



MUNICIPAL SERVICES, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
Council Chambers B, Keene City Hall
February 23, 2022
6:00 PM

A. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Loretta Simonds - Damage to a Sewer Line and House Foundation at 79 Woodburn Street and a Request to Remove a Nearby City Tree
2. Harris Center for Conservation Education - Request to Temporarily Close Jordan Road for up to Six Nights in March and April - Migrating Amphibians

B. MORE TIME ITEMS

NON PUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #A.1.

Meeting Date: February 23, 2022
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Loretta Simonds
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: **Loretta Simonds - Damage to a Sewer Line and House Foundation at 79 Woodburn Street and a Request to Remove a Nearby City Tree**

Council Action:

In City Council February 3, 2022

Referred to Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee.

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Communication_Simonds_Sewer Line_Redacted
2. Sewer Line - 79 Woodburn
3. Root Damage

Background:

Loretta Simonds who lives at 79 Woodburn Street believes that her house foundation and a sewer line are being damaged from the roots of a nearby City tree. Ms. Simonds provided an inspection report from a NH Septic System Licensed Evaluator who is suggesting that because of the location of the mature trees in relation to the sewer line, as well as tree roots that were observed in the cellar, the roots have intruded into the sewer line.

Patty Little

From: Loret Simonds [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 10, 2022 1:25 PM
To: Patty Little
Subject: 79 Woodburn St_ tree removal
Attachments: Sewer Line - 79 Woodburn.pdf

Dear City Councilors,

Out front of my house is a tree (non-native maple species) which has been problematic since I moved into this house in 2016. Two times I have had to call Public Works to come trim it off the house's siding, roof and the power lines coming into the house. Now I have roots growing into the sewer line and the house's foundation.

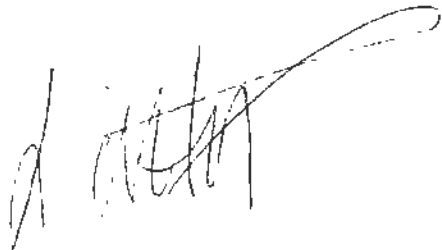
In the past, I have asked numerous times for Public Works to remove this tree because I was concerned of these kind of problems and wanted to mitigate them BEFORE we got to this point. Now that we have arrived, Public Works is still are telling me it is a healthy tree and they will not cut it down. I was told by Harry McKelvey the decision to take this tree down rests with you, the Council.

I'm asking the City Copuncil to have Public Works remove this tree as soon as possible. This should be an easy decision because when a tree is causing property damage it is unequivocally time to take it down.

Enclosed is the inspection report, from an unbiased professional, which confirms the tree roots are coming through the foundation (see paragraph below pictures). Plus, 2 pictures below of large roots growing in the cellar.

Thank you, Loretta Simonds

3 inch root growing from under the foundation to the cement pad the oil tank sits on and is undermining the foundation and the cement pad. There is a quarter on top of the root to give a reference of the size of this root.



Sewer Line Evaluation Report for:

Kira Thomas

Evaluation Performed on December 10, 2021



79 Woodburn Street
Keene NH

The sewer cleanout was located at the side of the basement and the pipe exited the home through the floor. The cleanout has a replacement cap. The sewer camera was run out the sewer line from the house towards junction with the municipal sewer approximately 57 ft from the access port. The sewer line has signs of previous “back-ups”, the camera could not make it to the municipal junction. Given the location of mature trees in relation to the sewer line, roots observed in the basement and the replacement cap I suspect roots have intruded previously and are the likely cause of the camera stopping. Having a qualified contractor cut the roots and verify the integrity of the pipe to the municipal junction (with a sewer camera) is recommended. Cutting the roots as part of a maintenance plan to reduce the chance of future blockages should be considered.

This evaluation is useful in determining the general condition of the sewer pipe system at the time of the evaluation and is not an estimate of system longevity. This report is based on the evaluation methods used, and information available at the time of this evaluation and is to be considered ‘an opinion’ with no guarantee expressed, implied or presumed under any circumstances.



