

Town Manager's Report **Monday, December 19, 2011**

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

Municipal Innovation Award: The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) has selected Concord, along with 5 neighboring towns, as recipient of the Kenneth E. Pickard Municipal Innovation Award. This award is presented annually to recognize communities' "dedication, commitment and ability to increase the effectiveness of local government" – this year recognizing Concord's joint submission on Regional Housing Services with Sudbury, Weston, Lexington, Bedford and Lincoln. The award ceremony will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 21 as part of the MMA's Annual Meeting and Trade Show.

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

FIRE

Emergency Management: All documentation for the hurricane Irene FEMA reimbursement was submitted to our FEMA representative last week.

Personnel: Retired Call Firefighter and former CMLP Director John ("Dick") O'Neil has passed away. John was also the father-in-law of retired Captain Ken O'Donnell.

LIBRARY

Assistant Director Recruitment: First round interviews are currently underway, with a group of 8 – 10 candidates being considered further from an original field of 33 applicants.

LIGHT DEPARTMENT

Concord Light's e-Smart Kids Website: Concord Light's e-Smart Kids integrative website was re-designed and re-introduced in September 2010. The educational website is intended for kids, their parents, and teachers to help them learn about electricity and how to use it safely and wisely -- while having fun with games and experiments. Concord Light had 2,360 visits to the e-Smart Kids website since January 2011, averaging about 197 per month. New games and updated questions from kids and answers on "Ask an Expert" will be added in January 2012. The web link is <http://www.e-smartonline.net/concordlight/>.

Concord Light Provides Tools to Track Down Heat Loss in Your Home: Light Plant customers may find out where their home's leaks are located by borrowing an easy-to-use, hand-held leak detector from Concord Light. Common places include small gaps where a wall and floor meet, or around recessed lights, fireplaces, electrical outlets, windows and

doors. The detector can also identify cold spots where insulation is missing or inadequate. The detector shines a point of light on a potential problem area and compares the temperature of the area to your home's interior temperature. When a cold spot is encountered, the light changes color, making the leak or the weak insulation easy to identify. To borrow a leak detector, send an email to jaceti@concordma.gov or call 978-318-3151. There is no charge.

2010 Lien Process for Electric Accounts: CMLP began the 2011 lien process for overdue electric accounts in mid-October with 340 customers overdue greater than 36 days; \$126,413 subject to liens, and \$234,568 in total outstanding balances. After collection efforts in early November, 193 lien letters were sent out. CMLP's continued collection efforts resulted in reducing the number of potential liens from 193 to 11 liens being levied this week. CMLP collected \$121,813 in overdue amounts; total outstanding balance reduced by \$212,554.92; and delinquencies decreased by 94%.

PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT

Natural Resources Division

9B Monsen Road: DNR and Planning staff walked the proposed Conservation Restriction (CR) for the proposed 8-unit subdivision at 9B Monsen Road. The State Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) identified the boundaries of the CR to protect the Blanding's turtle (a state threatened species) because the development is proposed within mapped Blanding's turtle habitat. The developer intends to file a Conservation Management Plan with NHESP, and an Environmental Notification Form with the State Environmental Policy Act unit early next year in advance of the local permitting process.

Nyanza Chemical Waste Dump Superfund Site NRD Settlement: In 2008, DNR staff responded to a Request for Restoration Projects to restore natural resources that were altered by mercury and other hazardous materials releases from the Nyanza site in Ashland. DNR staff issued several restoration projects for consideration, including one for improved aquatic invasive species control in Fairhaven Bay and the Assabet, Sudbury, and Concord rivers. The State issued a Draft Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment with 12 proposals, including one for water chestnut and other aquatic invasive species removal efforts in the Assabet, Sudbury, and Concord rivers and Heard Pond in Wayland. This 3-year effort (longer if additional funding is available) is proposed to be over \$1 million of the \$3.7 million available for restoration funding. The control efforts would be coordinated by the SuAsCo Cooperative Invasives Species Management Area (CISMA), a regional group of which Concord is a member. The plan can be viewed at www.mass.gov/dep/cleanup/sites/nrd/nydrpea.pdf and written comments will be accepted through January 23, 2012 by mailing to: Nyanza Trustee Council, c/o MassDEP, Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup, One Winter Street, 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02108, Attn: Karen Pelto; or emailing to Karen.Pelto@state.ma.us.

Trails Committee: The Trails Committee started a new trail system in the Domino-Nocella Land, off Conant Street. The Committee held their first scouting party this past weekend and

is seeking volunteers to assist with this endeavor. Interested parties should contact the Division of Natural Resources at 978-318-3285.

Heywood Meadow Stewardship Committee: The HMSC met with Concord Independent Battery representatives to review a proposal to widen the driveway entrances at the Gun House. The Battery is seeking approval to widen the entrances to 16 feet for safety reasons, and will be submitting an application to the HDC in the near future.

Health Division

CHNA 15 Health Communities Grant: Public Health Director Susan Rask has met with the Superintendent of Schools, Youth Outreach Coordinator, Community Services Coordinator, COA, Recreation Department and Concord CAN to engage them as partners in the upcoming CHNA15 grant funding opportunity to undertake a Healthy Communities planning process. Grants of up to \$15,000 will be made available by CHNA 15 to support these efforts; the grant application deadline is January 27.

