

Public Works and Buildings Committee

December 21, 2017

Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilor Ralph Torr – Chairman

Councilor Ray Varney

Councilor Sandy Keans

Councilor Donald Hamann

Councilor Thomas Willis

OTHERS PRESENT

Councilor James Gray

Daniel Fitzpatrick, City Manager

Blaine Cox, Deputy City Manager

Peter C. Nourse PE, Director of City Service

Lisa Clark, Admin and Utility Billing Supervisor

Ted Chandler, Director of Operations – Lydall Inc.

Tonia Chase, Manager of Environmental Health and Safety – Lydall Inc.

MINUTES

Chairman Torr called the Public Works and Buildings Committee to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Approve minutes from the November 16, 2017 Public Works & Buildings Meeting.

Chairman Torr requested comments or a recommendation on last month's meeting.

Councilor Varney made a motion to accept minutes as presented for the November 16, 2017 Public Works Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Willis. The Motion passed unanimously.

2. Public Input -

Mr. Chandler from Lydall Inc. introduced himself and Ms. Tonia Chase. He stated he was here to update the Committee and the public with PFAS contaminate activity on the site of Lydall and to respond to some of the concerns that were raised at last month's Public Works and Buildings Committee meeting. Mr. Chandler stated that Lydall was notified in November of 2016 that there were issues with PFAS's above the allowable maximum contaminate levels (MCL). He stated that Lydall had previously used materials at the facility that had contained PFAS's, and that the supplier had not disclosed that content to them. Mr. Chandler stated that as the materials are no longer in use at Lydall. He stated that Lydall acted quickly to ensure safe drinking water and develop a remedial action plan. Mr. Chandler stated that after the NHDES notification they immediately started testing all private wells within an approximate ½ mile radius. Mr. Chandler stated that of all wells tested, the well at 139 Chestnut Hill was the only one to test positive for PFAS's above the MCL. He stated one property owner at 133 Chestnut

Hill Road had initially refused to have their well tested. Mr. Chandler stated that Lydall has paid for all testing to date and has supplied both 133 & 139 Chestnut Hill with bottled water for drinking since the receipt of the test results at 139 Chestnut Hill Road. The resident at 133 Chestnut Hill Road has recently agreed to test and those results are pending. Mr. Chandler stated that Lydall has contracted with SUR Construction to have the water service at 139 Chestnut Hill Road tied into the City's water service and will do the same with 133 Chestnut Hill Road pending the testing results. Mr. Chandler stated that Lydall has obtained the services of an environmental consultant for the initial site investigations and a remedial action plan. The plan has been submitted to NHDES for comment and they will work with the NHDES on any additional site concerns that need to be addressed. Councilor Varney asked if it was necessary to continue testing regularly if the initial test results at 133 Chestnut Hill Road are not above the MCL. Ms. Chase stated that she believed it would be the one test, but it would depend on NHDES recommendations.

3. **Snow Policy Updates** – Mr. Nourse stated that he would like to remove this item from the agenda as staff is working on some minor updates to the policy that include the number of trucks, sidewalk tractors and like information.
4. **Downtown Lighting Policy** – Mr. Nourse stated that in November the Downtown Vibrancy representative was here to discuss lighting and made a request to keep the holiday string lights in the trees year round. Mr. Nourse stated that the Committee suggested discussing this again this month after the new brighter fixtures and globes were replaced. Mr. Nourse stated that he believed the consensus of the Committee was to keep the lights in the trees, as long as they were not taking up significant staff time, until late January or February and to have the Vibrancy Group and staff look at some alternate year round decoration to be mounted on the poles. Mr. Nourse displayed pictures of non-holiday pole mounted decorative lights and explained they would be \$200-\$300 per pole. Mr. Nourse stated that when this was discussed at the recent City Council meeting, he believed the consensus was to leave the string lights in the trees until further notice and he was looking for clarification. Councilor Varney stated that as the new fixtures and globes have brightened the area already, he believed that lights in the trees could come down after the holiday per the usual schedule. Councilor Willis stated he believed it was left to the discretion of Public Works. Councilor Willis stated if there is any burden to maintain them, they should come down. Councilor Varney asked when they are normally taken down. Mr. Nourse stated the first or second week in January. Councilor Keans, Councilor Willis and Councilor Torr thought it would be nice if they lasted until the beginning the end of January. Councilor Gray suggested next year looking at lights that are more durable for longer use.
5. **Irish Street Sidewalk & Utility Pole** – Mr. Nourse stated that this item had come from the Public Safety Committee and the City Council. He stated he had been asked for a cost estimate to install approximately 175 feet of concrete and curbing on Irish Street.

