

Town Manager's Report

Monday, December 12, 2011

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

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

FINANCE

Credit Rating: Moody's Investors Service has removed the "Negative Outlook" from the Town of Concord's Triple-A credit rating, and also from the Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Triple-A rating.

Following the downgrade by Standard and Poor's of the credit rating of the United States of America in July and the placement by Moody's of a "Negative Outlook" on the USA Triple-A credit rating, Moody's had followed up by placing a "Negative Outlook" on more than 400 of its Triple-A rated state and local governments across the country, including the 13 Massachusetts municipalities rated Triple-A. The stated purpose at that time was to conduct a review of the extent to which each highly rated state and local government would be affected by the fiscal problems of the federal government, either directly or through effects on its local and regional economy if federal outlays were to be sharply reduced. As a result of this review, now completed, Moody's has downgraded several, retained the "Negative Outlook on some ratings and removed the "Negative Outlook" from most Triple-A ratings nationwide.

In view of the upcoming borrowing for the Concord-Carlisle High School project, this is an important action benefitting Concord and Carlisle taxpayers.

FIRE

Apparatus: Firefighter orientation on the new Ladder 1 continues. The Ladder will also be going back to the dealer for a few punch-list items, but it is expected that it will be placed in service within about two weeks.

Personnel: Of the 153 Firefighter applications we received, 53 will proceed to the entry written exam to be held on the evening of December 20. This will be followed by a smaller number being invited to round 1 oral boards currently scheduled for December 28,29,30.

PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT

Planning Division

Community Preservation Committee: Monday night the CPC held its regularly scheduled meeting to begin review of this year's applications for funding at the 2012 Annual Town Meeting. The Committee reviewed and discussed each project proposal and has developed a set of draft recommendations which will be subject to a final review and approval at the next meeting on Monday, December 12. The Committee will also be developing draft conditions for all recommended projects and expects to develop a final draft of the warrant article on the 12th.

Battle Road Scenic Byway Task Force: The Battle Road Scenic Byway Task Force met in Arlington on Tuesday to discuss potential federal grant programs to fund construction projects within the Scenic Byway area. The grant program is focused on safety and infrastructure improvements that will have a positive impact on tourism; a potential application could request funding to construct a link between the Minuteman Bikeway and the existing trail system in the Minuteman National Historical Park parallel to Rt. 128 which is already in the planning stages. The Committee also discussed a future meeting with the planning and engineering departments of each member community to develop a better understanding of possible projects in each community that could be considered for future funding. The Committee also began a review of potential management structures for the Byway and will look more closely at these alternatives in January.

Community Housing Initiatives Conference: Senior Planner Lara Kritzer attended a half day workshop on Strategies to Build Support for Affordable Housing on Thursday morning hosted by the Massachusetts Housing Partnership. The conference focused on developing and furthering local affordable housing programs and provided examples of community supported projects under diverse circumstances in Medway, North Andover, and Carlisle.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA): Thursday night, the ZBA approved an Amendment to the Floodplain Conservancy District Special Permit and Site Plan for a proposed 50,000 SF medical office building and associated parking, stormwater and drainage improvements, and a Special Permit for an MRI trailer at 300 Baker Avenue. They also upheld the Decision of the Zoning Enforcement Officer regarding the unlawful open air storage of materials at a Grove Street residence, approved additional dwelling units at 385 and 389 Garfield Road and 131 Sudbury Road, and approved a change in lot lines and release of restrictive covenants at 97 Estabrook Road.

Natural Resources Division

Natural Resources Commission (NRC): At the meeting of December 7th, the NRC heard the following matters: a drainage project at 448/449 Barrett's Mill Road for Save Our Heritage; the construction of athletic fields at 15A, 16A, 153 Fairhaven Road for Concord Academy; the after-the-fact removal of trees and invasive species at 41 Lowell Road; and, the after-the-fact removal of trees and invasive species at 47 Lowell Road. All these matters were continued to December 21, 2011 for additional information. Additionally, the following matters were continued to the December 21st meeting without discussion: the installation of

underground utilities at 1373-4 Monument Street, the rehabilitation of the parking lot at Crosby's Market (181/191/203 Sudbury Road) and, the construction of an addition at 120 Channing Road. The Commission did issue an Order of Resource Delineation for 445/41A Lowell Road. The Commission received one new application this week for the installation of a satellite production well at the Deaconess Well site.