Area Where Camera Stopped



Interior of Pipe



Interior of Pipe



Area of Blockage

Eric Eichner



Inspections by Eric LLC
 Granite State Septic System Certified Evaluator # 151
 NH Septic System Licensed Evaluator #36



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CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #A.2.

Meeting Date: February 23, 2022

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Brett Amy Thelen
Science Director - Harris Center for Conservation Education

Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk

Subject: **Harris Center for Conservation Education - Request to Temporarily Close Jordan Road for up to Six Nights in March and April - Migrating Amphibians**

Council Action:

In City Council February 17, 2022

Referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee.

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Communication_Harris Center

Background:

The Harris Center for Conservation Education is submitting their annual request for the temporary closure of Jordan Road for up to six nights in March and April for the protection of migrating amphibians - in particular, the Jefferson Salamander.



February 8, 2022

Mayor George Hansel and City Council
3 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431

To the Honorable Mayor and City Council,

I am writing to request the temporary closure of Jordan Road for up to six nights in March and April for the protection of migrating amphibians – in particular, Jefferson complex salamanders, which are listed as a “Species in Greatest Need of Conservation” in New Hampshire.

Every year, on the first warm, rainy nights of spring, thousands of amphibians migrate to their breeding wetlands – including the wetland adjacent to Woodland Cemetery and North Lincoln Street, and the vernal pools in the upper reaches of Robin Hood Park, near Jordan Road. Many are killed when they must cross roads. Studies have shown that even modest vehicle traffic can have a significant negative impact on local amphibian populations.

Since 2018, the Harris Center for Conservation Education has worked closely with the City of Keene to close the North Lincoln Street amphibian crossing site to vehicles on migration nights, facilitating the safe passage of nearly 6,000 amphibians over the course of three seasons. We have received many notes of gratitude for these efforts, including one that said, “It gives me hope for this world that Keene closes a street for this.”

Over the last five years, our Salamander Crossing Brigade volunteers have also moved more than 1,200 migrating amphibians (including 134 Jefferson complex salamanders) to safety at Jordan Road, and documented 138 road-killed amphibians (including 5 Jefferson complex salamanders) at that site. These numbers are underestimates – likely significantly so – as our volunteers typically don’t stay out after midnight, but the migration can continue through the pre-dawn hours if conditions are right.

Although the Jordan Road crossing site comprises fewer individual amphibians than the North Lincoln Street crossing, Jordan Road has conservation significance due to the presence of the Jefferson complex salamanders, which are listed as a “Species of Special Concern” and “Species in Greatest Need of Conservation” in New Hampshire. (Jefferson complex salamanders do not occur at the North Lincoln Street crossing.) New Hampshire Fish and Game’s Wildlife Action Plan listing for Jefferson complex salamanders identifies road mortality as a primary threat to this species and recommends efforts to facilitate amphibian movement across roads as an action that can benefit Jefferson salamanders in New Hampshire.

When we first proposed amphibian detours at Jordan Road in 2020, traffic data was reviewed and the Harris Center sent letters detailing the proposed plan to all residents of Jordan Road; at the time, we received only one response, from a resident who was supportive of the detour. (We ultimately withdrew that proposal due to the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic.)

More recently, the Department of Public Works has consulted with the Keene Police Department and received their support for expanding amphibian detours to Jordan Road in 2022. The proposed plan, developed by the Department of Public Works in consultation with the Police Department, would only close the road to through-traffic. Jordan Road residents would still be able to drive to and from their homes when the detour was in place, and emergency vehicles would have access, as needed. Volunteers with the Harris Center's Salamander Crossing Brigade program would be present at the site in the early evening hours to keep track of the migration, and to minimize the potential roadkill impacts of any local traffic.

The amphibian migration is a weather-dependent phenomenon, so I cannot provide specific dates for the requested road closures at this time. However, we have already worked successfully with the Department of Public Works to implement detours at North Lincoln Street and to inform the public about them. Should the expansion of amphibian detours to Jordan Road be approved, we anticipate a similarly smooth process.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, which would benefit both wildlife and people in Keene. I would be more than happy to meet with you, or to make a brief presentation to provide more information and answer any questions you have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brett Amy Thelen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brett Amy Thelen
Science Director
Harris Center for Conservation Education
thelen@harriscenter.org