

CITY OF SOMERSWORTH
Office of the City Manager

TO: Mayor Dana Hilliard and City Council Members

FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager

DATE: Friday, May 12, 2017

SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Monday, May 15, 2017
City Council Agenda

6:30 p.m. Workshop
Somersworth First Impressions – UNH Planning Club
Attached is a copy of their Presentation.

City Manager's Items (under section 10 of Agenda)

A. Informational Items

1. **1 Winter Street – Former Breton's Cleaners Site.** The NH DES Brownfield's Grant has been approved by the Governor and Executive Council. Director Shanna Saunders and I discussed next steps with NH DES Brownsfield's Program Coordinator Mike McCluskey this past Friday. Our first step is seek proposals from qualified Environmental Consultant Engineering firms. Our goal will be to move forward as expeditiously as possible. Council passed Resolution No. 37-17 (copy attached) that authorized the City Manager to execute documents and agreements necessary for the Grant's execution. Unless directed otherwise by the Council, I will move forward with the selection process and contract hiring of the Environmental Consultant, abatement Contractor, as well as any other needed expenses to complete the Grant project's completion.
2. **Recreation Committee – Stein Park.** Attached is a "*Sample*" letter that the Recreation Committee has approved. The Committee requested that the Mayor and all Councilors sign it. The letter will be mailed to businesses located in the City. As you will read, the meeting date is scheduled for Thursday, June 22 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

3. **Plan NH.** As I mentioned in my last Council meeting Manager's Report, the City did receive notification of this Grant's acceptance. Director Shanna Saunders and I had a preliminary meeting with the project leaders last Monday. We are targeting late September to conduct the Planning Charette over a Friday-Saturday series of meetings. Plan NH hopes to have 8-12 professionals assigned to our Downtown Project which will focus on several key development points and the downtown areas from Stein Park, to the Plaza, and down to the Somersworth-Berwick bridge. I will be providing more information closer to the event as well as pushing information and invites out to the public, our City Boards and the Community as a whole.

B. Attachments.

1. **Department Head Monthly Reports.**
2. **City Manager eMails:**
 - a. Former Chabot's Dairy Purchaser's Work Update.
 - b. National Guard Site Replacement Tree Planting Update.



Extension



2017

March 28th

First Impressions: Somersworth



New Hampshire
First Impressions

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Introduction	4
Key Findings	7
Before the Visit	8
Training Meetings.....	8
Pre-Visit Survey.....	8
About the Visit: UNH Students Visit Somersworth.....	12
The Assessment Area.....	12
Findings.....	12
Businesses.....	13-14
Community Art	15
Displays & Signage.....	16
Downtown Entrance.....	17
Landscaping	18
Lighting	19
Parks	20
Point of Interest.....	21
Public Facilities	22
Seating.....	23
Sidewalks, Crosswalks, & Trails	24
Streets & Transportation.....	25
Waste & Recycling.....	26
After the Visit	27
Post Visit Survey	27
First Impressions: Somersworth Assessment Map.....	33

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the University of New Hampshire Planning Student Organization students who provided their time and effort to implement the First Impressions assessment in Somersworth, NH.



First Impressions was developed in 1991 by Andy Lewis, University of Wisconsin Extension Associate Professor, and James Schneider, Grant County, Wisconsin Economic Development Director. Since then, the program has been adapted by states across the US as well as in Canada. The First Impressions program has been adapted by University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension to meet the current and future needs of New Hampshire Communities.

Introduction

The look and feel of a downtown can influence the decisions of potential residents, visitors, and businesses. A vibrant downtown serves as a gathering place, a place for people to dine, shop, and conduct business. New Hampshire First Impressions is designed to help a community learn about their downtown's existing assets and opportunities for improvement as seen through the eyes of first time visitors. In this case, members of the UNH Student Planning Organization comprised the visit team and served as the visitors that assessed the community and reported their findings.

Possible outcomes include:

- Improving the visual appearance of a downtown
- Strengthening the marketing and promotion of a downtown
- Enriching the climate of a downtown for new businesses, residents, and visitors

The First Impressions assessment consists of training meetings, a Pre-Visit Survey, a visit to the community to conduct the assessment, and a Post-Visit Survey. During the visit, team members are using the following characteristics to conduct the assessment. These characteristics reflect important components of a vibrant downtown, and are adapted from the National Civic League and from First Impressions programs in other states.



Throughout the report, these characteristics are identified as assets and opportunities. Assets are the strengths in the downtown—where characteristics exist and are excellent and well-maintained. For example, a well-maintained trail or a bench in a nice location would be considered assets. Opportunities are those characteristics that exist or do not exist, where there is room for improvement. An example of an opportunity for improvement might be lack of bike lanes, or a broken sidewalk.

A Pilot Project

The First Impressions assessment of Somersworth is a pilot project. The program, New Hampshire First Impressions typically matches two different communities to compile a team of community volunteers to visit and assess another community and then report their findings. Many New Hampshire communities are interested in recruiting and retaining more young people in their communities, and the New Hampshire First Impressions program is one way to learn about how young people view and perceive a community's downtown. For this project, UNH Cooperative Extension partnered with the UNH Student Planning Organization to teach the students how to conduct a First Impressions assessment. The students not only participated in the assessment of Somersworth's downtown, but organized the resulting data by theme and wrote this report. The results of this First Impressions assessment will be presented at the UNH Undergraduate Research Conference in April 2017.

