

# Town Manager's Report

## Monday, March 7, 2011

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

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

### **FIRE**

**Station 1 Renovation:** Floor coverings are now being installed, and the Fire Chief reports the project almost ready for millwork to begin. Estimates are still that the project will end in April – ahead of the final contractual date of May 6.

### **LIGHT DEPARTMENT**

**New Demand Management Pilot Program:** The March/April edition of Concord Light's LightLines newsletter will be sent out to customers beginning next week. In this edition, Concord Light is asking for volunteers to participate in a pilot load management program this summer. This new program will utilize the Smart Grid infrastructure and is similar to existing load management programs where customers voluntarily allow Concord Light to control their electric thermal storage (ETS) heating system and/or hot water heating via an electronic switch. However, in this case, the Light Plant will be controlling residents' central air conditioning or swimming pool pumps to better manage the Town's summertime peak demand.

**Load Management Switch Replacement:** As part of Concord's Smart Grid project, Concord Light is updating its load management system which uses signals sent over its power lines to communicate with customers' ETS systems and hot water heaters to determine when the systems are charged with electricity and when they are not. Concord Light's new load management system will be compatible with the Smart Grid wireless fiber-based system and will require that a new electronic switch be installed for customers with ETS and/or controlled water heating. Concord Light will send a letter to 85 of these customers who reside in the Smart Grid Phase 1 area to schedule an appointment beginning in late March for technicians to replace existing electronic switches with new switches. There are approximately 500 customers with ETS heating and/or controlled water heating in Concord, and Concord Light will continue replacing the remaining customer switches through the summer.

**Residential Energy Audits:** Concord Light provides free, all-fuel home energy audits to its customers. Energy New England (ENE), under contract to Concord Light, conducts the home energy audits. Concord Light staff followed up with over 60% of its 2010 audit

customers in order to assess customer satisfaction with the home energy audit service being provided, provide assistance to customers as they implemented recommended energy efficiency measures, and track the rate of implementation of audit recommendations. Audit customers gave ENE's auditors high marks for their willingness to provide explanations and answer questions. Any Concord resident who would like to have a home energy audit is encouraged to call ENE at 1-888-772-4242 to schedule one.

## **PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT**

### **Natural Resources Division**

**Fenn School projects are under construction.** Last week, Natural Resources staff attended a pre-construction site visit for the Fenn School athletic playing field. This project had been approved by the NRC in November 2009, and appealed twice, receiving final approval from DEP earlier this year. Portions of the field outside NRC jurisdiction were already under construction as of this week. This project involves a new regulation-size synthetic turf field to be constructed on the existing lacrosse/football field near the baseball diamond. The school also received approval last summer to construct a new meeting house and performing arts center, which is also currently under construction.



New performing arts center

### **Planning Division**

**Planning Board:** Last Tuesday night, the Planning Board made favorable recommendations to the Board of Appeals for three Special Permit and Site Plan applications, for outdoor seating at Comella's Restaurant, special events at The Old Manse, and a 12-antennae installation by Verizon Wireless on the smokestack at the Middlesex School. The Planning Board then discussed the 3 zoning bylaw amendments proposed for the Special Town Meeting, tabling a vote on the West Concord Mixed Use Overlay District (WCMUOD) until March 8, at which time they hope to have more information about the development agreement and project timeframe for 50 Beharrell Street.

**Solar Siting Committee:** Friday morning, the Solar Siting Committee discussed the various issues that should be included in a criteria matrix used to identify and rank site suitability. The Committee then began its review of each parcel listed on the Town-owned, non-

conservation land inventory. Staff is working to prepare more information for Committee review on some of the parcels before their next meeting on March 18.

**Battle Road Scenic Byway Working Group:** The Battle Road Scenic Byway Working Group met last Tuesday to continue review of the draft Corridor Management Plan and potential Priority Recommendations. The Group is working with the MAPC, which is currently writing the Plan, and anticipates a complete draft will be ready for review by March 15. Two meetings have been scheduled in March to encourage the public to review and comment on the draft Plan - on March 17, the Working Group will meet with members of the project subcommittees (Land Use, Transportation, and Tourism) and any interested members of the public in the Lincoln Town Hall beginning at 7PM; and on March 31, the MAPC and Working Group will host an Open House from 5-8PM in the Minute Man National Park Visitors Center in Lincoln.

**West Concord Task Force:** Thursday night the WCTF met to hear an update on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail alternatives analysis and upcoming meeting with the MBTA; discuss infrastructure improvements anticipated under Article 36; hear an update on the West Concord Industrial District zoning articles proposed for a Special Town Meeting; review issues and concerns raised by the Concord Business Partnership regarding the Formula Business Bylaw and update the communications plan related to the WCTF public forum scheduled for April 5.

### **Health Division**

**Allergy Awareness Regulations in Place:** Public Health staff has been conducting a final round of compliance inspections of food establishments required to comply with new allergy awareness regulations. Almost every establishment is in compliance with a few exceptions. Enforcement has been initiated in those establishment found to be non-compliant.