

Town Manager's Report

Monday, December 6, 2010

To: Board of Selectmen
From Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

Following are some of the matters reported on this week by various Town Departments:

FIRE

Fire Prevention: Emerson hospital is installing a new parking gate system in the area are of the maternity circle. Although they do have a well-documented parking challenge, any restriction in this already tight area needs to be carefully monitored to ensure access for emergency apparatus. The Fire Department is working with the hospital to ensure it maintain acceptable accessibility for Department vehicles in the event of an emergency.

Emergency response: As was reported in last week's newspaper, on November 30 the Fire Department responded to a house fire at 24 Allen Farm Ln. Three alarms were struck, calling on seven communities' fire departments for assistance. There were no civilian injuries and two minor firefighter injuries. A portion of the house had to be torn down the day after the fire for safety reasons. The cause of the fire was faulty electrical wiring.

PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT

Building and Inspections Division

Projects about to begin construction: The Building Division reports several projects were recently approved through the permitting process for construction. Among them: a building permit is expected to be issued shortly for "80 Thoreau", the new restaurant at the Thoreau Street depot; a building permit is expected to be filed in January for the new Elks Club at 336-358 Baker Avenue; and the \$6.0 - 6.5 million renovation and remodeling project at Peter Bulkeley Terrace is expected to begin soon.

Natural Resources Division

Natural Resource Commission: The Commission received the Variance and Water Quality Certification Request submitted by MassDOT to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the Crosby's Corner/Route 2 Improvements Project. Filing these permit requests is the next step in the process for MassDOT to construct the improvements at Crosby's Corner, and is anticipated that DEP will issue permits by next fall. A public hearing on the Variance and WQC Request has not been announced yet but will occur in the near future.

Planning Division

Community Preservation Committee: The CPC reviewed a Special Application to fund Concord's inclusion in a Regional Housing Services Program at their regularly scheduled meeting. This proposal would allow Concord to join with five neighboring communities (Bedford, Lincoln, Lexington, Sudbury and Weston) to establish a Regional Housing Services Office to provide consistent, professional assistance in monitoring, developing and maintaining Community Housing projects in each of the member communities. The CPC voted to accept the Special Application and will consider it with the other submitted CPA applications when they begin their deliberations on funding recommendations on Monday, December 6. The CPC has also scheduled an extra meeting on December 13 to complete its project recommendations and warrant articles for the 2011 Annual Town Meeting.

Planning Board: At last Tuesday's meeting, the Planning Board continued its discussion on potential zoning bylaw amendments, hearing a presentation and recommendations from the Zone C Task Force, which include: redefining the way height is measured so that it is measured from the original base grade to the peak of a roof (which is hoped to discourage artificial mounding) and allowing a development height of 15 feet or less within the 3-foot setback off-set to limit the massing of structures at the side setback line. The Board then discussed whether to go forward with a Formula Business Bylaw, and if so, with or without a cap on the number of businesses; the Board decided to vote at their December 14 meeting. The Planning Board anticipates that there will be 5 articles from the West Concord Task Force, 3 articles from the Residence C Task Force, and 4 general zoning bylaw amendment articles for a total of 12 articles.

West Concord Task Force: The West Concord Task Force met to finalize their zoning recommendations to the Planning Board. These recommendations include: establishing a West Concord Village District, revising uses and dimensions in the West Concord Business District, adding a definition for grocery store, revising uses and dimensions in the West Concord Industrial District and establishing an overlay district that includes residential use.

POLICE

Community Services: Last night was the annual Christmas Night in Concord celebration and, as has been the case in past years, officers assisted with road closures and escorting Santa Clause to the tree lighting ceremony in Monument Square. Throughout the Holiday season, officers will be paying special attention to the business districts in Town, often assigned to foot patrol activities in Monument Square, the Thoreau Street Depot and the West Concord shopping areas in order to provide for a safe and happy holiday experience.

Communities for Restorative Justice (C4RJ): The Police Department recently hosted the annual Police Council Meeting for departments involved with C4RJ. The Department continues to utilize this as a solid alternative within the criminal justice system. Area communities are also seeing positive results as well.

PUBLIC WORKS

Engineering and Administration

Artificial Turf Fields located at CCRHS: This field replacement project has reached substantial completion for both fields 1 & 2. Final walkthroughs took place during the week of November 29 with various project representatives, and minor closeout work was noted including general cleanup and housekeeping.

2010 Road Program: The paving contractor completed temporary grading and paving of Whittemore Street, and permanent patching within Sudbury Road prior to Thanksgiving. The week of November 29, the contractor completed temporary driveway aprons for the Mildred Circle/Sarah Way neighborhood. The final top course pavement and driveway adjustments for Mildred Circle and Sarah Way will be completed within the Spring of 2011.

2010 Sidewalk Program: The sidewalk paving contractor completed loaming adjacent to the roadway on Lowell Road for the stretch of sidewalk installed near Pratt Lane. The sidewalk will remain at binder course grade until work on the sidewalk project resumes in the Spring of 2011.

Wastewater Planning Task Force (WWPTF) Meeting: The WWPTF is scheduled to meet on Friday December 10 to review task force progress, analyze current wastewater flow trends and discuss a draft evaluation matrix which was developed as a guidance tool to allow for the objective evaluation of various wastewater capacity alternatives as authorized by Article 41 at the 2009 Town Meeting.

Highway and Grounds

Energy Conservation: On Saturday December 4, an external consultant performed a building envelope energy audit, including infrared camera analysis, on the Keyes Road facilities in order to provide a baseline for further weatherization efforts, identify building envelope deficiencies, and evaluate strategies for improving the performance of the building envelope. This effort is in line with our Town-wide energy conservation initiative, and will follow similar efforts underway at the Town House and west Concord Fire Station which are utilizing Sawyer Trust funds to complete similar weatherization improvements.

Water and Sewer

Water Meter Legislation: Governor Patrick signed into law Chapter 374 of the Acts of 2010, which increases the fines for interference with water company meters. The language changes Section 11 of Chapter 165 to allow for fines that would be triple the amount of damages or \$1,000 whichever is greater (previous fine could only be \$100). The law also allows for the damages to include the value of the water used and the cost of labor and equipment repair or replacement.

Hanscom Air force Base Privatization Evaluation: Concord Public Works has been contacted by an engineering and utility consulting firm to discuss the government issued RFP for the privatization of water and wastewater utilities at Hanscom AFB. The RFP was issued by the Air Education Training Command ("AETC"), in association with the Air Force Civil Engineering Support Agency ("AFCESA"). A pre-proposal meeting and site walk is scheduled for mid-December. With the Wastewater Planning Task Force currently undertaking a Wastewater Alternatives Analysis, additional information will be explored to determine if this privatization effort presents an opportunity for the Town.