About the UNH Student Planning Organization

The UNH Planning Student Organization (PSO) is a group of UNH students who study planning and who believe that planning provides the tools for economic, environmental, and social well-being of communities. These students volunteer several hours a week to projects that give them experience in planning and provide a service to a community effort. The UNH Planning Student Organization is an official UNH student organization and is committed to the value of sustainability.

About Somersworth

Somersworth is a city in Strafford County, New Hampshire. Somersworth is situated on the Salmon Falls River and borders Dover, NH; Rollinsford, NH; Rochester, NH and Berwick, ME. The population was 11,766 at the 2010 census, and has slightly increased since the 2000 census. According to NH Employment Security, Somersworth's rate of unemployment was 4.2%, compared to New Hampshire's overall rate of unemployment of 3.8%.

The City of Somersworth, a traditional New Hampshire community struggling to support a downtown economy, was selected as a location to conduct the First Impressions assessment. The City of Somersworth was supportive of the project especially to better understand the interests and perspectives of young people in order to recruit more young people to live, work and visit.



Pre-Visit Survey

The Pre-Visit Survey was completed by the visit team online prior to conducting the visit. The survey collects information about members' demographics, such as age, gender, and town of residence; and requires team members to conduct internet research on the community they will be visiting and reflect on the quality and availability of information on webpages as well as social media. Finally, the survey requires team members to reflect on any perceptions they may have about the community prior to their visit.

First Impressions Assessment Visit

During the First Impressions visit, members of the visit team had access to two tools to conduct their assessment; the use of a mobile application: Collector for ArcGIS, and paper booklets. Collector for ArcGIS is a free mobile application that allows for data collection in the field. When a team member uses Collector, they select a characteristic from a list, fill out a description, observation, choose whether the characteristic is an asset, asset/opportunity or opportunity for improvement from a drop down menu, and have the opportunity to upload a photo or video. Once submitted, the information is stored as a point on a map. In addition to the mobile app, team members are able to use a paper booklet to collect their data. The booklet replicates the data collection process of the app: team members circle a characteristic from the list, and then write the location, description, observation, and select whether the characteristic is an asset, asset/opportunity, or opportunity for improvement.



Post-Visit Survey

Following the visit, the visit team members completed a Post-Visit online survey. This survey allows team members to reflect on their visit and rate the downtown overall. Team members also reflect on their initial perceptions and whether they would like to live, visit or open a business in the community.

Post-Visit Team Debrief

About two weeks after the visit to Somersworth, the visit team held a debrief meeting in which students reflected on the experience, shared their thoughts, and brainstormed the top assets and opportunities for improvement.

Key Findings

Assets

Assets identify the strengths in the downtown. These are impressive characteristics that exist.

- **Diversity of Businesses.** The visit team continually commented on the mix of eclectic businesses in Somersworth. Funky cafés, restaurants, and quirky boutiques create a very diverse downtown.
- **Seating.** One of the most praised categories during the Somersworth assessment was seating. Visitors found an abundance of well-maintained and inviting benches throughout the study area.
- **Historic Character.** Somersworth has done a nice job preserving beautiful historic buildings on Market Street and adjacent neighborhood streets. The colorful New England style houses make for a welcoming entrance to the town and the classic brick buildings tie together wonderfully along Market and High Street.
- **Signage.** The First Impressions team made numerous comments about the signs throughout Somersworth in respect to safety, business, and wayfinding.
- **Sidewalks and Crosswalks.** There were numerous comments praising the well maintained sidewalks, crosswalks and stairs on High, Market, and Main Streets. Crosswalks were well defined and made visitors feel safe when crossing the street.

Opportunities

Opportunities identify areas of high potential for improvement.

- **Public Art.** The First Impressions Team noticed a huge potential for community art. The mural on Constitutional Way was a popular example of how the town could decorate empty buildings and retaining walls.
- **Vacant Spaces.** Apart from Market Street, emptiness was prevalent in the study area. Vacant buildings and wide-open parking lots absorbed any energy or vibrancy. All of this space could be used for new businesses, parks, and/or a community gathering space.
- **Traffic.** The day of the visit was filled with the continuous buzz of cars along Market and High Street. This flow seemed fast and dangerous at times with a lot of confusion as to why the cars were not stopping in Somersworth. The City could benefit from capturing this traffic.
- **Park/Community Gathering Space.** The First Impressions Team identified parks and a community common as some of the biggest absences in Somersworth. At the debrief, the Team emphasized the need for an outdoor place for people to join together and enjoy.
- **Excessive Parking.** There was an abundance of parking spaces in the study area. This emptiness had a negative impact on the First Impressions Team. It appeared that the space could be used for something else.

Before the Visit

Training Meetings

UNH Cooperative Extension staff met with the UNH Planning Student Organization Club students three times prior to the students conducting the First Impressions assessment of Somersworth. The Planning Club students learned about what makes a community vibrant, and reviewed the downtown characteristics that comprise a First Impressions assessment. The students were also instructed on how to complete the assessment using the mobile application and the paper booklet.