Mr. Nourse had a visual display on the overhead screens showing the section of Irish Street in question. He stated that the cost estimate is \$100,000 and there are existing funds in the CIP account that is typically used to rehabilitate existing sidewalks. Mr. Nourse stated that the City Council's direction had been to replace sidewalks on Portland Street due to the poor existing conditions and trip & fall safety hazards, but if the desire is to install sidewalk on Irish Street that could be done. Mr. Nourse stated that he would estimate \$2000 for the removal of the utility pole in the center of the Irish Street and Charles Street intersection. Chairman Torr asked if the street was used much by kids walking to school. Councilor Gray suggested having the Crossing Guard assist in providing this information. Councilor Keans stated that there are more people walking from Irish Street down to the Sunoco Station. She stated there is a sidewalk that just stops half way and this is a more dangerous situation than the Irish Street concern. The Committee was not in favor of spending \$100,000 on the Irish Street sidewalk extension. Mr. Nourse stated that direction for the CIP Sidewalk funds previously was to rehabilitate sidewalks. He questioned whether the Councilors would now like to use those funds to build new sidewalks or would they prefer to address new sidewalk projects with separate budgeted funds for specific locations. Councilor Willis stated that the Sidewalk funds should continue to be used for sidewalk rehabilitation and new sidewalk locations should be specific projects. Councilor Keans stated that she would like the Columbus Avenue sidewalk looked at as a possible stand alone construction project. Councilor Varney agreed and asked if the Crossing Guard could be contacted to get a count of how often the middle school students are using the Columbus Ave sidewalk. Councilor Gray suggested getting information as to the use of Irish Street as well.

Councilor Willis made a motion to keep this item in Committee until the information is gathered by the Crossing Guard. The motion was seconded by Councilor Varney. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Nourse stated that the Strafford Regional Planning has started a sidewalk condition assessment study in the Rochester area.

6. **Chestnut Hill Road – Drinking Water Concerns** – item discussed above under Public Input.
7. **Franklin Street Project Update** – Mr. Nourse displayed a graphic of the project area. He stated the project has shut down for the winter and will resume in the spring. Mr. Nourse stated that Franklin Street, Western Avenue and the Western Avenue Pump Station had been completed and the change order work is nearly complete on Adams Ave and the numbered streets. Mr. Nourse stated that addition work at the corner of Adams Ave and Winter Street will be added in order to get as much of this neighborhood completed as possible with the existing appropriations. He specifically mentioned the culvert in that area and the sewer pipe that runs through it. Councilor Willis asked if the current contractor was performing well. Mr. Nourse stated that he has only been with the project a short while but based on the feedback of others in the department, he would say

the product is good, and although it would have been better to have several crews working to get the project completed quicker, he would say they have performed adequately. Chairman Torr asked if there have been any other complaints from the abutter to the pump station about noise or smell. Mr. Nourse stated there have not.

8. **Cocheco Crossing – TIGER Grant** –Mr. Nourse stated that this project, also known as the 3rd Cocheco River Crossing is a project that has been around for a while. Mr. Nourse explained that this project is to build a roadway and bridges to connect North Main Street to the Chestnut Hill Road / Wakefield Street area. He stated that the City had recently purchased properties in preparation for this possible project. Mr. Nourse explained that this project will be in excess of 20-50 million dollars and staff would like to see if there is support for a comprehensive submission of “Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Grant (TIGER) application. He stated that these grants are highly comprehensive and very competitive. Mr. Nourse stated that the preparation for the grant application would need to be funded as there would be costs incurred for work. He estimated that it could be up to 5 years before we would be eligible for the funding but if the City wishes to proceed toward eventually building this project we might consider putting a feasibility study in for next year’s CIP budget. Mr. Nourse stated that a requirement for consideration would be that the City would have to demonstrate that the roadway/bridge was to be built regardless of the grant. Councilor Willis stated he remembered some preliminary work being done. He stated some organized neighborhood push back and funding concerns led to a City Council decision not to proceed to preliminary design. Councilor Varney stated that in looking out over the next ten years we have committed to other projects that would prohibit the City from building this project. He referenced the new DPW Facility and a new school building that is necessary. Councilor Varney stated that if it is part of the approval process is to commit to building this roadway, with or without the TIGER Grant, he does not see how that would be financially possible. Councilor Willis asked what the match is for the TIGER Grant. Mr. Nourse stated that it varies based on the project and federal funds. Chairman Torr said that he agrees that this project would not be financially feasible in the next 10 years or more. He stated that the Rt. 11 corridor should be our first priority where there are serious safety concerns. Mr. Nourse stated that he too is very concerned about the RT. 11 area. He stated he is still waiting for a reply to the letter he sent regarding timing the lights at the Farmington Road / exit 16 intersection. He state that Councilor Gray had also requested action on the letter and there still has been no response.
9. **Salmon Falls Road EDA Project Update** – Mr. Nourse that this project is completed.
10. **Colonial Pines Project Update** – Mr. Nourse stated that the first phase going under the turnpike is complete. He stated the next phase is to run the sewer line down Railroad Avenue about 900 feet to the sewer main interceptor. He stated that there are wetlands and a culvert in the area to deal with but the intent is to do a contract modification with the current contractor to get this work completed quickly with the best pricing. Mr.

