

City of Keene  
New Hampshire

**MUNICIPAL SERVICES, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, December 13, 2017**

**6:00 PM**

**Council Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Janis O. Manwaring, Chair  
Robert J. O'Connor  
Stephen L. Hooper

**Members Not Present:**

Randy L. Filiault, Vice-Chair  
Gary P. Lamoureux

**Kendall W. Lane, Mayor**

**Staff Present:**

Elizabeth Dragon, City Manager  
Thomas Mullins, City Attorney  
Beth Fox, Assistant City Manager  
Kürt Blomquist, Public Works Director  
Don Lussier, City Engineer  
Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks, Recreation  
& Cemeteries  
Donna Hanscom, Assistant Public Works  
Director  
Aaron Costa, Wastewater Operations Manager  
Eric Swope, Industrial Pretreatment  
Coordinator  
Mary Ley, Lab Supervisor

Chair Manwaring called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, welcomed the public, and explained the rules of procedure.

**1) Eversource Energy – Tree Trimming on Scenic Roads**

The representative from Eversource could not attend this meeting due to weather. Councilor O'Connor made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Hooper.

On a vote of 3-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends the request for tree trimming on scenic roads be placed on more time.

**2) Mayor Lane – Renaming Carpenter Field to the Patricia T. Russell Field**

Mayor Lane said this proposal is something that has been in discussion for some time. He listed reasons for changing the name of Carpenter Field:

- The City has developed a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) relating to Carpenter Field to convert it into a recreation facility; a proposed \$1.5 million project to upgrade the field.
- Patricia Russell was the first female Mayor of Keene and an iconic figure in this community. Accomplishments while she was Mayor include: establishing the

Ashuelot River Park, celebration of the millennium, and bringing President Bill Clinton to Keene. Ms. Russell grew up in the neighborhood of Carpenter Field, so this is particularly fitting.

Mayor Lane continued that in working with the Director of Parks and Recreation he found there is no basis to keep the name Carpenter Field – it holds no particular significance besides being located on Carpenter Street.

City Ordinance O-96-20 relating to the naming of public facilities after an individual sets forth a process for renaming, which requires a favorable decision by a City Committee that no longer exists. The Ordinance requires:

- *That the qualifying facility be under the ownership of and funded through the City of Keene.* Carpenter Field is owned and funded by the City.
- To name a facility after an individual at least one of the requirements must be fulfilled:
  - *A well-known community leader, elected, appointed, or volunteer.* Ms. Russell fits this description.
  - *An individual has positively influenced a large population of the City through their contribution.* Ms. Russell fits this description.
  - *An individual who has had a major involvement in the acquisition or development of the facility.* While Ms. Russell was not involved in the development of Carpenter Field, she was prominent in the development of the Ashuelot River Park.
  - *An individual whose civic leadership or volunteerism clearly contributed to the betterment of the City.* Ms. Russell fits this description.
  - *An individual who is deceased and whose personal attributes symbolize the principles and standards of a community organization.* Ms. Russell fits this description.

Mayor Lane continued explaining the process for renaming: if the MSFI Committee makes a recommendation for this renaming to Council and Council agrees it is appropriate, then a resolution will be drafted to rename. A copy of that resolution will then be presented to Ms. Russell's family – the family is very excited about this possibility. Then, Mayor Lane assumes, once the Resolution is accepted that appropriate signage will be generated for the facility.

Chair Manwaring recognized Councilor Philip Jones who agreed with Mayor Lane that Ms. Russell meets the criteria for renaming this field as she was one of the greatest supporters and contributors to this community. He asked if the renaming should also change the description from a field to a park. Mayor Lane agreed following redevelopment the field will be more of a recreational area.

The Director of Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries said he fully supports this renaming, especially as he grew up in Keene and knows how much the Russell family has contributed to the City. The park renovations are scheduled for FY21 to include a walking track around the perimeter, enhanced connection to the bike path, a sports field,

and efforts to complement restoration of Beaver Brook, a playground, and possibly a pavilion. Both the neighborhood and the Keene Rotary Club have been involved with this restoration. He said the renaming is ideal. He agreed changing the description of the field to park or recreation area is a good idea because it will be developed into a greater community asset.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor O'Connor.

