

Town Manager's Report

Monday, January 31, 2011

To: Board of Selectmen
From: Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

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

FINANCE

Tax Payments Due: Quarterly property tax payments are due at the Treasurer's office by Tuesday, February 1, at 4:30 PM. Taxpayers may Contact the Treasurer's office at 978-318-3050 with any questions. Abatement applications are also due by Tuesday, February 1, before the office closes at 4:30 PM and may be delivered to the Assessing Office at 24 Court Lane or to the Treasurer's Office at the Town House.

FY2012 Budget: The Town Manager's Proposed Budget for FY2012 will be available on Thursday, February 3 and presented to the Finance Committee meeting that evening (7:30 PM, Selectmen's Room). It will be posted on the website as soon as possible, probably by the middle of next week. The Finance Committee's public hearing is scheduled for Monday, February 28 at 7:30 PM in the Town House Hearing Room.

FIRE

Station 1 Renovation: Work continues this week with the installation of interior wall insulation and sheet rock.

Emergency Management: The Fire Chief reports Emergency management as well as the fire department was busy last week coordinating with the Mass Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and other town departments in preparation for the recent major snowfall and present extreme cold. The snowstorm was weathered without incident.

LIBRARY

Technology Update: The Minuteman Library Network officially launched the new Encore search engine on January 19. As a Network member, the Concord Free Public Library is pleased to offer this new web-based search interface that will make finding everything the library has to offer easier and more engaging than ever before. Encore will reveal content such as media and e-books, suggestions of recently added or popular items, tags added by library users, faceted search results for easily modifying queries, and pathways to relevant websites and library databases. Library patrons can access all this from a single, "Google-

like” search box. Encore is available on library workstations and remotely on the web at <http://find.minlib.net/>.



Fowler Progress: Recent Installation of Granite Countertops on the Fowler Circulation Desk

PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT

Building and Inspections Division

Sally Ann’s Food Shop: Staff recently met with the owner of Sally Ann’s Bakery to review proposed changes to the layout of the retail food establishment. The proposal is to add 12 patron seats within the establishment, which would encompass 8 table seats and 4 counter seats. This seating will be allowed under the assumption that Sally Ann’s will not change the nature of their retail bakery business and that the twelve (12) seats can be considered as an allowed accessory use. The substantial majority of the business’ sales must continue to be comprised of retail baked goods. In the same manner, the sale of single serve sandwiches, soups, coffee and baked goods are considered an accessory use to the principal retail bakery business. Such “fast food” sales must continue to be minor and accessory in relation to the retail bakery business.

The Building Division has provided the owner with a list of preliminary requirements (including applying for a common victualler license with the Board of Selectmen to reflect this new seating) before the revisions would be allowed.

Natural Resources Division

Vegetation Removal Projects: MassPort has begun removing trees at Pine Tree Hill on Virginia Road. Two acres of pine trees on land owned by the Concord Land Conservation Trust will be cleared, required by FAA Regulations as these trees have been identified as aviation obstructions to aircraft. Near the North Bridge, the Drinking Gourd Project will begin site preparation at 34B Monument Street for the Caesar Robbins House relocation by removing several black locust trees. This work is expected to occur over the next few weeks.

Warner's Pond Watershed Management Plan: DNR staff and members of the Warner's Pond Stewardship Committee met with representatives from ESS Group, Inc. for a kick-off meeting to review the scope of work to be completed for this watershed management plan. ESS will begin working on a bathymetric map of Warner's Pond over the next couple weeks, which involves coring through the ice to determine soft sediment depths. The bathymetric map will assist the Town in identifying areas of potential dredging.

Battle Road Connector Trail: DNR staff, a member of the Trails Committee, and representatives from the Thoreau Farm Trust met with the Town Manager to discuss a trail from the Battle Road Trail to the Thoreau Birth House. Bedford is also developing a network of trails from the Jordan Conservation Area through Massport and Bedford town lands, which could provide another trail linkage.

