adjustment to the timing and location of signal heads on the mast arms would be adjusted as the project progresses.

In response to a question from Councilor Lamoureux about the utility line installation, Mr. Lussier said the project includes new water and sewer lines and accommodations for the existing telecommunications conduits. He said Liberty utilities had been offered the opportunity to use the construction to install a stub for future needs, but the company did not elect to do that.

Councilor Lamoureux asked if there would be a no-right-turn-on-red light sign for drivers heading east on 101 who want to turn right on Route 12 to go south. Mr. Pillsbury said that is a question he would pursue with the traffic planners for the project.

Returning to the issue of the Swanzey Factory Road intersection, Councilor Lamoureux asked if there had been any discussion of installing a temporary traffic light. Mr. Lussier said that option was worth consideration but would have to be discussed with NHDOT.

Mr. Hooper raised concerns about drivers coming out of Martell Court taking U-turns, but Mr. Lussier said that he believes it is currently posted for no U-turns.

Mr. Hooper said that he supported the suggestion by Mr. Lamoureux to pursue the idea of installing a temporary traffic light at the Swanzey Factory Road/Route 101 intersection.

Councilor Bettina Chadbourne speaking from the audience asked about the notification to affected businesses. Mr. Lussier said the city reached out to inform businesses: a meeting was held at Public Works at the end of December and letters were sent. He said the outreach would continue.

In response to a question from Councilor Chadbourne, Mr. Lussier said the project includes an allowance for broadband conduit under the new sidewalk.

City Attorney Mullins asked if the driveway access to Martell Court is going to be considered a Class 5 road. Mr. Lussier explained that the state calls it a driveway permit but it is a temporary access point with all the standard indemnifications.

Chair Manwaring asked for further explanation regarding the duration of traffic disruptions. Mr. Lussier said that the disruptions will be continuous from the expected start date of work at the beginning of July to Labor Day. Mr. Pillsbury stated that more limited kinds of disruptions might be expected beyond Labor Day, when finishing work is accomplished.

Chair Manwaring expressed concern that Norm's Bike Shop and Agway will have their business adversely affected during their most busy time. Mr. Lussier agreed with those concerns, noting that the project is being undertaken during the driest time of the year because of its location in a stream bed.

Councilor Filiault made the following motion, which was seconded by Council Lamoureux.

On a vote of 4-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the proposed bridge replacement project for the Main Street/ Route 12 bridge over Beaver Brook.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Kathleen Fleming, Minute-taker