On a vote of 3-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends a Resolution be drafted for the renaming of Carpenter Street Field to the Patricia T. Russell Park.

### **3) Gilbo East Parking Lot Improvements – Public Works Department**

The City Engineer explained he was at this meeting to give a brief presentation and overview of the proposed Gilbo East Parking Project. This project was a part of the 2018 CIP and was originally proposed for FY19, but Council elected to move it to FY18. The project is in the design phase, surveys are complete, and meetings have been held with the Parking, Police, and Planning Departments. This included consultation with the Highway Department responsible for plowing the lot. The City Engineer showed a design of the optimized, feasible scenario for this project within the budget. Goals include improving the streetscape aesthetics along Gilbo Avenue, softening edges, defining sidewalks (raised concrete), and connecting sidewalks to those that currently exist near Lindy's Diner. This plan includes a few vegetative islands along Gilbo Avenue to improve aesthetics. A recommendation from the Planning Department was to close one of the three curb cuts to reduce the number of conflicting traffic movements; the downside to this will be the loss of nine parking spaces (101 spaces as opposed to the current 110 spaces). This project does include removal and restoration of deteriorated pavement and repair of drainage issues. Ideally the parking meters will be replaced with kiosks, but this cost was not originally included in the FY18 project costs. The kiosk cost is in the FY19 CIP budget and timing of the project should be consistent with those funds being available. If the Council does not approve the kiosks, the original parking meters will be placed back in the lot. This proposal does not include any lighting changes. The current light poles should still suffice as the parking locations will remain largely the same. In the future these lights will likely be replaced with solar fixtures.

Councilor Hooper said he likes the idea of two entrances to the parking lot instead of three. He asked if vegetation will be short enough for people to clearly see when entering and exiting the lot. The City Engineer replied the plan includes shrubs and low maintenance vegetation; the Highway Superintendent is knowledgeable about landscaping and will be consulted. What is shown on the design is only a concept sketch; the next step will be converting that into construction drawings to put out to bid.

Chair Manwaring asked if this concept drawing is the only choice for Council. The City Engineer replied this is what staff recommends and an option developed to fit within the

available funding; staff is open to guidance and requests for changes. This is the fifth iteration of concept designs to minimize parking impacts and fit within the budget.

Mayor Lane asked, when parking meters are removed, if landscaping or curbing will be installed to prevent drive through parking; he also noted the Planning Department has standards for internal landscaping in parking lots. The City Engineer replied there is no plan for raised curbing for islands of vegetation inside the lot; that option was considered as there is sufficient space in the lot but the cost of curbing would put the project over budget.

Chair Manwaring recognized Councilor Carl Jacobs who asked why parking kiosks are more expensive than replacing the parking meters. The City Engineer replied the kiosks would have to be purchased new, whereas the existing meters could be put back in place with no purchasing cost.

Chair Manwaring said she is concerned about the loss of parking spaces because that lot is always full; she asked if vegetation is necessary or if that area could be used to maintain parking spaces. The City Engineer replied the sidewalks, as shown in the concept drawing, are on the edge of the public right-of-way; part of the logic in that design was to delineate the line of public versus developable space. The vegetation could be eliminated to push the sidewalks further into the right-of-way but that would blur the lines between City and public property. The Public Works Director said the Gilbo lot is highly utilized, but the Commercial Street parking lot (only 30 feet away) is only at 40% occupancy providing sufficient space for increased demand. On-street parking is also not fully utilized. In general, this is a fairly minor loss in parking space, as the Police Department agreed. Chair Manwaring replied she does not park in the Commercial Street lot because she is uncomfortable with the kiosk technology and she might not be the only one in the City with that hesitation. The Public Works Director said he hopes phasing kiosks in over-time throughout the City will help enhance public comfort with the technology.

The City Engineer showed a second drawing, which staff does not recommend because it significantly exceeds the budget. This drawing would only eliminate five parking spaces and add more diagonal parking and a sidewalk along St. James Street, which would require \$60,000 more than is budgeted. He said staff is not insensitive to the concern about lack of parking, but after many iterations of this design, this is the most feasible.