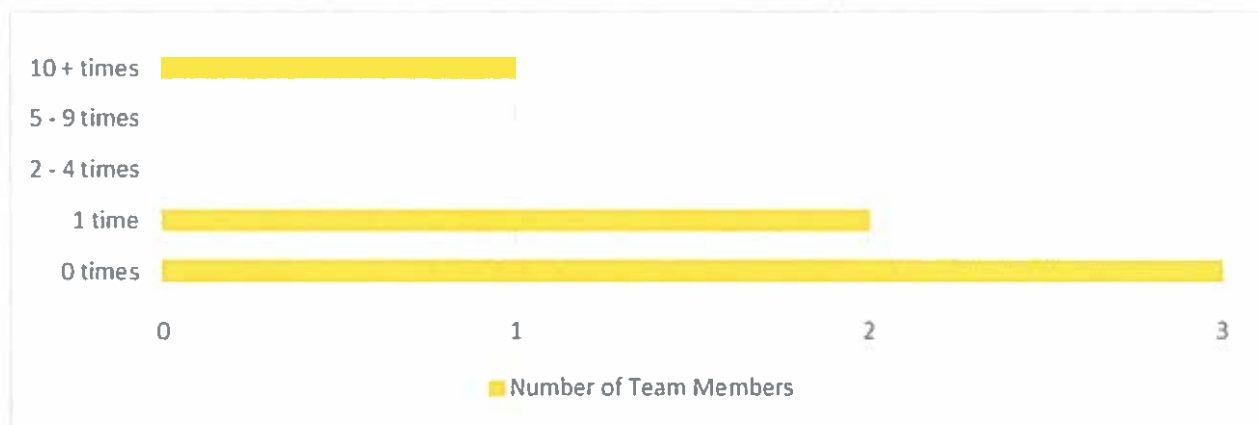
Pre-Visit Survey

The visit team completed the Pre-Visit Survey prior to visiting Somersworth. The survey provided opportunity to research Somersworth on the internet and social media and describe their perceptions. The results of the survey follow:

Demographics

The visit team was comprised of three females and three males. All members currently attend the University of New Hampshire in Durham and are between 18-24 years old.

Number of times team members have visited Somersworth prior to First Impressions



General Impression

Team members were asked to record their impression of Somersworth, NH before completing any research. The following are their responses:

- I do not know anything about Somersworth.
- I visited once for a doctor's appointment. I remember a lot of traffic.
- My impression of Somersworth is that it is a slightly economically depressed town that has not fully recovered from closure of mills.
- The city is about the size of Dover and is an old mill town.
- I do have one friend at school who is from there and he does not seem too fond of it.

Internet Research

Team members were asked to use a search engine (like Google.com) to search for "Somersworth, NH" in order to record what websites are at the top of each search. Each team member recorded the first three websites. The websites recorded were: City of Somersworth Website, City of Somersworth City Clerk page, Wikipedia, Zillow, Mapquest and Somersworth High School. This review can provide Somersworth a brief insight into the effectiveness of their online materials and marketing. Some of the comments by the team members were:

City of Somersworth Website (www.somersworth.com)

- Very useful. There are links to just about everything you could be searching for (departments, events, agendas and minutes for every committee etc.)
- Useful as it has lots of information about Somersworth.
- Very good quality on up to date matters and did its job to serve as a function for its citizens as well as "market" for itself for perspective visitors, new dwellers, and developers.
- The newsfeed is easy to read and placed on the front page. There is a cycling banner at the top that advertises community events. The news and announcements found on the home page all relate to town government functions. There seem to be up-to-date links off of the main page. The numerous tabs at the top of the page drop down and make it easy to find what you are looking for. This website seems current and has a nice design.
- Good website, news on the first page and easy to navigate.

City of Somersworth City Clerk Page

(www.somersworth.com/departments-services/finance/city-clerk/)

- This page is more plain and focuses on the city clerk's mission, contact info, location, etc.
- A lot of information for contacts, very useful.



Wikipedia

- Very useful. It gave a background and history of the town
- The second website is Wikipedia so it does have lots of background information.
- I always like Wikipedia because of its emphasis on history then touching on several other categories
- Wikipedia - basic facts about Somersworth - useful to get a quick snapshot of the city.
- This is a standard Wikipedia page. It starts with useful information, such as the city population and location, at the top of the page. This page also appears to have short quality sections on Somersworth's history, geography, education, and demographics. I feel that this webpage is somewhat helpful in collecting an idea on the general statistics of Somersworth.
- Good for getting facts on Somersworth, but you never know how reliable Wikipedia is.

Zillow

- It showed houses for sale in the area so this was somewhat useful

MapQuest

- This website was very useful showing a map, location and information on the town

Social Media

Team members were also asked to use social media to search for information about Somersworth, NH. There were mixed reviews about the various Facebook pages for Somersworth. The following are comments on the quality and usefulness of information obtained:

- There are two Facebook pages about Somersworth with upcoming events and contact information. Looks to be updated regularly.
- There were a few Facebook pages for the community but they were closed so it was not very useful.
- I did not find a lot of great social media for Somersworth.
- Their Facebook page is geared towards visitors looking places to eat, drink, sleep, and sightsee.
- Not much of a presence on social media. Facebook had a page but I was confused who it was actually run by. Not useful.

General Information

The majority of team members reported that they were able to find general information about Somersworth, NH. One team member did not find general information.



Desire to Visit

Team members were asked if they would want to visit Somersworth, NH with family or friends, and to share why or why not. Two team members said that they would like to visit Somersworth with family or friends, one said that they would not, and the remainder were not sure. Comments included:

Yes

- It seems like a cool old mill town that may be a cool interesting area
- It seems like another town of interest that is near enough to Durham. I am always interested to see how mill towns have transformed.

Maybe

- I did not find anything that was a main attraction but it looks like there are restaurants and some stores that would be worth going to.
- Based on what I saw I would not be particularly drawn to Somersworth over other communities in the area like Dover or Portsmouth.
- It does look like a nice New England town but there isn't great advertising for a downtown area as a whole, which leads me to believe that it is a bit scattered.