Planning Division

Planning Board Focus on West Concord: The Planning Board discussed its recommendation to the Board of Appeals concerning site plan review and relief from parking requirements for the proposed site improvements to the Bradford Mill on Bradford Street; the discussion was continued to February 8 to obtain additional information on stormwater management, traffic circulation and managing parking demand. The Board then reviewed draft zoning bylaw amendment language for the proposed mixed use overlay district in the West Concord Industrial (WCI) District for 50 Beharrell Street and debated the concept of residential use by special permit for all or one of the parcels zoned WCI. Finally, the Planning Board voted to send a letter to the Public Works Commission indicating their support of restoration and improvement of the house and barn at 1489/1491 Main Street as consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Long Rang Plan and a policy or decision that encourages the retention of buildings listed in the Town's Survey of Historical and Architectural Resources and minimizes the need to remove specimen trees are in the best interest of the Town.

Health Division

Regional Health Services Grant: Acton's Public Health Director met last week with representatives from the Health Division, DPLM, Town Mangers Office, COA, Community and Youth services to explore coordinating efforts to identify how community services may be enhanced by a regional health services grant program. The grant requires participation of at least 5 municipalities serving a total population of at least 50,000. More information on this opportunity will follow.

PUBLIC WORKS

Winter Storm Response January 26: On the evening of January 26, Public Works staff were called upon for the 22nd time this winter season to respond to another major winter storm event. Sanding and salting crews began treatment routes at 4:00 PM with plowing crews dispatched at 1:00 AM followed by plowing contractors at 2:30 AM. Crews plowed throughout the night with snow intensifying at 2:30 AM and total accumulations reaching 12". The costs for storm response, not including any post storm snow removal operations, totaled approximately \$50,000. This puts our fiscal year winter maintenance expenditures at

approximately \$376,000 challenging our base budget of \$495,000 (which excludes any contingency spending allowance of \$205,000).

Water Main Emergency Response: Public Works crews responded to an emergency water main/service break last Wednesday evening. The break was of a magnitude which resulted in a substantial drop in the levels at the Annursnac storage reservoir and increased demand on all supplies. Crews were hampered by cold temperatures, deep penetrating frost and snow cover. The break in a 10" service line was located and isolated at approximately 9:30 PM at which time water service was restored to impacted customers.

MEMA Initial Damage Assessment Request: The Mass Emergency Management Agency has requested communities compile and submit costs incurred during winter storm response for the 48 hour period associated with the January 12 winter storm. The expenditures which include overtime, materials, contractor costs and equipment time total \$99,429. This process is initiated by MEMA to determine whether Massachusetts or any counties or communities are eligible to receive federal disaster assistance as a result of the January 11-12 winter storm emergency. Eligibility is determined based on highest historical 1-day snowfall amounts and expenditure thresholds for the state and counties.

Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Inclement Weather Policy: With the recent inclement weather effecting municipal collection routes, CPW has taken the opportunity to review and revise the former collection policy which asked customer's to hold their solid waste and recycling until the next collection week. An explanation of the policy is shown below.

Snow – When weather is bad but roads are passable, collection will occur as scheduled, but residents are encouraged to hold materials until the following week if possible, in order to minimize the number of roadside obstacles that may interfere with plowing.

Severe Snow Storm – In the event of a severe snow storm / snow emergency, where roads are not drivable and the Town's solid waste hauler, Waste Management is unable to travel, collection will be cancelled that day and Trash & Recycling will be collected on Saturday instead. Only the route on the day of the storm will be affected; there will be no delay in collection on other days that week unless subscribers are notified otherwise.

Should there be a delay in collection, it will be indicated on a voicemail recording at 978-318-3240. Subscribers can also reach Concord Public Works at this number for updates during regular business hours.

Collection delays are also posted under News & Notices on the Town's website:
<http://www.concordma.gov/Pages/index>.