

Town Manager's Report Tuesday, September 11, 2012

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

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

FINANCE

Budget Award: We have been advised by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada that the Town's FY2013 budget documents (General and Enterprises) have again received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. This marks the eighth consecutive year that the Town's documents have earned this distinction. The criteria for the award have been continuously refined and heightened, requiring the Town to respond to new standards with continual improvements to the content and format of its documents.



Much of the credit for the award, and for the continuous effort to improve the usefulness of our budget documents both internally and for the general public, is attributable to the efforts of Jon Harris, Budget and Purchasing Administrator, and the talented individuals who have served in the Budget Analyst position in recent years - Michael Ward, Adam Roberts and Christopher Nunes. These staff members have had the principal responsibility for planning and executing the documents.

Additionally, the preparation of these budget documents to meet the standards of the GFOA's award criteria and the needs of Concord's citizens relies upon the collaborative efforts of all department heads, division managers and departmental staff involved with budget development and deliberations. All members of this team have made important contributions to the improvement of the budget documents on the four dimensions evaluated by GFOA:

- as a policy document
- as a financial plan
- as an operations guide
- as a communications device.

PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT

Natural Resources Division

Natural Resources Commission: At the Sept. 5 meeting, the Commission held the continued Notice of Intent hearing to convert the Mobil station at 1112 Main Street into a TD Bank, and issued a permit for the continued NOI to construct an in-ground pool and pool house at 495 Monument Street. Three new applications were heard and permits issued: a septic repair at 168 Cambridge Turnpike; demolishing and removing a remediation shed at the Unisys land at 48B Fitchburg Turnpike; and landscape and drainage improvements at 85 Walden Terrace. The Commission also heard the new application to construct a new CCRSD high school at 500 Walden Street and expects to issue a permit at the September 19 meeting, and heard and continued the hearing to confirm a wetland boundary at 85 Pilgrim Road. Six new applications were received for the September 19 meeting: an NOI to replace the boardwalk at the Old Calf Pasture conservation land (20A Lowell Road); an NOI to construct a 2-car garage at 68 Laurel Street; an NOI to demolish an existing single-family dwelling and construct a new home at 30 Oak Road; an NOI to construct an addition and patio at 262 Sandy Pond Road; an Abbreviated NOI to demolish an existing garage and construct a new garage at 63 Monument Street; and an RDA for invasives removal at Bear Garden Hill (64A Sudbury Road).

Old Calf Pasture: Peter Gifford mowed portions of the Old Calf Pasture over the last few weeks. Areas left unmowed will be retreated this September and October by the New England Wildflower Society to control the invasive glossy buckthorn, and then mowed later this fall. Natural Resources staff led a small group sponsored by CISMA through the field, giving an overview of the invasive species project done to date, plans for future management, and status of the rare violet onsite. The two years of treatment have been largely successful, though both areas need retreatment, as expected with invasive species. Botanist Sally Zielinski conducted violet counts at the meadow over the summer, noting increases in violet populations from pre-treatment numbers, though not yet as high as original counts from the 1990s. Natural Resources staff hope to continue the invasive species management efforts over the next several years by targeting additional areas of buckthorn infestation and retreating areas as needed.

Building and Inspections Division

Nightclub Inspection Training: Staff attended a course given by the Department of Fire Services and the Board of Building Regulations and Standards centered on nightclub/liquor licensing. This program was offered to fire and building inspectors who may be inspecting nightclubs prior to the renewal of liquor licenses each December. The goal of the course was to highlight fire and building code requirements necessary to ensure the safety of the nightclub staff and patrons. It covered topics such as: what is a nightclub; a brief history of the Station Nightclub fire and resulting MA Laws; joint Building and Fire Official Certificate of Inspection activities; egress issues through the building and to the public way (via building and fire codes); egress lighting and signage requirements; with specific attention to the requirements of the law related to overcrowding and resulting retroactive sprinkler requirements.

Concord Mews Rental Project: The Building & Inspections Division has completed the final inspections for the project which is entirely built-out. The project was completed ahead of time and within their estimated budget (\$44.6 million). More than 60% of the 350 units have been leased to date.

Health Division

Mosquito Weekly Update: On August 31 and September 5, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) announced that West Nile virus (WNV) illness has been confirmed in four additional Middlesex County residents, bringing the total number of human WNV cases in Middlesex County to eight. As a result of the Middlesex County findings, the WNV threat level has been raised to “High” in Chelsea, Everett, Lexington, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Revere, Saugus, and Winthrop. The threat level is being raised to “Moderate” in Bedford, Burlington, Lincoln, Stoneham, Wakefield, Winchester, and Woburn. The WNV threat level in Concord remains at “Low”. EEE-positive mosquitos were detected in Acton in the past week, which resulted in Acton conducting truck-based mosquito spraying throughout most of the town. One new human and one new animal case of EEE have been confirmed statewide this week: the human EEE case occurred in Worcester County in early August, and the horse EEE case recently occurred in west-central Massachusetts. The MDPH-determined risk level for EEE in Concord remains “Low”.

Nonetheless, residents are reminded that this is the middle of the highest risk period for human infections with both WNV and EEE. Although Labor Day is often considered the unofficial end of summer, infected mosquitoes persist and personal precautions are still encouraged. As the weather cools and mosquito populations continue to die off, risk will drop, but will not end until the first hard frost. Because the days are getting shorter, residents may be outside closer to dusk, especially for after-school sports practice. **All residents should continue to take steps to protect themselves against mosquito bites: use insect repellent, cover up, and avoid outdoor activities at dusk and after nightfall when mosquitoes are at their most active.**

Healthy Communities Project Consultant: Jill Block, MPH, has been hired as a consultant to help guide the Healthy Community Planning Project. Jill has extensive

experience working on healthy community assessment projects. Jill is a Concord resident whose knowledge of the community will be a great asset to the project. The Steering Committee held its initial meeting with Jill last week to plan for public roll-out of the project in mid-September.

50 Beharrell Street Soil Testing: Assistant Public Health Director Stan Sosnicki witnessed soil testing at 50 Beharrell St for the proposed redevelopment at this site. Soil profiles indicate excessively drained sand and gravel with groundwater at 8-9'. Three areas were tested to site a 9,900 GPD septic system to augment sewer flows for the proposed complex of 75 residential units and 30,000 s.f. of commercial space. Testing for storm water drainage near the Nashoba Brook revealed approximately 6' of fill material with peat-like material below the water table.

MDPH Emergency Preparedness Drills Conducted: The Health Division completed Emergency Dispensing Site call-down and site activation drills. These drills require notifying key Town staff who serve in leadership roles in the event that the Town needs to open an emergency dispensing site to administer medication or immunizations in a public health emergency. Completion of the drills meets required deliverables which are a condition for the Health Division to continue to receive MDPH Public Health Emergency Preparedness funding through Region 4A.

Planning Division

Historic Districts Commission: The HDC reviewed two new and two continued applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for changes within the Historic Districts at Thursday's meeting. The Commission approved three of these applications for work including the replacement of the gutters and downspouts at 47 Lowell Road; the replacement of the North slope roofs at Trinity Church, 81 Elm Street; and the installation of new stone retaining walls and walkways leading to the basement at the School of Philosophy and for new and existing parking signage at Orchard House, both of which are located at 399 Lexington Road. The Commission also denied an application from the Louisa May Alcott Memorial Association to install a new accessible walkway, ramp and handrails leading into the School of Philosophy on the grounds that the proposed work would substantially alter and disrupt the historic landscape and open space surrounding both the School and Orchard House, and that the proposed handrails and ramp are out of character with the historic structure and inappropriate to the site. The Commission also discussed the potential for holding a joint meeting with other Town boards to discuss the proposed development plans for the Mill Brook Tarry site on Lowell Road.

Community Preservation Committee: The CPC held their annual informational hearing on Tuesday, September 4 at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center. The meeting included a brief overview from the Committee on the CPA grant funding process, including any new requirements and suggested processes, as well as an opportunity for potential applicants to review their projects with the Committee. The Committee does not yet have an estimate for the funds available for distribution in the upcoming grant round, but anticipates that the total will be similar to last year's amount of \$1.1 million. The CPC's application deadline for

funding recommendations at the 2013 Town Meeting is Monday, September 24, at 3:00 pm.

Planning Board: The Planning Board met with the development team for the resubmitted 2-lot definitive subdivision application for 80 Squaw Sachem Trail on August 28. After discussion of the proposed provision to allow for all or a portion of the property to be subject to a Reservation of Land for Public Purposes under Section 6.20 of the Planning Board's Subdivision Rules and Regulations, the Board voted unanimously in favor to grant approval. The Board then met with the architect for the proposed Concord Outfitters building at 113 Commonwealth Avenue and, after discussion of the potential for a bump-out at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Bradford Street, decided to continue the application to the next meeting to allow Planning staff to work this out with Concord Public Works. The meeting concluded after the Board discussed their goals for the upcoming year and voted in favor of Remote Participation.

Concord Business Partnership/Parking Management Plan Presentation: Planning Division staff accompanied Parking Management Plan consultants Nelson-Nygaard to a meeting of the Concord Business Partnership on Wednesday. Nelson-Nygaard staff provided a description of the study area, outlined the process to date and shared preliminary findings and recommendations on parking spaces and usage. A public forum will be held later this fall with the report available before the end of the year.

POLICE

Operational Services: On Saturday, September 8 at approximately 11:10PM, Officer Bordenca conducted a motor vehicle stop of a suspected impaired driver on Route 2. After performing brief investigation roadside, Officer Bordenca arrested the operator of the vehicle for drunk driving. The operator was processed and released from the Station for a court appearance on Monday morning.

On Sunday, September 9 at approximately 12:40AM, Officer McGrath conducted a motor vehicle stop of a suspected impaired driver on Route 2. Officer McGrath conducted a roadside investigation and determined that the operator was intoxicated and subsequently placed him under arrest for drunk driving. The operator was processed and also released for a court appearance on Monday morning. Both drunk driving arrests occurred within 1 ½ hours of each other.

Community Services: With school recently starting, officers have been actively enforcing speeding and other motor vehicle violations in school zones.