No

- Not particularly, there is not much about things to do in Somersworth

Welcoming

Team members were also asked if Somersworth seemed welcoming to people to visit, live or open a business. Three members responded yes, one responded no, and the remainder had mixed responses.

Yes

- Based on the webpages that seem welcoming with updates on upcoming events
- The town is conveniently located near Portsmouth and Boston. It appears to have potential for development and probably encompasses a nice New England atmosphere.
- Yes. The website has a lot of information on businesses and residences.

Maybe

- They try to sell the visitors on sightseeing but it doesn't seem like there are many businesses, but as a business owner, the website was very user-friendly which would make me more inclined to inquire.

No

- It does not because it is very small and old
- Not particularly welcoming. I have never felt compelled to keep coming back



About the Visit: UNH Students Visit Somersworth

The visit team consisted of six students from the UNH Planning Student Organization. The students visited Somersworth on Saturday, November 5th. The weather was cool and cloudy. The team arrived around 10am, and spent time exploring, shopping, and eating in downtown Somersworth, and departed around 1pm.

The Assessment Area

The City of Somersworth defined the First Impressions assessment area as shown on Map 1, below.

Map 1. City of Somersworth Downtown Study Area



Findings

The following narrative is representative of data collected through Collector for ArcGIS during the visit, comments from the Post-Visit online survey, and comments during a debrief meeting with the visit team. All six team members utilized the mobile application Collector for ArcGIS.

The data is organized by the downtown characteristics team members identified, and the comments have been coded as assets and opportunities. Assets are the strengths in the downtown—where characteristics exist and are excellent and well-maintained. For example, a well-maintained trail or a bench in a nice location would be considered assets. Opportunities are those characteristics that exist or do not exist, where there is room for improvement. An example of an opportunity for improvement might be lack of bike lanes, or a broken sidewalk.



Assets

Appearance

The visit team reported a lot of positive feedback when it came to the appearance of the businesses in downtown Somersworth. Some comments included:

- The Zen Garden store looks like an interesting eclectic store then building is nice looking brick
- There was a very welcoming boutique that looked put together with nice designs on windows.
- 45 Market St. Bakery & Café is nicely colored and eye catching
- Poppy Seed Studio is a great building that meshes nicely with neighbors
- Citizens Bank had good landscaping
- Nice preservation of older architecture. These signs are consistent with each other
- Thrift store has a nice umbrella and good use of side walk space

Signage

There was a lot of good and clear signage in regards to the businesses in downtown Somersworth. Some comments the visit team reported were:

- Poppy Seed Studio has good signage with flowers and very attractive as well
- Signage was very consistent and attractive
- 45 Market St. Bakery & Café had great signage that invited people to come in

Eclectic

- Cool use of depot
- Zen Garden store is very interesting makes people want to check it out
- Funky thrift store that would cause people want to come in and look around



Businesses

Opportunities

Appearance

There were many opportunities found within the Somersworth downtown area. A lot of the feedback stems from vacant and closed businesses. Some of the comments include:

- Does not seem to fit in with the rest of the town architecture
- Does not look inviting
- Looks run down and not well kept
- Businesses are empty and closed
- Old rundown bank that has potential but is over grown and vacant
- Building with windows grated up. No signage so we are not sure what type of business it is.
- Excess space that makes some businesses stand out in an unflattering way
- A lot of prime locations in downtown have poor appearances which is wasted space

Parking

The visit team noticed that there was an excess of parking. We noticed that there was a lot of cars driving through the town while few stopping, parking and utilizing the downtown area businesses. The team's comments included:

- Parking lot was too big and seemed to be taking up space
- Strip mall has a lot of excess parking not being used
- There are tons of excess parking spaces on surrounding streets that are not used and off the beaten path
- Retail businesses in the strip mall seemed less visited and had very few cars in the parking lot in front of them



Assets

The visit team could only identify one example of community art with a mural on the strip mall wall. The mural was a great use of a blank wall that made the town seem more lively and brought some color to an otherwise dull street.

Opportunities

The visit team collectively felt that there was a lack of community art. The only identified art was the single mural on the strip mall wall on a street that was not very busy which takes away from the value. There is a huge opportunity in the area for community art with there being multiple retaining walls in the downtown area. The painting was also deteriorating due to the brick falling off taking the paint with it.



Displays & Signage



Assets

Displays and signage were a good asset to the immediate areas on High and Market Streets. This area seemed to have a cohesive idea about signage. Some specific comments included:

- Nice looking classy street sign for business.
- Flags on light poles look nice and show pride in a town so this is pleasing to the eye for visitors and leaves a good impression.



Opportunities

Opportunity certainly exists in improving the signage in all areas of downtown. This can help the area become more accessible and visitor friendly. An ordinance could be put in place to determine the types of signs allowed as well.



Downtown Entrances



Assets

The downtown entrance from High Street was quite attractive with large houses and well maintained offices and beautiful streetscaping.

Specific comments include:

- Attractive historic houses faded into brick business buildings
- Well maintained sidewalks and crosswalks, and frequent light posts with downtown sign.



Opportunities

It was clear that time had been spent on the major entrance on High Street. Some opportunity exists in the future through improving some of the other entrance points to downtown.

Some specific comments include:

- Not a very inviting entrance and the first thing you see is duplex apartments.





Assets

Appearance

The landscaping was observed to be an asset in Somersworth. There has been an obvious effort particularly on High and Market Streets to flatten and landscape the otherwise very steep area.

Some specific comments include:

- Good placement, adds character to the downtown
- Looks like this would be a beautiful area with flowers in warmer months. Good use of some otherwise very rough terrain but valuable space.
- Landscaping looks nice and inviting with a new rock wall.



Opportunities

Appearance

Landscaping is also a major opportunity for Somersworth. Encouraging improved landscaping in areas off High and Market Streets can help the entire downtown better its appearance. The landscaping of vacant lots and trimming of street side shrubs are an opportunity.

Specific comments included:

- Sad looking tree. Is not very welcoming. Possibly shrubs instead because they don't lose their leaves.
- How about a small park? There seems to be housing in the area and subsequent need.





Assets

The visit team appreciated the consistency, upkeep, and aesthetics of the light posts around town. Some comments included:

- Aesthetically pleasing, good signage, pretty lamppost.
- These are consistently found on Market Street. Freshly painted and good sign for historic downtown. Looks like a high quality light.
- This lamp looks nice, is solar powered and provides good light on a corner where there are not a lot of light poles.

Opportunities

The visit team made only one mention of an opportunity where a light was oddly placed and malfunctioned.





Assets/Opportunities

The park in downtown was a nice addition. It looks well maintained but the location seems uninviting next to the busy street and behind the gas station. It is mentioned that a major opportunity is to use vacant land in the downtown to create some more public space.

Specific comments included:

- Good placement but surrounding environment makes it unappealing to go to. Also hidden.
- Nice park with benches, memorial and sign for dog owners to take care of their dogs but is also located behind a gas station on a side road so the location is poor but the park area is nice.
- Could be redeveloped or at least the land. Empty space could be a small park.





Opportunities

The visit team only made comments regarding potential for future points of interest. Suggestions for points of interest revolved around vacant buildings and bare retaining walls:

- Plenty of space in the front of this possibly vacant building for some new landscaping or street side art. Lacks curb appeal.
- The big retaining walls could be used for a community mural or something of the sort instead of camouflaging it with shrubs.
- Two rundown buildings could be used for something with real potential.
- Plaza with vacant units and a small rundown grocery store. Plaza has potential but is not pleasing to the eye.





Assets

Appearance

The visit team noted several positive aspects of the public facilities with respect to appearance. The public library, city hall, and post office carried much of the praise. Some comments included:

- Post office looks official and fits nicely.
- Nice old looking post office in central location.
- The city hall has a good design mixing modern and historical brick character.
- Nice library with benches and a little garden out front.
- Library looks nice and inviting. Redone in the past.

Opportunities

The team identified an opportunity to improve the significance of the Chamber of Commerce building. The comment included:

- The Chamber of Commerce doesn't look like an official building. Walked past it earlier thinking it was a business.





Assets

Appearance

The visit team enjoyed the visually appealing and convenient seating in front of businesses in the downtown area. Specific comments include:

- Nice looking bench for public seating.
- Lawn chairs outside of the café added good décor for the business, fit the environment, cute.
- Good use of seating for people in the downtown area.
- Benches were plentiful all throughout town. Many were in great shape, but lacked shade.
- Good use of seating for people in the downtown area.

Opportunities

Placement

There were several opportunities for benches to be improved in appearance, orientation and location.

- Faces highway, not attractive.
- Bench next to parking lot: Perhaps few people would want to sit and look around in this spot.
- Random bench. Next to a dumpster with a bad view.
- Garden is not maintained and there is graffiti on the bench



Sidewalks, Crosswalks, & Trails



Assets

Safety and Maintenance

Especially in the downtown area, the visit team noticed crosswalks in key locations that provided safety for pedestrians, emphasizing that these were well maintained. Comments included:

- Safe crosswalk with a sign before it for cars.
- Stairs look new and add a good touch to the run down parts of the sidewalk.
- Crosswalk visible with white paint but could be more defined.
- Nice wide road with well-maintained sidewalks.



Opportunities

Connectivity

The visit team noticed that with some small improvements, various parts of town could be more accessible for foot traffic and improve connectivity. Comments included:

- There is a lack of crosswalk on Main Street, it seems a bit dangerous.
- The way to get into the mill building is through some brush and across train tracks.
- Wide road hard to cross without crosswalk.
- High potential to link downtown and mill housing.
- Sidewalks were a little busted up, some parts had good greenery, some did not.





Assets

The visit team appreciated that people had no problem parking anywhere in town, and also had the racks to lock their bicycle to if they biked into town. Comments included:

- Ample all day parking.
- Excessive amount of open parking, especially for a Saturday.
- There was a few low profile, nicely maintained metal bike racks along Market and High Street.

Opportunities

Parking

The visit team noticed that there many open parking spaces that could potentially be used for other purposes. Comments included:

- Huge parking lot. Waste of space and too much parking when there is already street parking.
- Parking lot was too big and seemed to be taking up space.
- Strip mall has a lot of excess parking not being used.
- There are tons of excess parking spaces on surrounding streets that are not used and off the beaten path.
- So much on-street parking where it's not necessary. Could be used to bump out sidewalks and plant trees.



Alternative Transportation

Though there were many places to park, the visit team found it difficult to safely navigate all streets by bike, foot or public transportation. Comments included:

- Distinct difference of pedestrian geared infrastructure.
- Didn't see much for public transportation.
- Did not appear to be any bike lanes.
- Non-stop traffic going through the downtown but nobody was stopping.
- Not many obvious bike racks on Main, Washington or Constitutional.



