

Town of Concord, Massachusetts

Town Manager's Report

Monday August 31, 2009

To: Board of Selectmen
From Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

Willard School Demolition (Photos). Demolition of the existing Willard School building began last week. The Contractor expects to have the building down by September 1. Work will continue onsite this week when school starts sorting debris for recycling or disposal, but will take place at good distance from the new school. The protective fences with the privacy fabric are already installed and there will be a water truck and fire hoses onsite to wet down the material to decrease the dust. Added filters are being installed on the air intakes of the new building closest to the demo area to prevent dust entering the new building when it is occupied.

Electric Rate Hearing. The Municipal Light Board has scheduled a hearing in September to consider increasing electric rates for the period beginning October 1, coinciding with the expiration of the advantageous power supply contract we have enjoyed for seven years with Constellation Energy. The new rates are expected to include three steps: the first for average electrical consumption; a second, higher tier for 100% above the mean residential bill; and a third step for those using 200% of the mean electricity usage. These stepped rates are similar to the "block rates" the Water Division uses and are intended to promote conservation. The rate hearing is set for Wednesday, September 9 at 7:30 p.m. at the Town House offices at 1175 Elm Street. The Light Board expects to vote to approve 2009 rates at a regular business meeting on Thursday, Sept 17 at 8:00 a.m. in the same location.

Energy Services Coordinator. Light Plant Director Dan Sack, Asst Director Dale Cronin and I interviewed two candidates for the position of Energy Services Coordinator last week. We will be checking the candidate's references this week and hope to be in a position next week to make a job offer to one of the candidates. This is a new position, full-time position which evolved out of a position that was vacated last winter with part-time responsibility to energy conservation. This person will work out of the Light Plant and will work with the Energy Committee, town staff and residents to advance a coordinated effort toward energy conservation.

HydroPower. Last week, the Town of Concord expressed interest in purchasing 4 million kilowatt hours of electric power beginning March 1, 2010 from Miller Hydropower in Lisbon Falls, Maine. The power is available at 6.35 cents per kilowatt hour for a period of three years. This would represent about 2% of the Town's annual electrical usage and would be coming from a carbon-free, renewable source. Execution of the purchased power contract will bring the Town's portfolio of renewable energy to about 7% of our annual consumption.

Gift from Middlesex School. Head of School Head Kathy Giles sent to the Town last Friday a check in the amount of \$25,000 on behalf of Middlesex School to be used for toward the Town's energy conservation efforts. The school would like to contribute toward the purchase of energy-efficient public works and public safety vehicles, covering the difference in cost between a standard vehicle and the price of a hybrid or fuel-efficient vehicle. The funds may also be used to install energy efficient windows in town offices and workspaces. This marks the third consecutive year that the School has made a significant donation to the Town.

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Pine Street Bridge Reopened (Photo). After about 15 months of work, the Pine Street bridge reopened to traffic on August 31, a few days before school reopens on Thursday. The Pine Street bridge had a weight-restriction in-place for many years, prohibiting its use by school buses, ambulances, and fire engines. The former structure was completely replaced with a new bridge at a cost of about \$3.5 million, paid for by the Massachusetts Highway Department's bridge replacement program.

Nashawtuc Bridge Closing for Repairs (Photos). The Nashawtuc Bridge over the Sudbury River on Nashawtuc Road will be closed for repairs beginning on September 14 for a period of 90 days, through November 30. The goal is to have the bridge re-opened to traffic this winter. The work involves primarily replacing the granite parapet walls, which had been sagging, had ceased providing any safety for motorists, and were in danger of falling into the Sudbury River. The project was substantially funded by an allocation of \$250,000 in CPA funds in 2008.

Work on Route 2 at ORNAC (Photo). National Grid resumed construction on Tuesday, September 1 for a gas main replacement on Old Road to Nine Acre Corner at Route 2. The work is required to address recurring gas leaks in the area. National Grid plans to install new pipe to eliminate the problem. The work schedule is from 10:00 a.m. to -3:00 p.m. daily, excluding weekends, weather dependent and is expected to take 10 days.