Bruce Freeman Trail: Staff met on site with representatives from MassDOT to review the alignment of the rail trail land bridge over Route 2. The three proposed alignments will be discussed at an NRC meeting in January.

Conservation Coffee: The last Conservation Coffee for this year was held on Tuesday, December 6. It was very well attended. The next Conservation Coffee will be held on January 3, 2012.

Health Division

CHNA 15 Health Communities Grant: Public Health Director Susan Rask has been conducting outreach to citizen groups and Town departments to engage as partners for the upcoming CHNA15 grant funding opportunity for undertaking a Healthy Communities planning process. Grants of up to \$15,000 will be made available by CHNA 15 to support these efforts; the grant application deadline is January 27.

9 Independence Court: Health Inspector Gabrielle White has completed initial review of the proposed restaurant, Umami, and sent a request for additional information regarding physical aspects (equipment specifications, placement and construction) of the food service operation to the project applicant.

Building and Inspections Division

Long View Meadow project: The Building & Inspections Division is completing final inspections of the Community Recreation building at the Long View Meadow Project. If all finals are passed, a Certificate of Occupancy will be issued for this building.

Zoning Enforcement/Neighborhood Discontent: With the holiday season upon us, the Building & Inspections Division this week has received half a dozen zoning complaints. These complaints consist of an illegal dwelling unit, a residential garage being used to conduct auto repairs, an illegal storage trailer on a residential property, junk storage on a residential property, and two illegal signs.

PUBLIC WORKS

Cambridge Turnpike Reconstruction: RFQ #274 for the design, permitting and construction period services for Cambridge Turnpike reconstruction has been advertised. The qualification packages are due on February 2. CPW is seeking to engage an engineering design firm to provide full design and construction period engineering services including environmental assessment, permitting, plan development, public meetings, design development, final design, technical specifications and drawings and bidding for the reconstruction of Cambridge Turnpike. The proposed project is based on the desire to

modify Cambridge Turnpike and associated infrastructure to ensure it remains accessible and passable during flood conditions. The Town of Concord entered into an agreement with MassDOT which provides construction funding of up to \$7.5 million dollars to construct improvements to the Cambridge Turnpike based on existing flooding conditions along Cambridge Turnpike which would otherwise be exacerbated following the Crosby's Corner Construction project.

Wastewater Planning Task Force: A meeting of the Wastewater Planning Task Force (WWPTF) has been scheduled on December 16, 2011 at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Over the next several weeks CPW and WWPTF consultant Weston and Sampson will be performing load scale testing at the existing wastewater treatment plant to assess the feasibility of groundwater discharge of treated effluent within the existing sand filter beds. CPW and consultant Weston and Sampson have developed a plan which was submitted to the DEP for review which includes a hydrogeologic investigation to gain the necessary subsurface information to understand the potential impacts and hydraulic response to potential future groundwater discharge of treated wastewater effluent. To provide additional insight to the WWPTF members and the public around this investigative work, a meeting is scheduled to coincide with this load scale testing activity.

Compost Site Hours: The 755 Walden Street compost site will be open for residents to drop off Christmas Trees on January 6, 7, 13 & 14, weather permitting. The hours will be 9-3. The Holy Family Parish & The Boy Scouts will be offering Christmas Tree pickup on January 7th (charitable donation required). Residents can call 978 369-7442 or email treepickup2012@gmail.com to schedule Christmas tree pickup.

Residents may also bring Styrofoam™ block to the compost site for recycling on Saturday, January 7th and Saturday, January 14th from 9 – 3.

Inclement Weather Policy For Curbside Program: The inclement weather policy for the curbside solid waste collection program will remain the same as last season. The inclement weather policy is outlined below:

Snow – When weather is bad but roads are passable, collection will occur as scheduled, but residents are encouraged to hold materials until the following week if possible, in order to minimize the number of roadside obstacles that may interfere with plowing.

Severe Snow Storm – In the event of a severe snow storm / snow emergency, where roads are not drivable and Waste Management is unable to travel, collection will be cancelled that day and Trash & Recycling will be collected on Saturday instead. Just the route on the day of the storm will be affected; there will be no delay in collection in other days that week, unless subscribers are notified otherwise.