Nourse stated that he has a new engineering firm that will be working at the same time on the final plan to actually cross Old Dover Road and into Colonial with the sewer pipe and services. He stated that this work would be going out to competitive bids. Councilor Varney asked when the Railroad Avenue connection would take place. Mr. Nourse stated that he would like to start early in the spring with the existing contractor.

Councilor Varney stated that the residents in that project area are anxious to see work in the neighborhood. Mr. Nourse stated that the engineers will be working to get a bid out for that work as quickly as possible and the neighborhood will see them out there doing survey work and should expect to see them conducting door to door interviews and information gathering.

II. Other -

Crosswalks – Councilor Willis stated that as this is his last meeting as a City Councilor he would like to express his concerns for crosswalk safety in the downtown area one more time. He stated that he would like to see the City using the signage recommended in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). He specifically noted North Main Street near George & Ed's and the mid block crosswalks downtown at the Lilac City Grill and near Moe's Sub shop. Councilor Hamann stated that this issue came up last evening at the Public Safety Committee as well. He stated that Mr. Bezanson had informed the Committee that the consultants have been working on the report for the review of the downtown crosswalk safety and the City will soon be implementing many of the recommendations including the signage Councilor Willis is requesting. Councilor Hamann stated that there will be paving downtown and the pavement markings will then be addressed along with the signage. Councilor Varney asked if there was sufficient funding for the new signs. Mr. Nourse stated not in our DPW O&M. Ms. Clark explained that there are sufficient CIP funds that the City Council had appropriated for Downtown Crosswalk Safety. The City Council funded \$100,000 and there is \$92,000 remaining after the initial study. Councilor Gray also expressed concern for getting the signs in prior to spring. Councilor Keans mentioned cars coming from south main to the crosswalk at Hanson Street. She stated that cars leave the light at Portland Street and accelerate up South Main Street and come around the corner to pedestrians in the crosswalk going from Hanson Street to the Central Square. Councilor Gray stated that was discussed at the Public Safety Committee as cars are coming from North Main Street and are looking down South Main to yield onto Wakefield Street and they do not notice pedestrians in the crosswalk that are right there. He stated that there was discussion of removing or moving that crosswalk. Councilor Keans stated that is the busiest crosswalk downtown. Councilor Varney suggested to get started as soon as possible on as many of the recommendations as possible with the existing funds. Mr. Nourse stated that we would do that, but he did want to make the Council aware of the large amount of highly visible signs we would be putting up in the downtown area.

Illicit Dumping into Sewer System – Mr. Nourse stated that the staff may have found

the source of the illicit dumping into the sewer system. He stated that he couldn't reveal details yet but believe the source has been found.

Pedestrian Bridge on RT125 Guardrail – Councilor Varney asked the status of the sidewalk/ guardrail project. Mr. Nourse stated that it would be completed in the spring. He stated that staff is working with the contractor to get the guardrail fabricated.

NHDES Energy Assessment – Councilor Keans asked if Eversource is doing an energy assessment at the WWTF. Mr. Nourse stated that NHDES and the Department of Energy have been working with City Staff on an energy assessment. They have come back with a list of recommendations. He stated many of those recommendations were already in the works and others will be included in the budgeting process in the future.

Fieldstone Village – Councilor Varney asked if the meters were in yet and if that Mobile Home Park is now being billed on usage and is there more or less usage than previously billed. Ms. Clark stated that the meter is in and that the usage is higher than what they have been billed for the past few years.

Chairman Torr made a motion to adjourn at 8:16. Councilor Willis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa J. Clark, City of Rochester Administration and Utility Billing Supervisor.