Councilor O'Connor echoed the Mayor's question about how this design will meet Planning Board requirements for parking. The City Engineer replied this design was approved by the Planning Director and does not require Planning Board approval because the project is on existing City property. Chair Manwaring said she feels uncomfortable if there are rules about how a parking lot should be configured and the City is not abiding by those standards. The City Engineer said he cannot provide answers about the Planning Board authority and review process. He continued this is not a time sensitive decision and he suggested coming back after the New Year for a joint presentation with the Planning Director. The Public Works Director said that projects on City property usually

do not go through the Planning Board process because their authority is for private property. Chair Manwaring said she understands that, but thinks the City should comply with its own requirements. Councilor Jacobs agreed with Chair Manwaring and asked if there is a design that complies with Planning Board standards. The City Engineer replied there is a plan for that. He continued this parking lot is in the Gilbo Avenue Overlay District and the first plan was for that lot to completely comply with City Code. However, the City Code was written and developed to apply to private development projects. The Public Works Director added those plans would require 10-15% green space and screening. Because this development is public parking, they have tried to maximize the number of spaces available; this is also necessary because adjacent property owners in the Central Business District do not have to provide parking. Councilor Jacobs said he is concerned about the optics. Mayor Lane agreed he does not want to create roadblocks for this project and agrees the lot needs to be redeveloped, but in the past the City has complied with their own regulations regardless if they have to go before the Planning Board. He thinks everyone would be more comfortable if the Council has an option to decide which proposal they want to move forward with in terms of compliance; it should be a Council decision, not a staff decision.

Councilor O'Connor made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Hooper.

On a vote of 3-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends placing the Gilbo East Parking Lot Improvements on more time with staff returning in January with more options for the Council.

**4) Presentation of Inflow and Infiltration Evaluation of the City's Wastewater Collection System by Hazen & Sawyer Environmental Engineers – Public Works Department**

Aaron Costa, Wastewater Operations Manager at the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), introduced Charles Wilson from Hazen and Sawyer Environmental Engineers. Mr. Costa said a project was put in the City's CIP a few years ago to evaluate inflow and infiltrations in the City's sewer collection system. During heavy rain events the WWTP was experiencing higher than normal flows. Infiltration occurs when water enters the collection system through leaky or broken pipes. Inflow is water that enters a collection system through roof drains or catch basins. In 2015, Hazen and Sawyer completed phase one of evaluation, which included installation of flow monitoring devices in the collection system. This narrowed down where to search for further leaks in phase two. Phase two was completed in August 2017 and targeted those potential problem areas on the east side of the system. Phase two included smoke testing – smoke is passed through the sewer system to show leaks.

Mr. Wilson explained the testing that took place noting the overall goal of testing was to track down extraneous flow in the sewer system to avoid the cost of treating extra water that enters the sewer. There was a prior overall study in the City with monitoring equipment to target hotspots in the City for inflow and infiltration so that investments are

made only where necessary. In the prior study, monitoring data indicated that most extra flow was coming from the eastern part of the City. This is not surprising because there is older commercial and industrial infrastructure in that area. More detailed testing was conducted in this eastern region. Mr. Wilson went on to explain the testing procedures and how notification to the public was handled.

Mr. Wilson continued by explaining what can be found in the sewer system with these smoke tests.

He noted an innovative approach was also used in the field in addition to the smoke testing. Crews also used drones to observe flat roof industrial and commercial buildings. This helps to show if smoke is making its way inside a building where it should not be and coming out of the roof drain stacks of an industrial building. This prevents crews from having to climb onto the roofs.

Mr. Wilson continued explaining the results of the study, which he displayed on a map. The testing revealed 14 indirect catch basin connections; 35 suspect sources like flat roof buildings.. When a building shows smoke, the Public Works Department can notify the building owner about a potential problem; and 5 other defects – manhole leaks, uncapped cleanouts, etc.

Mr. Wilson said now the Public Works Department has this information to further isolate extraneous flow in this system.

Councilor Hooper asked why higher flows during inflow and infiltration are a bad thing. Mr. Costa replied that these flows result in water being treated at the WWTP, like rain and groundwater, which do not need to be treated. This causes extra pumping capacity at the pump station, as well as electrical and staff demands. Also, if water can get into the collections system, it is an indication that water can also leave the system before being treated.

Councilor Hooper made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor O'Connor.

On a vote of 3-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends accepting the Inflow and Infiltration Presentation by Hazen and Sawyer Environmental Engineers as informational.