Waste & Recycling



The visit team noticed many well placed trash bins but would have liked to see recycling bins as well. They thought that some of the bins could also be more pleasing to look at. Comments included:

- Consistent on newer sidewalks but lacking on cross streets.
- Trash receptacles were abundant and in good condition along Market Street.
- Trash can located conveniently, no obvious recycling though.
- Poor location, doesn't seem like a heavily foot-trafficked area, but unique in that it is attached to the telephone pole. Could be maintained better.
- Fine looking trash can but no recycling or cigarette tray.
- No obvious public restrooms or recycling bins.



After the Visit

Post-Visit Survey

The visit team completed a Post-Visit Survey following the assessment in Somersworth. This survey gave the team the chance to reflect on the visit and give the downtown an overall rating. Additional questions asked the visitors to comment on their interest in returning to Somersworth, recommendations to friends, and whether or not they would live there. The responses of the survey follow:

Five-Minute Impression

The initial impression can greatly influence visitors' overarching opinions of a location. Below are the five-minute observations of the team:

- It is extremely hilly, has a really nice stretch and some not as pretty areas and an obvious problem with vacancy.
- There were some vacant buildings, including a gas station.
- The welcome sign was difficult to read
- There looked like a few quaint stores on the Main Street, but lots of traffic.
- There have been investments in pedestrian infrastructure on High Street that create a safe walkable area. There are two clusters of businesses and a flow of traffic through the town.
- I felt that there was no real indication of officially entering Somersworth. If it were not for a small, hard to read "Welcome to Somersworth" sign, I would not know the difference from the continuation of development between Dover and Route 16.
- I did recognize some of the nicely preserved historical buildings in the old town as we drove down High and Market Street. I also noticed the old church spire on the left when driving through town as well as the mill buildings down to the right.
- Somersworth was on the side of a hill and had many steep streets, especially to the North of Market Street. Parking didn't seem super easy to find on Market Street.
- Rundown mill town.
- It seemed sad. There weren't very many people out or anything that drew you in.



Community Amenities

Comments were collected on the quality and availability of the following amenities: bike racks, benches, shade area, community gathering spaces, drinking fountains, community art, wayfinding signs, landscaping, historical sites, wireless internet access, public restrooms, public trash containers, public recycling containers:

- There were a few low profile, nicely maintained metal bike racks along Market/High Street. I did not see any other racks on Main, Washington, or Constitutional.
- Benches were plentiful all throughout town. Many were in great shape, but lacked shade.
- It's hard to say if it is a community gathering space, but the park/bench area behind the public library may function as one. There were no other noted gathering places.
- The only community art I recognized was a mural on the side of a strip mall on Congressional Way.
- Signage along high/market streets was good and helpful. Signs elsewhere were small or nonexistent.
- Good landscaping along High/Market streets.
- Otherwise steep and unusable land. Grass, a few trees, and flowers/bushes were a nice use of space near the north end of Market Street.
- The trash receptacles were abundant and in good condition along market street. I did not notice any public restrooms or recycling bins.

Recreation

The visit team noted that Somersworth had little to offer in the recreation category:

- I did not see any of the following on my visit
- There is one park off of Main St.
- Although I did see some potential for recreational areas, I did not see any existing parks, trails, etc. whatsoever.

Housing

The visit team was asked to comment on the apparent quality and availability of several types of housing:

- Most of the housing I saw was located up side streets from the downtown. There was an apartment complex located in an old mill surrounding the downtown as well. There were quite a few vacant buildings whose previous functions were unknown. The houses that I saw varied from very nice to run down.
- Within the area that we assessed there was apartment housing along High Street that looked like it had been updated in recent years. Just outside of the area there appeared to be single family homes all existing. I did not observe any senior assisted living or assisted living/group homes.
- It was hard to decipher between some types of housing. I noticed most housing units on Washington Street and Constitutional Way. They were acceptable, but nothing appeared to be in great condition. It was also challenging to decide if many of the units were even occupied.
- The existing, older, and new homes (if any) were seen from afar. I believe these were the homes north of High/Market Street. Much of this area seemed to maintain a historic character, but many were run down. A few lining Market Street seemed exceptional with colorful paint (only 2-3).
- I noticed vacant lots along Constitutional Way and Washington. They were overgrown and littered with trash.

An Identified Brand

Team members were not able to pick up on an identifiable brand in Somersworth.

Using Your Senses

The survey asked team members to describe Somersworth through their senses: taste (food and drink), smell (air in the downtown), and sounds (parks, roads, trains, construction, music, social gatherings).

Taste

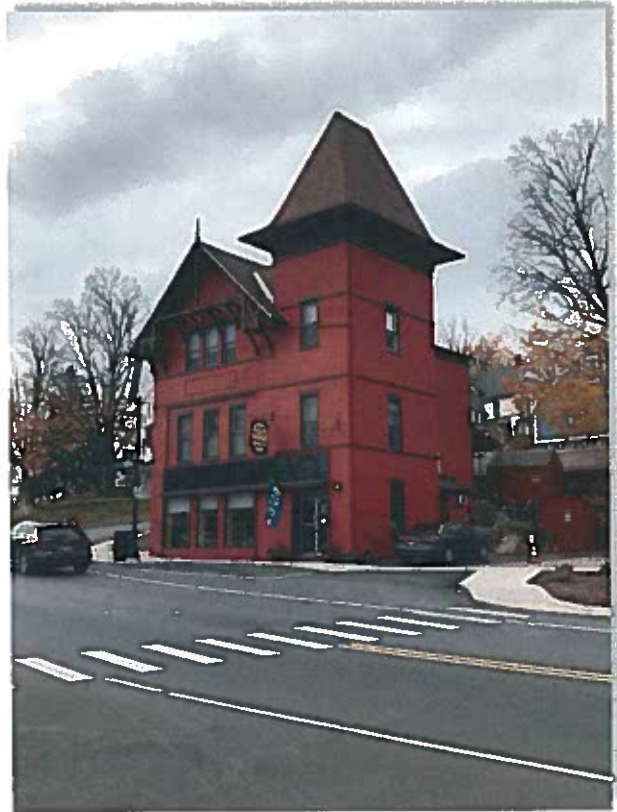
- The cafe we visited seemed to have a very natural, 'earthy' feel to it and its food seemed all natural, which was the vibe I got while being in the town as well when visiting the thrift store and the retail store next to it that sold many handmade items and locally made products.
- I think the restaurant and cafe scene seems fairly progressive. These offered local products, interesting food, and cool interior decoration.
- There were not many places to sit down and stay. Few of the restaurants were inviting and most seemed like pick up or delivery places.
- There was a lot of potential for the downtown but only two bakeries/restaurants. Both looked inviting and good though.

Smell

- No distinct good or bad smell, we went on a fairly cold day. Much of the vegetation was dead and unkempt. Off the side streets away from the downtown garbage cans weren't covered and there was some littering evident. Did not get close enough to the old GE to see if there was an apparent smell.
- It was cold so I only remember smelling pizza places. There were a lot of cars driving through down town and I definitely picked up on the smell of exhaust a few times. There were never times of fresh/flowers/plant smells.
- The restaurants were distinct to the type of food they were selling only when you were right out in front but when you would go near the plaza or in front of regular business there was no distinct or memorable smell.
- The smell of the downtown was musty and stale. There were not much trees and flowers to help this. Fumes from traffic, because there was a lot of it.

Sounds

- Lots of traffic, busy downtown but once we left the downtown, the side streets were quiet and had a deserted feel. They were unkempt compared to the downtown and there was an obvious difference between the maintenance of the two.
- Mostly traffic because this acts as a pass through rather than a downtown.
- Somersworth was very quiet in terms of people walking and talking on the day of the visit. I heard many cars driving and also noticed louder noises coming from the car repair shops. Positive conversations were heard among shop owners and locals along Market Street.
- A lot of sounds were passing by cars or the wind blowing leaves. There was a lot of cars moving but not a lot stopping. There was not a lot of social gathering going on but some people would try and talk to you even if you were uninterested in conversation.
- There were not many noises of the downtown. A few friendly voices which were nice but the rest was mostly traffic.



Unique Attractions

Members of the visit team were asked to identify a restaurant, specialty shop, or attraction that would bring them back to Somersworth:

- The thrift shop and Teatotaller cafe that was very pleasant and had great food.
- Teatotaller the cafe was a very unique place with great food.
- Teatotaller Tea House.
- I really enjoyed going into and learning about the Gathering Place.
- The place that would bring me back is the 45 Market Street Bakery and Cafe. It was a nice place to sit, have a coffee and study or read.

Live, Work, Play

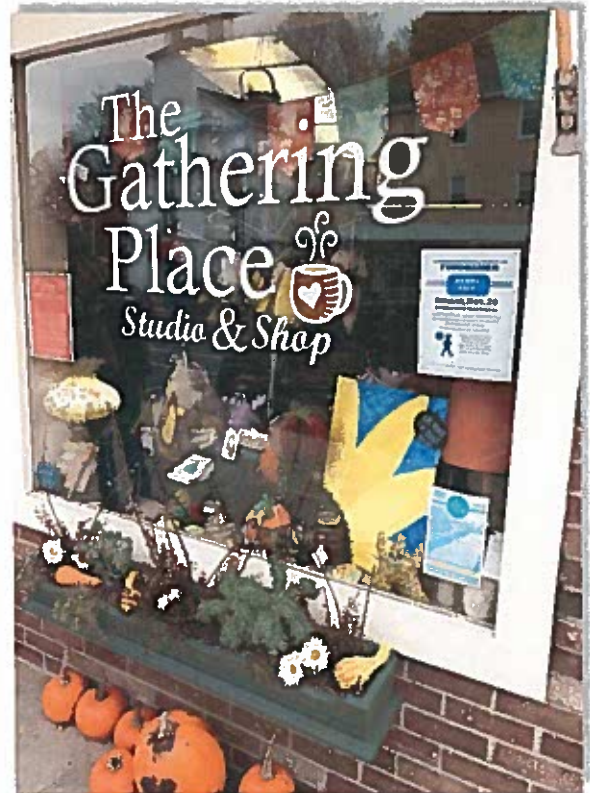
The Post-Visit survey asked team members to consider whether or not they would consider living, opening a business, or visiting Somersworth.

Would you consider living in Somersworth?

Each of the five respondents said no. Their rationale:

No

- The downtown was nice but there was not much there that would attract me to live there. I feel that if I lived there I would be traveling a lot to other places.
- I'm not sure what the job opportunities are in the area.
- Doesn't seem like a thriving scene that I am looking for. I need more people, more green, more trees, and more signs of success.
- It is not a very aesthetically pleasing town and the housing was very poor and vacant in the downtown area.
- The vibe I got from downtown Somersworth was sad and worn out, I would need somewhere with more going on.



Would you consider opening a business in downtown Somersworth?