New Little League Field at Ripley School. The Friends of Concord-Carlisle Fields are proceeding with plans to construct a new 60-foot, fenced-in Little League field at the Ripley School, re-using one of the two existing soccer fields at that location. Bids will be solicit by the non-profit group in mid-September, with a goal to complete construction before winter. The plan has been approved by the School Committee and Recreation Commission. Once the work is finished, the group will visit the Selectmen and request formal acceptance of the donation. All funds for this field have been raised privately. Public Works will oversee the construction from the Town's perspective and will assume maintenance responsibilities once the work is done.

1. **Historic Districts Legislation.** Representative Cory Atkins office informed the Selectmen's Office last week that House Bill H. 632, an act relative to the Historic Districts Commission of the Town of Concord, has been released by the House Committee on Steering, Policy & Scheduling and is moving forward on the House side of the Legislature. If approved, the act would revise the procedure for appointing members of the HDC, pursuant to a vote of Town Meeting in 2007 under Article 38. In 2008 the bill was voted by the House but died due to inaction in the Senate.

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Health Division

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1. **Waste Water Task Force.** The Task Force did not meet in July or August. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 6th at 7:30 a.m. in the Selectman's Room. The agenda for that meeting will include a discussion of: 1) the initial findings of the Waste Water Treatment Plant capacity study recently performed by Woodard and Curran; 2) The status of the Request For Qualifications for engineering services related to the wastewater alternatives analysis; and 3) an update of discussions and activities taking place which may result in public/private wastewater partnership opportunities for future evaluation.

series of final

1. **Ag Day September 12.** The Agriculture Committee has planned the third annual Ag Day for Saturday, September 12 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the Mill Dam. The one block section of Monument Square will be closed from Monument Square to Walden Street to enable free pedestrian traffic.

Verrill hopes to take occupancy by

September 10 and then

open for operation the

following week.

15. PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Gabrielle will be working closely with Jen and Steve Verrill to ensure a seamless transition from the temporary stand to their new permanent establishment.

□. Food service operations expand and new ones are set to open. Gabrielle has been actively reviewing and conducting build-out inspections for the following establishments: a major expansion of Ferns (Carlisle); Nine Acre Convenience and a Building and Inspection Division Café at Byville, the new Building Inspections staff completed construction of the new Willard School with a temporary Certificate of Occupancy. This will allow teaching staff to occupy the building and begin preparing their classrooms for the arrival of students.

Trade Traditional Chinese Food with The old: On Monday, September 8, a contractor began demolishing the old Willard School building. It is starting with the portion of the building closest to the schoolhouse. This is a so-called "stretch code" would be an optional part of the State Building Code that sets higher energy levels of energy efficiency in new buildings and major renovation projects. The Building Code proposal relating to energy conservation was approved by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards and went into effect on August 1, 2009. It is based on the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) 2009.

Natural Resources Division

□. White Pond Restoration is required by the state building code. The state has developed the “stretch code” in Works Over the past several of several municipalities to mandate greater efficiency in local weeding, construction, but in Concord, state law municipalities are not allowed to vary from the state code. The several projects would give cities and towns an option, but because it is a single restoration project, it would be White Pond. The higher efficiency standards. projects were installing water bars to divert runoff near the Varick Road entrance, and coir log controls to protect the pond’s bank on the northeast part of Sachem’s Cove. Both projects have improved protection of the pond. The Crew will also be installing cable on the northwest side of Sachem’s Cove in an effort to prevent pond access down the slope. Fishermen will still be able to access the pond’s edge but will be directed down a shallower slope and around the water’s edge. Next week, the Crew will be removing the prolific unauthorized “No Swimming” signs that appeared this spring on Town land.