Should there be a delay in collection, it will be indicated on a voicemail recording at 978-318-3240. Subscribers can also reach Concord Public Works at this number for updates during

business hours. Collection delays are also typically posted under News & Notices on the Town's website.

SPCC Training: Annual SPCC (Oil Spill Control & Countermeasure) training was conducted for CPW Highway, Engineering and W&S employees on 12/6/11. Training covered oil spill prevention and countermeasure protocol, including a review of CPW's SPCC plan. This annual training was conducted by Rod Robison, Environmental Services Program Administrator.

2010/2011 Roads Program: Project contractor, Lazaro Paving, paved the first course of asphalt on Fielding, Union, Willow, and Hubbard Streets on Monday, Dec. 5th. CPW-Engineering was on site to inspect the work. Lazaro plans on adjusting two catch basins in the neighborhood in order to ensure adequate drainage. Final paving, loam and seeding, and cleanup will commence in the spring. Lazaro also patched areas on Thoreau Street in preparation for winter operations. This concludes work for the 2011 Roads Program this construction season with final completion scheduled in the spring of 2012.

2012/2013 Roads Program: CPW's Engineering Division began planning for the 2012/2013 Roads Program and is evaluating the possibility of a dual bid for the 2012 construction season which would allow construction to begin prior to the beginning of FY2013 (July 2012). The preliminary plan includes reclamation within the Brooks Street, Grant Street, Elsinore Street, Byron Street and Belknap Street neighborhood as the first project. The second project would include the mill and overlay of Sudbury Road (from the RR tracks to Route 2) and Lawsbrook Road, reclamation of Pond Street and a hybrid mill/overlay/reclaim treatment on portions of Powdermill Road and Brook Trail Road. Please note, as the projects are still in the planning phases, scopes and streets may change.

Monument Street Retaining Wall (Hutchins Farm): CPW conducted a preconstruction meeting with project contractor Tasco Construction, Inc. and project consultant CMA Engineers on December 7th. The meeting reviewed the project responsibilities, schedule and provided Tasco with the project's Notice to Proceed which will allow for receipt of project submittals and review over the winter. The main preconstruction review for the project is the sheeting design. Tasco has requested to complete additional borings December 14th to assist within their sheeting design. CPW expects to receive a ROW permit and traffic plan for the boring activities Monday December 12.

Main Street/Thoreau Street Pedestrian Improvements: CPW awarded design and development of the bid specifications for pedestrian improvements to consultant Greenman Petersen Inc. (GPI). The project will install new pedestrian buttons and display housings for all four intersection approaches, install two new 8' signal posts and replace the existing 4 apex curb ramps with 8 new ADA compliant curb ramps. In addition, the bid will include alternates for the installation of a new vehicle detection system as well as the emergency preemption.

Due to the changes with ramp locations, change in material types and addition of the signal posts, the Division will be required to obtain a certificate of appropriateness with the Historic

Districts Commission, as the intersection is located within the Historic District. The Division expects to develop the HDC application within January for an early February HDC hearing. CPW is evaluating the option of bidding the project a standalone project or including the project with the sidewalk program. Either way, the project will be bid within March, for an April contract award and an April/May project start. The project's public outreach will be included with the sidewalk program outreach initiative with onsite meetings and the PWC public meeting.

Junction Park Rehabilitation: CPW is proceeding with the preparation of a submittal package for MassDOT to renew the Town's lease on the subject property. The plan set is currently at the 75% Design Phase with the Engineering Division working finalizing the utility layout within the park for inclusion within the submittal package. No comments have been received by CPW in response to the November PWC meeting. The Division expects to complete the design of the park and preparation of the bid package by year's end.

Church Street Parking Lot Repair: A temporary surface repair was completed by CPW Highway and Grounds staff on the Church Street parking lot to address deteriorating pavement conditions with the lot. This work included improvements to the driveway apron at the entrance to this location.

Speed Hump Installation: a speed table (hump) has now been installed on the entrance/exit to Doug White field to slow vehicles coming down the hill. Vehicles traveling at a high rate of speed and ignoring the stop sign have the potential to cause conflicts with buses and vehicles leaving the bus parking area.