**5) Departmental Presentation – Protecting Keene’s Water Resources – Public Works Department**

Chair Manwaring welcomed members of the Public Works Department – Eric Swope, Industrial Pretreatment Coordinator, and Mary Ley, Lab Supervisor at the WWTP (Wastewater Treatment Plant).

Mr. Swope began talking about the Industrial Pretreatment Program. Objectives of the program include: protecting the WWTP and infrastructure; protecting public health and worker safety; and, environmental protection and pollution prevention.

Ms. Ley said she works at the Keene City Laboratory, which is at the WWTP. She supervises day-to-day testing and does mineral analysis, other instrumentation, paperwork, and data reporting. She went on to provide some details on the functions the Keene Laboratory provides. Some of the functions include: testing wastewater, drinking water, groundwater, and surface water. Ms. Ley noted it is unusual for a municipal lab to test both groundwater and drinking water, but Keene does both. She noted that in a typical month, the lab runs approximately 1,200 different tests. The lab does this testing to protect the public and ensure Keene's drinking water is safe. The lab is accredited by the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program for drinking water bacteria testing. The other purpose of the testing they do is to protect the environment by ensuring the WWTPs discharge into the Ashuelot River meets EPA permit requirements. To that end they assess both drinking and wastewater resources.

Ms. Ley stated there are a large number of sampling programs at the lab, from daily sampling to annual sampling. Some of the samples are just for process control and others are for EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) or DES (New Hampshire Department of Environment Services) requirements. She went on to detail some of the sampling programs including: sampling what comes in and out of the WWTP and all steps in between; this provides data for staff to keep the WWTP running well and make sure that outflow meets permit discharge requirements; various drinking water sampling to meet requirements from EPA and DES; annual sampling for lead and copper; water quality monitoring and most recently cyanobacteria; storm water sampling for the presence of *E.coli*; and groundwater monitoring to ensure that drinking water levels and sources are protected from pollutants traveling through the aquifer; it establishes a baseline of data that allows staff to look for changes over time.

Mr. Swope continued his portion of the presentation by explaining the Industrial Pretreatment Program, which ensures control of discharge of pollutants into the system. He noted the goals of the program include: protection of the WWTP process; protection of infrastructure, public health and safety; protection of surface waters; reduction of pollutants discharged; and to help businesses to understand requirements and help them to remain in compliance.

Problems staff tries to avoid through the Industrial Pretreatment Program include: the discharge of flammable or explosive materials; worker safety and precautions in confined spaces; and sanitary sewer overflow caused by sewer blockages or capacity issues. Mr. Swope and the WWTP staff works to avoid these problems through some of the following measures: pretreating industrial wastewater; wastewater sampling of industrial wastewater, at least annually; periodic inspections of businesses and their wastewater processes; encouraging pollution prevention; wastewater permitting for businesses; and responding to sewer blockages/overflow via education.

One of Mr. Swope's primary jobs is to inspect businesses grease traps to make sure they are properly maintained. He showed a diagram of a grease trap to show how water enters and leaves the traps. If not properly and frequently maintained, grease builds-up in these traps, reducing its efficiency. Grease traps vary in size from 200 to 2,000 gallons.

The WWTP staff and Public Works Department have begun education and stewardship efforts to support goals of protecting water resources through programs like the 4<sup>th</sup> grade water science fairs in public elementary schools, WWTP tours for schools, The Connecticut River Source to Sea River Clean-Up, and the annual Green-Up Keene event, among others.

Councilor Hooper thanked Mr. Swope and Ms. Ley for an extremely well done presentation. He said it is great to see the work with children. Councilor O'Connor noted his son enjoyed working in the youth program.

Chair Manwaring said she also sees people disposing of cigarettes into the sewers. Mr. Swope replied they have been reminding businesses and patrons with education and signage to not put cigarettes into the drains. Chair Manwaring asked if the Ashuelot River has any impact on the City's water system; she knows high *E.coli* has been found in the river. Mr. Swope replied the City had a grant a few years ago for testing in Beaver Brook so that has been a large focus; but they are interested in any data on surface waters and consult reports from testing in the City.

Councilor O'Connor made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Hooper.

On a vote of 3-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee recommends accepting the presentation on Protecting Keene's Water Resources as informational.

**6) Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Manwaring adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker