

Town Manager's Weekly Report

Monday, November 24, 2008

To: Board of Selectmen
From Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

*Items with **italicized** headings relate to the Town Manager's goals for 2008-2009.*

1. ***Town Budget Receives Award.*** *For the third consecutive year, the Town budget document has received the Government Finance Officers Association's "Distinguished Budget Presentation Award" for the fiscal year that ended last June 30. The document is prepared by Budget & Purchasing Administrator Jon Harris and Budget Analyst Adam Roberts under the direction of Finance Director Tony Logalbo. Concord was one of only 7 Massachusetts communities to win the award, which is intended to encourage the development of budgets that provide policy statements and a broad array of information for the public – not just a spreadsheet.*
2. ***Concord-Carlisle Chairs Meeting.*** *The Concord chairs of the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and School Committee met with their counterparts and relevant staff from Carlisle to discuss the Regional School budget and possible opportunities to collaborate or regionalize school and other services. The group expects to meet monthly leading up to the April Annual Town Meeting in an effort to coordinate budgeting for the Regional High School assessments, to avoid having the High School budget funded at differing levels between the two communities. Similar meetings have taken place for at least the past four years, with success in improving coordination and communication between the towns.*
3. ***Town's Website Temporarily Off-line.*** *The Town's website, which is hosted by an independent contractor, Virtual Town Hall, Inc. of Maynard, was taken out of service on Sunday, November 23 for routine maintenance. However, a glitch was encountered and Concord's site, as well as the sites of many VTH customers, remains off-line 24 hours later. I regret the inconvenience to those wishing to access Concord's webpage.*
4. **Public Works Related Matters.**

Junction Park – CPW has worked closely with several citizens in West Concord to finalize plans and specifications for an improved stair design at the entrance of Junction Park, adjacent to the West Concord Depot. Bob Moran, a Concord Resident, has graciously donated materials and personnel to make these construction improvements which will address pedestrian mobility, safety and overall aesthetics. A formal acceptance of this gift will be brought forward to the Board upon completion.

Route 62 Reconstruction – Bids Opened. The Massachusetts Highway Department opened bids on November 18 for the reconstruction of 1.2 miles of Route 62, from the Assabet River in Concord to the Acton town line. The engineer's estimate and project budget for this work is \$3.4 million. The low-bidder, E.H. Perkins, Inc., submitted a bid of \$2.87 million, well within the available

funds. Mass Highway staff indicated that they are planning to have a pre-construction meeting with the contractor and Town staff in late February and hope to have work underway by mid-March of 2009. This road is long overdue for resurfacing, but the project was delayed several times while the Commonwealth assembled the funding necessary to complete the work. The work includes new drainage systems, a sidewalk the length of the project, and reconstruction and resurfacing of the roadway at generally the same width as it currently exists.

New Storage and Restroom Building for Playing Fields (Photo). Using donated funds, work began last month on a storage building and restrooms for the new playing fields at the High School. The building should be completed by mid-December, however the restrooms will not be put in service until the spring of 2009. The storage area of the building will be used to house the specialized equipment needed to maintain the fields.

Warner's Pond Dam (Photo)– *After a challenging construction season due to extreme weather conditions resulting in multiple floods and temporary dam breaches, the Warner's Pond Dam project has reached substantial completion. The temporary coffer dam is now being removed, water is flowing over the main spillway, low permeability soil has been placed to reinforce the dam embankment and loaming and seeding are underway. A final punch list will be developed involving minor finish work and this work will be completed in the Spring of 2009. The dam is now functioning as designed.*

Flint Bridge – *Mass Highway has reported that the revised redesign which minimizes the deep excavations of wing walls and abutments and addresses the bridge strengthening component of the project has been completed and an advanced copy submitted to Zoppo Construction for development of a cost proposal. Zoppo anticipates providing pricing and schedule to Mass Highway over the next several weeks and has indicated that upon Mass Highway approval, they intend to mobilize before the end of 2008, subject to weather conditions.*

Pine Street Bridge (Photo) – *MAS Construction has placed all deck beams and will continue with installation of utilities before winter shutdown. Stormwater management improvements will also be completed this season to allow for tie in of the Upland Road drainage improvements.*

EPA Region 1 Site Visit - The Deputy Director of EPA, Region 1, Ira Leighton, along with key permitting personnel, toured Concord's Wastewater Treatment Plant to view the new and innovative CoMag phosphorus-removal system. They were all very impressed with technology and performance. Phosphorus is an element found in wastewater which promotes the growth of vegetation in rivers, resulting in lowered levels of oxygen for fish and other wildlife. Concord's new system dramatically improves our ability to remove phosphorus from the effluent discharged from the plant into the Concord River.

Water Main Project - Ventresca Inc. has continued to install water main along Belknap and Elsinore Streets as weather permits. They are expected to demobilize in the very near future and return in the spring to complete remaining work.

CPW / Emerson Hospital Meeting – CPW staff met with Emerson Hospital's Green Committee. The discussion focused around the town's green initiatives and Buy Recycled Policy. Discussions also took place around the possibility of the hospital implementing a SHARPS / unwanted medication recycling program for Concord residents.

Pedestrian Crosswalk at Route 2 and ORNAC (Photo) – *The Public Works Department installed a short extension of the sidewalk from Old Marlborough Road along Old Road to Nine Acre Corner to Route 2, recently, including a pedestrian-activated light that will stop traffic and allow*

pedestrians to safely cross the 4 lanes of traffic at this intersection. There is currently no crosswalk connecting the sidewalks on either side of ORNAC. A crosswalk will be painted on the ORNAC paving next spring.

5. Department of Planning & Land Management

Health Division

- **New Onsite Wastewater Regulations:** The Board of Health at their Tuesday, November 18 meeting adopted proposed revisions to Chapter 3 of the Concord Board of Health Regulations. This chapter sets forth the Board's regulations that are over and above the requirements of Title 5, governing onsite wastewater system replacements. The proposed changes included a reduction of the number of pages in the regulation from 42 to 7, removal of language more appropriate for policy documents, and an updating of the regulations to reflect changing technology.
- **Verrill Farm:** The Temporary Retail and Kitchen trailers at Verrill Farm both received their operations permits this week, after passing inspections by the Health Division. Gabrielle White and the rest of the Health Division staff worked closely with the Verrill family to rapidly, but safely, bring these temporary facilities online.

Building and Inspections Division

- **What slowdown in construction?:** On Wednesday, November 12th the Concord Building and Inspections Division carried out thirty (30) Building, Electrical, Plumbing and Gas inspections. With a number of 40B and affordable housing projects proposed for spring and summer 2009 the Building Inspections Division expects to have the busiest summer in our history.
- **Walden Street parking problem:** John Minty continues to work with the Walden Street School for Girls over their parking on the street across from their school facilities. The Concord Historic Districts this week sent a letter to John voicing their concern with this parking occurring on the historic Mill Brook land. Part of the issue here is that the Police and Fire Departments use this same edge-of-road parking for their large meetings.

Natural Resources Division

- **Local Wetlands Bylaw Outreach:** The Natural Resources Commission focused its efforts on reaching out to the community this past week to discuss the draft Local Wetlands Bylaw, scheduling a special Conservation Coffee presentation early Tuesday, appearing before the Planning Board, and posting the information on the Town's website. An article has been submitted to the Concord Journal requesting comments and providing links to the information. The Commission is scheduling additional meetings with other town boards and committees, such as the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee, the Agriculture Committee and the Economic Council, and other groups such as OAR, Concord Business Partnership and the Chamber of Commerce. Meetings and hearings are expected to continue through December into the spring, leading up to Town Meeting in April. The Commission will be asking the Selectmen to include the proposed Local Wetlands Bylaw on the Town Meeting warrant for approval by the voters in April.

