

**PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2016
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
ROOM 208
MIDDLETOWN, CT**

Members Present: Councilman Carl R. Chisem
Councilman Thomas Serra
Councilman Gene Nocera
Councilman Sebastian Giuliano
Councilman Philip Pessina

Staff Present: William Russo, Director of Public Works
Christopher Holden, Deputy Director of Public Works
Tina Gomes, Chief Management Analyst

Others: John Hall, Jonas Center for Earth & Art & Complete Streets Committee
Paul James, 91 Beverly Heights
Norman, Donna, & Laura Caron, 159 Birchwood Drive
Karen Meszaros, 154 Birchwood Drive
Cindi Perugini, 243 Bartholomew Road
Pam Frost, 1253 Bartholomew Road
Monica Belyea, 186 College Street
Beth Emery, 64 Church Street
Tom Quirk, 658 Ridge Road

Chair Chisem opened the Public Works & Facilities Commission meeting at 7:04 P.M. Chair Chisem requested a motion to approve the minutes dated March 9, 2016. Motion to approve the minutes was seconded and approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Director Russo requested that a motion be made to waive the rules and let the members of the public make comments during 'New Business', item 5a. A motion was made to waive the agenda to allow the public to speak during 5a. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Director Russo stated that there is no correspondence, except for the document that John Hall will pass out during item 5a.

NEW BUSINESS:

Councilman Pessina asked if there was any member of the public that wishes to speak about any topic other than the Complete Streets item 5a.

A member of the public spoke about the future paving on Ridge Road South. He would like to know if the speed of traffic can be controlled with some shoulder leans or stripe installations. It was suggested to him by one of the Councilman that he should speak to either the Director or the Deputy Director about this matter after the meeting.

Laura Caron, 159 Birchwood Drive, stated that her neighbor has been working on finding problem areas on the streets. Birchwood Drive is between two schools which causes a lot of bus traffic. Parents and students coming and going are the major cause of this traffic. She is concerned about the speeding and wants to know if there is anything that is being planned to address the safety. One of the councilmen told her to also speak to either the Director or the Deputy Director about this matter after the meeting.

- a. Complete Streets Committee Projects – John Hall, Complete Streets Committee, stated that he was invited by Councilman Serra at a previous meeting to come back and speak about his Complete Streets plan in a more refined way. The following areas of interest are matters that have been identified as short term and low cost priorities that require minimal planning.

The fence behind the American Legion Building should be moved about ten feet. The footpath should then be extended from Palmer Field parking lot to the footbridge over the Coginchaug River to allow access to Veteran's Park.

John also brought up the need for rehabilitation on the riverfront. He would like to remove the unattractive and uninviting barricades at the Eastern Drive and Silver Street entrances. These barricades should be replaced with bollards or another type of gate system. He wants to indirectly let the pedestrians know that walking and bicycling is permitted.

A sign should be added to Long Lane that says "Bike Route," to identify to the public that it is indeed a bike route. He would also like a "sharrow" pavement marking painted on the street. These will not only help the bicyclists feel more invited, but it will also notify traffic that there are possible bicyclists on the road.

After looking at all of the schools, the Complete Streets committee came up with three low to medium cost "safe routes to school" priorities. The areas around schools are high priority for health and educational reasons. John mentioned the first priority, which is closing through traffic on Spruce Street to Keigwin School in conjunction with planned parking and security improvements.

Karen Meszaros, 154 Birchwood Drive, stated that she would like an "emergency access only" gate put on Spruce Street to prevent traffic related issues. The Fire Department and Police Department were opposed to this idea as it was discussed in the past. They need two access ways to the school if anything were to happen. Karen then recommended stop signs and/or speed bumps to help with the traffic issues.

John stated that there are two other areas of priority involving the schools. The sidewalk in front of Woodrow Wilson Middle School should be installed from Russell Street and down past the parking lot. This will help with all of the safety concerns towards children being dropped off and picked up at school.

Monica Belyea, 186 College Street, spoke in regards to the third safe route issue which is the lack of signage and crosswalk at MacDonough School. There is a lack of crosswalk at Pearl Street along with some signage that is missing in areas where cars are not supposed to park. The cars coming off of the bridge tend to cut through on Spring Street to get over to Washington Street instead of going down Main Street in the morning. Half of MacDonough's students are walking and biking in this area causing safety concerns due to the speeds of the cars. Additional sidewalks and signage will be needed to prevent these issues from happening in the future.

Councilman Serra stated mentioned that the traffic concerns should go to the Public Safety Commission so that they are aware and will take care of possible infractions.

John also mentioned two of the highest priorities that will require some further study and/or significant funding. One of the major priorities is Saybrook Road near Stop & Shop between Tryon Street and East Main Street. There is no real way for pedestrians to walk on a sidewalk to get to Stop and Shop and Bielefield School, nor is there a push button for pedestrian crossing. John stated that he would like for the sidewalk design to be incorporated into the design for road reconstruction. This should include bike lanes for Saybrook Road since it is a main route for bicycling transportation within the city. Director Russo stated that in the past, he brought Cardinal Engineering in to study the situation. The firm recognized that it is a very complicated area with all of the side streets and possible back up of traffic. Since the Saybrook Road area is the worst area in Middletown in terms of pedestrian safety, the project will be very costly.

The second major priority of the committee is allowing bicyclists to easily and safely travel north. Due to the lack of safety on Newfield Street, four million dollars in bonding authorization was put in towards a multi-use trail from Tuttle Place to Veteran's Park and/or North Main Street. The survey and design work for this will become priority so that a possible grant can be received. This will allow for some federal money to be used along with the City's money. An engineering firm will be hired to do the survey and design work which will cost around \$250,000.00 - \$300,000.00.

