

Town Manager's Report Monday, September 17, 2012

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

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

FIRE

Unusual Emergency Responses: Late Thursday afternoon, September 13, CFD responded to Rte. 2 at Sudbury Road for a multi-car accident. On arrival responders found a tractor trailer car hauler crossing route 2 had overturned, spilling the cars atop the trailer onto the busy intersection. Fortunately none of the vehicles fell on passing cars, and only two patients were transported to the hospital.

Saturday afternoon, a motorist on route 2 noticed smoke and then flames coming from her car. The operator pulled off route 2 and into Concord Gas to report the fire. The well-involved vehicle was extinguished quickly with no extension to the gas station.



LIGHT DEPARTMENT

Tracking Energy Consumption: Concord Light has prepared a report on the annual amounts of electricity, natural gas, heating oil and propane consumed in Town government buildings from 2008 through June 2012, to help building managers assess their progress towards Town government's goal of reducing its energy use by 20% of 2008 levels by 2015.

PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT

Building and Inspections Division

Annual School Inspections: School building inspections have been completed by the Building Department with only one minor glitch in one of the buildings. These types of yearly building inspections include verifying that there are no obstacles impeding the means of egress, that fire extinguishers are up-to-date, that proper handrails and guardrails have been maintained, etc.

Concord Mews: The final certificate of occupancy has been issued for Concord Mews with a 30-day temporary for items that require more time for completion. This project was issued building permits in December 2010.



Health Division

Mosquito Weekly Update: On September 13, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) announced an additional human case of West Nile virus (WNV) in a resident of Hampden County, and an additional human case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in Plymouth County. To date, there have been a total of nine human cases of WNV and one human case of EEE in Middlesex County. Statewide, there have been fourteen human cases of WNV, four human cases of EEE, and four animal cases of EEE to date. Based on the distribution of the illnesses across the State, MDPH on September 10 raised the risk level to at least Moderate in all towns across the State (with risk levels at High or Critical in towns which have human or animal illnesses, or directly border towns with illnesses).

Based on MDPH's determination, the EEE and WNV threat level in Concord is at Moderate. Although our risk is Moderate, no one should be complacent about the risk of disease. To the extent possible, residents should avoid being outdoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitos are most active. Everyone should be using personal protection against mosquitos

as needed when outside. Anyone who will be outside at dusk or dawn is strongly urged to wear effective mosquito repellants. **All residents should take steps to protect themselves against mosquito bites: use insect repellent, cover up, and avoid outdoor activities at dusk and after nightfall when mosquitoes are at their most active.**

Board of Health Regulation Regarding Sale of Tobacco Products and Nicotine

Delivery Products: At its September 11 meeting, the Board of Health voted to adopt a regulation which prohibits the sale of Nicotine Delivery Products (e-cigarettes, nicotine candies, and similar products) in health care institutions, including pharmacies. The regulation also prohibits retail sale of nicotine delivery products to minors, and in self-service displays and vending machines. The use of commercial “Roll-Your-Own” machines is also prohibited. The regulation enhances the Town’s bylaw, Sale of Tobacco to Minors, by further preventing youth access to addictive nicotine delivery products. Notification of the regulation will be sent to pharmacies and to all retail stores which currently have tobacco sales licenses. It is important to note that the regulation does not affect the sale of products such as nicotine patches or gum that are regulated by the U.S. FDA and used for smoking cessation.

Planning Division

Affordable Housing Updates: On Tuesday, DPLM Director Marcia Rasmussen and Senior Planner Lara Kritzer attended the Concord Housing Development Corporation’s monthly meeting where they received an update on the status of their ongoing and new projects. The CHDC is currently working to complete necessary access easements for the proposed Junction Village development and expects to be moving forward with development plans over the next few months. The CHDC is also working with Housing Consultant Beth Rust and Senior Planner Lara Kritzer to initiate a Small Grants Program, which will provide up to \$3,000 to income eligible Concord residents to make necessary repairs or accessibility improvements to existing homes. Grant funds will be awarded three times a year, with the first round of funding anticipated to be ready for distribution in January 2013. Staff will be working with the CHDC to begin outreach and notification efforts over the next few months.

In further housing news, the recent completion of additional units at the Concord Mews development has once again pushed the Town of Concord’s Subsidized Housing Inventory above the required 10% threshold. While existing affordable housing programs will continue to work on diversifying and enhancing affordable housing opportunities in Concord, this threshold protects the Town from any “unfriendly” 40B projects which might be proposed. Lastly, the Regional Housing Services Program is sponsoring a Post-Purchase Fundamentals seminar to educate new affordable housing homeowners on the financial and property maintenance responsibilities of their new homes. This training will take place on Wednesday, November 7, from 6 to 9 in the Town House Public Hearing Room.

Planning Board Update: The Planning Board had a long meeting on Tuesday that started with positive recommendations on the Concord Outfitters project at 113 Commonwealth Avenue and the special permit for parking relief at the Colonial Inn. The Board heard a presentation by the development team for the proposed new high school at 500 Walden

Street and, after discussion, a review of the Planner's Report, and a silent public comment period, voted to recommend that the Board of Appeals approve the project. The Board then had a lengthy discussion with the development team for the proposed TD Bank at 1112 Main Street, and after determining that 4 out of the 5 members felt that the proposed bank would be "substantially more detrimental than the existing use" and would not recommend approval of the project as proposed, the development team decided to return to the Board in October for review of a revised concept plan. The meeting concluded after the Board briefly discussed goals and distributed tasks for 2013 Annual Town Meeting.

Zoning Board of Appeals: Thursday night, the Zoning Board of Appeals accepted the continuance requests for the proposed residential project at 12 Kenney Lane, redevelopment project at 1112 Main Street, and expansion project at 91-107 Lowell Road. The Board then granted a special permit and site plan approval for the new Concord Outfitters building at 113 Commonwealth Avenue, and special permits for a special home occupation at 69 Pleasant Street and for reconstruction of a nonconforming garage at 63 Monument Street. After a lengthy discussion on the Colonial Inn request for parking relief, the Applicant asked to be continued to the Board's November meeting because of concerns raised by abutting property owners. The meeting ended after the Board approved the special permit, variance and site plan for the new high school at 500 Walden Street.

MAGIC Meetings and Projects: The 13-town Minuteman Area Group on Inter-local Coordination (MAGIC) received good news that the Comprehensive Agricultural Planning Project was approved by the Sustainable Communities Steering Committee last week; this effort will consider the regional scope of agriculture and expand on the work done for the Concord Community Food Assessment Report. The Suburban Mobility Study Phase 2 is wrapping up; MAPC staff made a presentation on Tuesday of the school bus issue as it relates to using school buses for public transit and there was discussion on the efforts to consider creating a new Transportation Management Association (Littleton, Acton, Boxborough, Stow and Maynard were part of the initial discussion with active consideration of adding Westford and Concord). The general MAGIC meeting took place on Thursday with all but Lexington and Lincoln represented – Senator Jamie Eldridge attended the meeting where there was a lively discussion of legislation to be considered if he is re-elected. A MAGIC workshop will be held in October (date to be determined) for a discussion of best practices and innovative ideas for mixed use and smart growth.