Planning Division

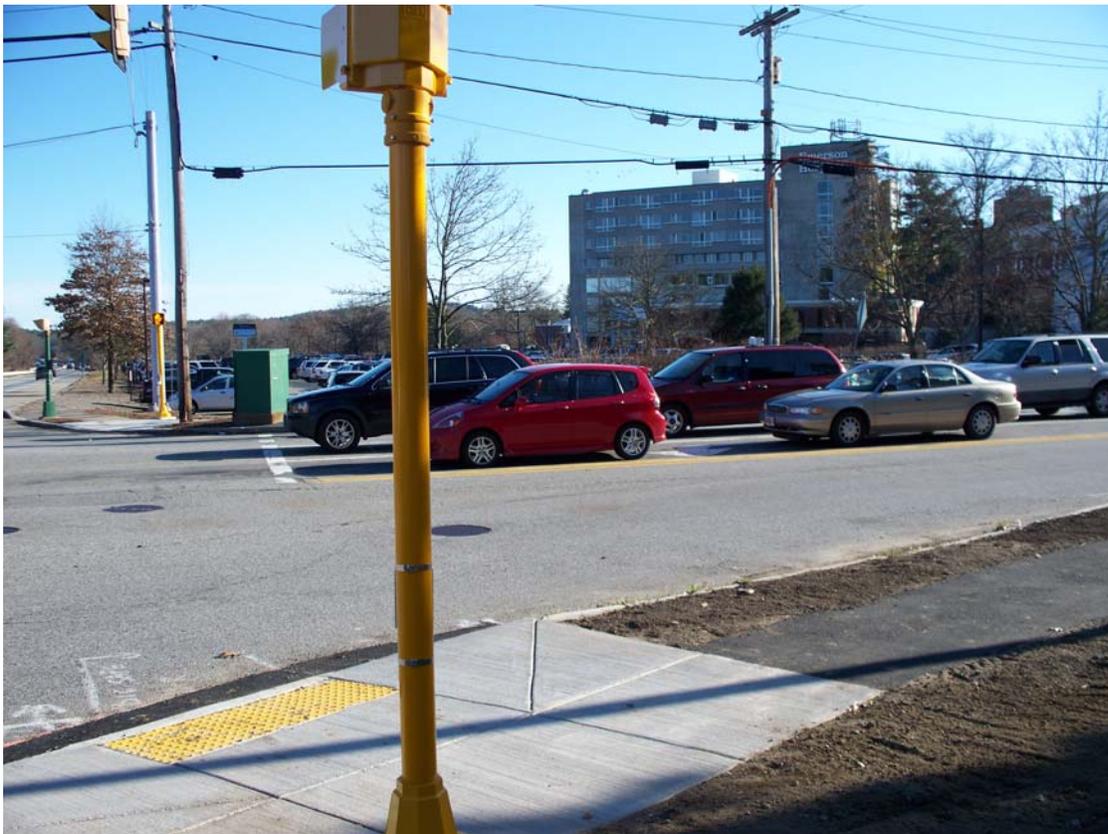
- **Planning Board:** The Natural Resources Commission presented the draft Wetlands Bylaw to the Planning Board on Tuesday. The Board was generally supportive of the local bylaw with further clarification and offered to prepare a Zoning Bylaw amendment that would delete the regulatory aspect of the Wetlands Conservancy District. The PB also continued its public hearing for 110 Commerford Road, Concord Wold LLC Definitive Subdivision and Special Permit application. The Board is working with the developer and the residents to identify a development solution that will minimize traffic impacts and maximize environmental/open space features – favoring a design that

shows 9 building lots in a standard subdivision and 5 building lots in a Residential Compound special permit development.