- b. Parks Bond Budget – Director Russo stated that the council is looking for concrete numbers. Millone & MacBroom's numbers will be shared to the committee along with the numbers from the work of City staff. Both groups have been trying to get closer to the actual numbers.

Tina Gomes, Chief Management Analyst, went over the Parks Bond Budget with the commission. She stated that the numbers shown in the budget were provided by Millone & MacBroom after the synthetic fields were removed. In order to fund everything that was listed on the bond ordinance, Tina Gomes and Director Russo had to go through their budget proposals and figure out what was going to be done in-house to save money. After doing so, the figure was reduced from 4.9 million to 3.7 million.

Funding and line items were discussed amongst the commission. Councilman Serra stated that the budget will have to go to the Finance & Government Committee and the Common Council. He wants to amend the name of the project to: "Woodrow Wilson Track & Field Improvements and Tennis Courts" Pat Kidney park improvements. This will show that it is all included under one name for construction management purposes. Director Russo stated that he doesn't believe that the tennis courts were involved with the 33 million in funds. The tennis courts are ready to go out to bid after presenting the information to the public schools and the athletic director.

Councilman Serra discussed the organization of the project completion order and the larger projects that should have building committees assigned. Director Russo believes that if there is a building committee and Pat Kidney Field and the track is prioritized, the first meeting would have a firm present. The firm would then tell the building committee the scope of work involved. If the committee is happy with what the firm presents to them, negotiation to start work will begin. The cost for the firm's re-appearance for updates in committee meetings will be included in the cost of hire.

Councilman Giuliano stated that he believes that if there are two separate projects taking place at the same time, then two separate building committees should be assigned. Director Russo stated that it can be done any way that the Council feels it should be done.

Councilman Serra reviewed the budget for the \$33,450,000.00 bond authorization for the work being done at athletic fields, parks and trails city-wide. He gave the breakdown on how much will be spent at each location, excluding Woodrow Wilson Tennis Courts. Woodrow Wilson Tennis Courts will be financed through a separate bond authorization.

The commission discussed all of the projects and decided which ones need to have a building committee assigned and which ones that Public Works & Facilities Commission will take over. Building committees will be assigned to projects that cost over \$500,000.00. Public Works & Facilities Commission will take on projects that cost less than \$500,000.00. After dividing these projects into two separate lists, they then prioritized them in order of importance.

The projects that a building committee will be assigned to are: Pat Kidney field and Woodrow Wilson Middle School track/field improvements and tennis courts which will be done first. The following locations will be determined down the line as to when work will start: the new grass fields, Country Club Soccer Complex improvements, Hubbard Park, Snow School field improvements, Smith Park improvements, Moody School park improvements, McCutcheon Park improvements, Veteran's Park improvements, Mattabassett Bike Path, and Westlake Drive Park.

The projects that Public Works & Facilities Commission will be assigned to are: Harbor Park, Palmer Field entry and bleacher repair, Wesley School park improvements, Lawrence School park improvements, Spear Park, McCarthy Park, Butternut Hollow, and Donovan Park.

Director Russo stated that a motion shall be made to change the threshold to \$750,000.00 along with establishing the committee so that work can begin.

One of the councilmen made a motion to accept the budget for the improvements, including the names of the individuals indicated in the resolution, and for it to be recommend to the council at the meeting on May 2, 2016. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

- c. Docks for Harbor Park – The crew docks that are currently in place are made out of plywood and are not ADA compliant. The new docks will contain rubber couplers that allow the dock sections to “run up” on the cement entryway without the use of ramps. Each section will flex accordingly and provide a smooth transition and any water level.

Tina Gomes stated that \$80,000.00 will be needed to complete the new dock installation. A motion was made to utilize \$80,000.00 for the dock installation which will come out of the Harbor Park Improvements line item which currently contains \$585,000.00. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

- d. MTAC Commercial Brake Seminar, 7 Mechanics & 1 Parks Employee – June 16, 2016 – Director Russo stated that item 5d and 5e are both highly recommended brake classes for the mechanics. The money is in the budget to send the seven mechanics to the seminars, including the one mechanic in the Parks Department. This class costs \$125.00 per person for members. Motion was

made to approve the attendance of 7 mechanics and 1 parks employee at the MTAC Commercial Brake Seminar. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

- e. MTAC ABS Seminar, 7 Mechanics & 1 Parks Employee – July 14, 2016 – Motion was made to approve the attendance of 7 mechanics and 1 parks employee at the MTAC ABS Seminar. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.
- f. Building Permit Refunds: - NRG Home Solar, 127 Round Hill Road, \$343.24
 - NRG Home Solar, 93 Spring Brook Drive, \$328.98
 - NRG Home Solar, 62 Windy Hill Drive, \$328.98
 - NRG Home Solar, 194 Hickory Circle, \$585.66
 - AAA Const. Services, Inc., 80 Pashley Lane, Lot 16, \$2,596.32

Director Russo stated that the projected number in building permit revenue is \$550,000.00. Currently, the revenue reached a total of \$600,242.14 with two and a half months still left to go until the end of the fiscal year.

A motion was made to approve all five building permit refunds. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. March 2016 Public Works Overtime Report – The commission reviewed their March 2016 Public Works Overtime Report.
- b. March 2016 Building Permits – The commission reviewed their March 2016 Building Permits.

OTHER:

- a. March 2016 Monthly Report – Highway Division – The commission reviewed their March 2016 monthly reports.
- b. March 2016 Overtime Report – Parks Division – At this time, there is no overtime report for March 2016 for the Parks Department.

As there was no further discussion, the Public Works & Facilities Commission meeting adjourned at 9:03 P.M.