□. Brister's Hill Parking Area: Natural Resources staff are preparing a DCR grant for materials to construct two handicapped parking spaces at Tuttle Lane on Brister’s Hill. CPW is designing the spaces with input from John Minty to ensure that they meet recent revisions to ADA regulations. A loop trail from Tuttle Lane to the Brister’s Hill Interpretive Site owned by the Walden Woods Project will also be constructed. This trail will be an “assessed trail”, one that may not entirely meet accessibility standards for limited mobility users but provides enough information at the trail head to

Planning Division

□. Bike Rack Inventory - Senior Planner Julie Vaughan completed an inventory of bike racks throughout Town and has compiled a list of possible locations for new bike racks. MAPC has approved the Town’s application for eligibility and Julie has acquired quotes from the vendors. Julie has had various meetings with Marcia Rasmussen, Dick Fowler, Rich Reine, Lara Kritzer, Delia Kaye and John Wilson to modify the initial list and coordinate the installation, which has to occur before November 1st for MAPC reimbursement. At this time, it has been determined that the Town will order 25 bike racks with a black powdercoat finish. The order will include a combination of the two proposed styles (U and Post & Ring) and will be surface mounted or in-ground depending on the proposed location.

□. Mill Brook Footbridge on the Emerson Thoreau Amble The Natural Resources Commission recently approved a Notice of Intent for a foot bridge, simple boardwalk and trail across Emerson land to connect the recently completed trail in the Town Forest with Heywood Meadow. Joan Ferguson designed a footbridge that will be constructed in generally the same

Town Energy Audit- after a productive Tour of Facilities with ADI on July 21st, a new draft Energy Audit Report has been submitted. Senior Planner Julie Vaughan has circulated the new draft for staff review and is anticipating that it will be discussed at the next Facility Manager's Meeting on September 22nd. Next steps should include a presentation of findings to the Facility Managers, Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee and Town staff and then further revisions if necessary.

16. PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS

Engineering and Administration

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The major portion of the reconstruction work on Cranberry Lane to Water Street is completed with reclaiming and fine grading on-going. The road reconstruction will continue for the upcoming weeks with project contractor EH Perkins paving binder course pavement within Cranberry Lane/Water Street segment prior to school beginning. In an effort to accelerate the project schedule, the project contractor was authorized to work on Saturday August 29th beginning at 8:00 AM, but heavy rains limited the contractor's ability to use this extra day. The work will allow for binder course pavement installation to begin ahead of schedule. Upon completion of the paving of this

section of the road, drainage work will resume on the remaining sections from Cranberry Lane to the Acton Town Line with reclaim, grading and pavement to follow. The project remains on schedule to install binder course pavement for the entire roadway and sidewalk binder course by November 2009. Top course pavement and sidewalk installation will resume during the 2010 construction season.

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Solid Waste and Recycling

Water and Sewer



New Retaining on Main Street (Rt 62) North Side



Work Continuing on Main Street (Route 62) – Paving to begin Sept 3



New Stone Retaining Wall will replace existing wall on Rt 62 near Damon Mill



Route 62 Retaining Wall Near Damon Mill – Trees on Right will be removed to construct new stone wall. New trees will replace existing.



New Pine Street Bridge now open to all traffic (looking east toward Upland Road)



Demolition of Old Willard School nearly complete on Sept 1 (New School is in background)



Much of the former Willard School Building will be sorted and recycled



New Farmstand at Verrill Farms will open in mid-September



Top Course of Paving being installed on ORNAC (9/1/09) - following 2008 installation of water line connecting White Pond Well with new Deaconess Water Treatment Facility.



Old Road to Nine Acre Corner resurfacing near Concord Country Club



National Grid Crews Replacing gas main at intersection of Route 2 and ORNAC, addressing long-standing gas leak problems.



Nashawtuc Bridge will be closed for repairs September 1 through November 30.



Nashawtuc Bridge Repairs were partially funded with Community Preservation Act funds, an historical preservation project intended to preserve the original granite parapet