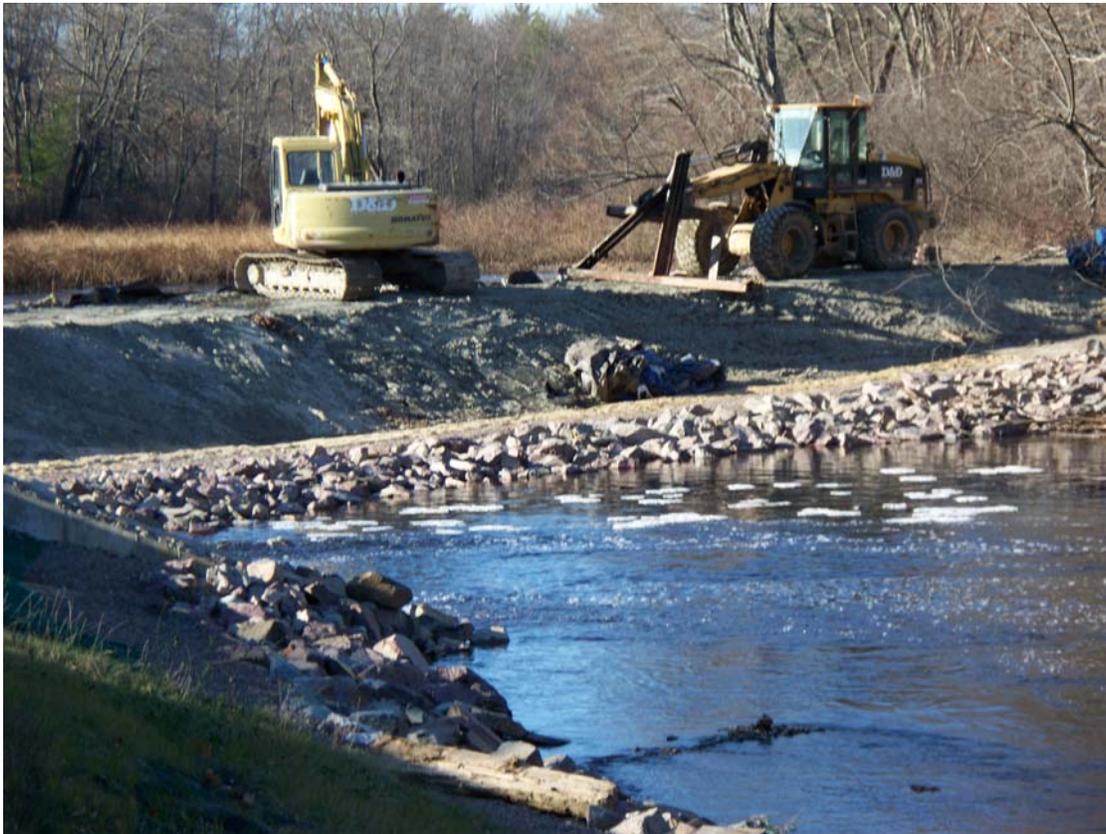
- **Community Preservation Committee:** The CPC held their annual public hearing for new funding applications on Tuesday. Brief summaries of the fifteen project applications were presented, followed by questions from the public. Only two projects, the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and the planning study updates, brought out larger discussions on the use of CPA funds and how the projects fit in with those goals. The CPC will hold their next meeting on Monday, Nov. 24, with a further discussion of the CHDC's proposal for reallocating their funding from last year, after which deliberations on this year's recommendations for Town Meeting will begin.
 - **Route 2 Rotary redesign – archeology meeting:** Lara Kritzer and Marcia Rasmussen met with Martin Dudek, a principal archeologist with John Milner Associates, on Monday at the Concord Municipal Light Plant to review the locations for an archeological survey in areas that may be impacted by future construction of Route 2. The sites were located between the gas station at the Rotary and the eastern edge of the Light Plant parking lot. Mr. Dudek pointed out an existing Colonial era foundation and possible well; as well as areas where there will be explorations of possible Native American sites and other early Colonial sites. Excavation was to take place later this week, after confirmation by DigSafe.
 - **Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee:** The BFRT Advisory Committee met on Thursday, November 20 to get an update on State funding questions and the public hearing with the Community Preservation Committee. The Committee asked that the request for a quote to conduct a survey of the railroad spur move forward and that MAPC (regional planning agency) be contacted for clarification of the Regional Transportation process and how it impacts the Rail Trail, and asked what we can do to help move the project forward.
6. **CC Human Rights Council's Annual Human Rights Day Breakfast.** The Selectmen and the community have been invited to attend CCHRC's Breakfast on Monday, December 1 at 7:30 a.m. at the Trinitarian Church on Walden St. No charge to attend and all are welcome.
7. ***Willard School Construction (Photo).*** *The masonry contractor is scheduled to begin installing exterior brick this week at the new school, a process that is expected to take about two months.*
8. ***Waste Water Task Force.*** *The Waste Water Task force is meeting December 2 at 7:30 a.m. in the Selectmen's Room of the Town House. The group will be discussing a draft report to the Board of Selectmen, as well as two possible articles for inclusion on the Town Meeting warrant for 2009. The Task Force will be reporting to the Selectmen at the December 1 meeting, in advance of the Town Meeting Coordinating Meeting on Saturday, December 6.*



View of Pine Street Bridge looking west toward Fowler Library



View of Route 2 at Old Road to Nine Acre Corner looking east toward Emerson Hospital



View of Warner's Pond Dam Main Spillway



Donated Restroom and Storage Building Under construct adjacent to new Playing Fields at CCHS. Bathroom entrance shown at left; storage bays on right.



Willard Construction photo taken on November 21 showing south elevation.



A portion of the north elevation of the new Willard School