Building and Inspections Division

Long View Meadow: The first Certificate of Occupancy has been issued for the Club House at the Long View Meadow project off Old Powder Mill Road. The Club House will be used temporarily for a rental office until the first apartment building is ready for occupancy. Also this week - the last building in the development has been framed out and will be completely weather-tight before Christmas.

Fenn School Library & Science Center: On Thursday, the Plan Review staff met with the development team for the next phase of the Fenn School master planning project, which includes the renovation and replacement of Robb Hall with a new Library & Science Center. The library will be located on the lower level; the upper level will contain four science classrooms. The project also includes scaling back the bus drop off loop to create a larger campus green in front of Thomson Hall, a net decrease in impervious area, relocation of two handicap parking spaces, handicap lifts, and green design measures in line with the Stretch Code and LEED. The project will not increase the student or faculty population. This proposal will need to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Board. The work is proposed to begin during the summer of 2012 and it is estimated to cost over \$ 5 Million.

Planning Division

Planning Board: Tuesday night, the Planning Board heard an update from the Concord Academy development team on the proposed athletic facility at the former Arena Farm. State law requires that the Planning Board file a decision on site plans for religious, educational and child care facilities within 90 days of receipt of an application; the Applicant granted an extension to the Planning Board to January 17, 2012, prior to which it is anticipated that all of the outstanding stormwater and drainage design issues will be resolved. After endorsing an Approval Not Required Plan for land of Carlson at 494 Old Marlboro Road, the Planning Board reviewed all of the green cards submitted for the West Concord Advisory Committee and voted on members and term limits. The Planning Board will be finalizing their proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments on Tuesday, December 20.

Community Preservation Committee (CPC): On Monday night, the CPC completed their review of this year's CPA funding applications and voted on this year's funding allocations. The CPC is recommending that the \$1,105,226 be divided amongst 17 projects, 8 of which are Town of Concord projects. In addition, the CPC drafted conditions for the recommended projects, completed the draft Warrant Article, finalized the CPC's Annual Report, and scheduled their meetings leading up to Town Meeting in April. Lastly, the CPC reviewed the letter received by the Committee from the Historical Commission expressing concerns about the CPA funding of the project currently underway at the Concord School of Philosophy. The CPC hopes to schedule a meeting with representatives of both the Historical Commission and the School in January to discuss these questions.

Affordable Housing Unit Successfully Closed!: This week, the Planning Division successfully completed the transfer of an existing moderate income affordable unit at Elm Brook Lane, an entirely affordable development created by the Concord Housing Trust in the early 2000s, to an income eligible family. Senior Planner Lara Kritzer (with guidance from the Regional Housing Services Office) has worked with both the owner and buyer of the unit since June to market the unit, qualify the new buyer, and ensure that the sale was completed as required under the Town's Affordable Housing restriction for the unit. Not only was the affordability of the unit retained in a difficult housing market, but the project also benefited from a generous donation from the Concord Housing Trust which increased the affordability of the unit from its original 140% AMI to 110% AMI. This is also the first resale in Concord which was completed by Town Staff with professional assistance and guidance provided through the Town's membership in the Regional Housing Services Office.

Concord Historical Commission: At their Thursday night meeting, the Concord Historical Commission welcomed three new nominees to the Commission – Ellen Denison, Electra Tritsch, and Geoffrey Taylor – and reviewed the HC's charge and duties at this time. Commission member Annette Bagley updated members on the Historic Preservation recommendations for CPA funding this year; Member Nancy Butman provided an overview of a recent meeting with the Town's Building and Planning Divisions on potential future changes to the Demolition Delay Bylaw, and Chair Holly Larner presented the questions to be addressed by the HC for the draft Harrington House National Register Nomination. The Commission plans to hold a workshop in early February to further review the Demolition Delay Bylaw and discuss potential changes.

POLICE

Operational Services: On Thursday December 15, officers conducted a motor vehicle stop on Fairhaven Road on a motor vehicle that was observed traveling at a high rate of speed on Route 2. After completing their investigation, officers determined that the operator was intoxicated and should not have been driving. The operator was arrested and charged with second offense drunk driving and operating to endanger.

On Friday December 16, Officers responded to the area of Oak Hill Circle a report of past vandalism. Officers determined that several mailboxes, a potted plant and a lawn ornament had been vandalized. The case is currently under investigation and several leads are being pursued.

On Saturday December 17, officers stopped an erratic operator of a motor vehicle on Route 2. Officers conducted an investigation of the operator to determine his sobriety. Officers determined that the operator was drunk and should not be driving. The operator was arrested and charged with second offense drunk driving and operating after suspension.

Community Services: The Department has been actively assigning officers to foot patrols in the business areas during the holiday shopping season. Officers have reported making positive contacts within the community and their presence has been appreciated by the local merchants and business owners.

The Department has had a record 69 drunk driving arrests for the year thus far. Officer Brian Soll has had 26 drunken driving arrests, and has made concerted efforts to keep the roadways and citizens safer throughout Town.