Town Manager's Report Tuesday, January 22, 2013

To: Board of Selectmen

From Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

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

Starmet / NMI (2229 Main Street) Site Activities: The contractor responsible for conducting the demolition of the buildings will start some outdoor activities the week of January 21, 2013. These will include clearing trees near the buildings, and some minor earthwork to prepare staging areas for trucks and to install a truck scale. Accordingly, nearby residents may hear chainsaws and equipment during normal working hours. The EPA-approved work plan is posted on www.NMISIte.org as the "SMSP Addendum #1". If there are any questions, please contact the Project Coordinator, Bruce Thompson at brucet@demaximis.com or at 860 298 0541.

FINANCE

2013 Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Bills To Be Issued This Week: The Tax Collector will be mailing more than thirteen thousand Motor Vehicle calendar year 2013 Excise Tax bills on Thursday of this week (January 24). Excise Tax bills are issued on a calendar year basis. All vehicles registered as of January 1, 2013 are subject to the tax. The data comes to the Town from the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) and the bill is issued to the owner's address as recorded at the Registry. The bill for the full year is owed to the municipality where the vehicle was garaged on January 1, 2013. The tax is based on the manufacturer's list price of the vehicle for the original (model) year as set by the RMV according to the N.A.D.A. Blue Book. It is not based on the actual sales price or the current market value. This value for tax purposes is then factored based on the age of the vehicle, as follows:

Year prior to model year	50%
Model year	90%
Second year	60%
Third year	40%
Fourth year	25%
Fifth year and each year	

thereafter 10%

If a vehicle is taken off the road, it is still subject to tax UNLESS it is sold or traded. Vehicles registered to the owner for only a portion of the calendar year are eligible for a prorated abatement based upon whole months, according to state law. Details regarding applying for an abatement are available on the Town website under "Town departments/Assessing", or

"Boards and Committees/Board of Assessors". Owners who sell or trade their vehicle are reminded to obtain a signed <u>Bill of Sale</u> from the buyer AND to obtain a <u>plate return receipt</u> from the RMV unless plates are being transferred officially to another registered vehicle.

13,776 bills are being issued totaling \$1,906,134. This is an overall increase of 9.2% compared to last year and the average bill of \$138 is up 7% over last year, indicating an upturn in the registration of newer vehicles.

This first billing of the calendar year excise tax includes all vehicles that were registered through approximately December 1, 2012. Owners of vehicles first registered in December 2012 can expect to receive a partial bill for calendar year 2012 and the full year 2013 bill within a few months. These are issued from the RMV as two separate bills, but each will clearly show the calendar year to which it applies. An owner who expects but does not receive a part-year 2012 or full year 2013 bill should contact the Assessors office, 978-318-3070.

Owners who may be applying for abatement are reminded to pay the bill in full by its due date of February 23, 2013, after which additional charges may apply. An abatement granted by the Assessors which results in a refund will be processed promptly by the Treasurer (978-318-3050).

PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT

<u>Planning Division</u>

Historic Districts Commission: At their Thursday meeting, the HDC reviewed one new and one continued application for changes within the Historic Districts. Following a site visit on Wednesday, the HDC voted to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for Verizon to install new AC equipment and decorative balustrade on the roof of their building at 111 Walden Street on the condition that all necessary repairs to the fencing, shutters, and front entrance are made. The Commission also began review of a proposed detached garage at 10 Wood Street, but continued the hearing to allow time for a site visit in February.

Community Preservation Committee: The CPC met last Monday to review the revisions to their draft warrant articles and project conditions. Members also received an update on the proposal to acquire McGrath Farm, and reviewed existing projects that have been completed over the last few months and began planning for the CPC's upcoming presentation to the Finance Committee. The CPC is scheduled to meet again on Monday, February 11.

Regional Housing Services Office: Planning staff met with the Regional Housing Services staff to discuss recent monitoring work, updates for the Subsidized Housing Inventory, HOME documentation, program administration for the Concord Housing Development Corporation's small grants program and an upcoming regional meeting.

Millbrook Tarry Workshop Report: The report on the November 14, 2012 planning workshop for redevelopment of Millbrook Tarry was finalized and distributed. The report and supporting documents used at the workshop are now posted on the Planning Board's web page at http://www.concordma.gov/Pages/ConcordMA_Planning/board.

Natural Resources Division

Natural Resources Commission: At the January 16 meeting, the NRC heard and issued an Order of Conditions to replace the septic system at 189-191 Hawthorne Lane. The Commission also issued Orders to construct a garage and additions at 276 Main Street and after-the-fact tree removal and invasive species control at 676 Monument Street. The Commission also discussed options to preserve the McGrath house lot at 449 Barrett's Mill Road.

Open Space and Recreation Plan: DNR staff is proceeding with the Open Space and Recreation Plan Update, with the assistance of students from the Conway School of Landscape Design. The first community meeting will be held on February 4, 2013 at 7:00PM at 141 Keyes Road, First Floor Conference Room.

Building Inspection Division

Concord Carlisle Regional High school: John Minty has been working with the architect, owner's representative and the contractor to confirm the process for earth removal from the new high school construction site. Also in discussion: school security issues and the code requirements that must be satisfied to provide safe egress from the building in an emergency.

1112 Main Street - Mobil Gas Station: The Building Inspections Division received a zoning complaint regarding improper lighting on the site, oil deliveries after hours and the removal of trees. John Minty is investigating the matter and will determine if there is any validity to these claims. This is the same site where the Board of Appeals has issued a special permit to allow a new TD Bank building to be built.

Health Division

Regional Tick Task Force: Public Health Director Susan Rask attended the monthly meeting of the newly-forming regional tick task force, which is being coordinated by the Town of Lincoln. The purpose of the task force is to educate residents about tick-borne illness and steps that may be taken to prevent contracting these diseases. A number of public health directors in towns adjacent to Concord are discussing seeking grant funding to create a tick awareness education program on walking trails and other outdoor areas, modeled on the program developed in Concord by Health Inspector Gabrielle White.

Permits to Remove Beavers: The Concord Public Works Department has requested two emergency permits this month to trap beavers to prevent flooding on Cambridge Turnpike in the area of Millbrook Farms.

Enforcement of Regulations and Bylaws: The majority of Health Division staff time last week was spent on enforcement of several complex regulations and the bottled water bylaw.

Influenza and Flu-like Illness: The Massachusetts Department of Public Health reports that the rate of flu-like illness in the State has dropped for the second week in a row. While this is encouraging news, it's important to note that flu can be unpredictable, and it's too soon to know for sure whether flu season has peaked here in Massachusetts. Residents are reminded that if they have not yet been vaccinated, it is absolutely not too late to protect themselves against flu. Residents should contact their health care provider or visit a local pharmacy to get a flu shot.

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