Of the five respondents, two answers were positive, three were negative:

Yes

- There is an established downtown.
- Many, many cars travel through Somersworth. If there was a way to stop them, you could have a lot of business.

No

- There were many vacant buildings that looked like previous businesses; gave the feeling that businesses were not very successful in staying in Somersworth. There was also a lot of thru-traffic but no apparent traffic that was coming through and stopping in Somersworth
- It is not a very inviting place and by the looks of it many businesses have had little success since many of them are vacant.
- There is not a promising customer base. Feel like businesses don't do well there due to the amount of vacant store fronts.

Would you consider visiting downtown Somersworth with family or friends?

Yes

- Yes, there are some great retail businesses and places to eat.
- I'd like to try other cafes, restaurants, and shops along Market Street. I also heard that there is a concert/music night sometimes....

No

- Not much there.
- There was nothing for me and my friends to enjoy in the downtown area. We would most likely go to somewhere that has more things to do for younger people or better food.
- There was not much to offer. It is not really an inviting place to hang out.

Missing Attractions

The Post-Visit survey also asked team members to consider what was missing from Somersworth's downtown. Comments:

- It could use more businesses.
- Community identity.
- People, Green Space, Public Art
- A lot of businesses are closed down and they have no standout attractions that would really make you want to go back.
- Public art was a huge thing missing. Could have given the downtown a more uplifting vibrant feel.

Change in Perception

The visit team was asked to reflect on whether their pre-visit impressions fit the impression they got during their visit to the Somersworth downtown. Some of their comments were:

Yes

- Somewhat yes. The things I have heard of Somersworth turned out to be partially true but I do think there is a huge potential for their downtown.

No

- I assessed all of Somersworth which has many strip malls and retail whereas the downtown is quite different.
- I assumed it would be thriving and quaint like other revitalized mill towns in the area like Dover and Newmarket.
- I did not think it was going to be as run down as it was.



Outstanding Feature

The survey asked about the most outstanding feature in the downtown:

- The upkeep of the downtown. It looked nice and was aesthetically pleasing.
- The river
- The historic aspect.

Top Assets

The visit team was asked to list the top three assets they observed in Somersworth:

- Quaint retail shops with locally made products
- Sidewalks and crosswalks
- Abundant parking
- Good choice of restaurants
- Town Hall, library, and public buildings
- Unique restaurants/cafes
- Parking
- Historic architecture
- Grocery store
- Signage



Top Opportunities for Improvement

The visit team was asked to list the top three opportunities for improvement in the Somersworth downtown:

- More businesses
- Better street art/aesthetics
- Through traffic
- Greenspace, parks, trees
- Food
- Crosswalks, bike lanes, and paths (especially along canal)
- Parks/recreation
- Vacancy and run-downiness
- Plaza
- Landscaping/public art



First Impressions: Somersworth Assessment Map

All of the assessment data is stored on an online interactive map. To view that data, visit: <http://arccg.is/2nPE24q>

First Impressions: Somersworth

A story map



Extension

All Points

Assets

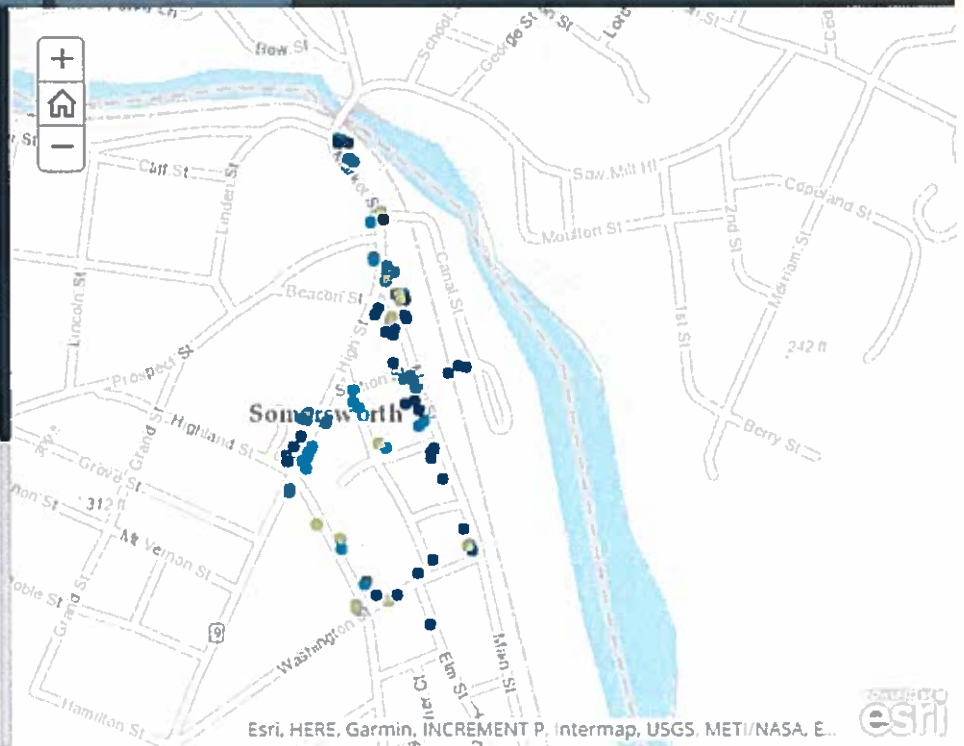
Opportunities

Assets/Opportunities

First Impressions is an assessment program that examines a community's downtown through the eyes of potential residents, visitors, and businesses, helping communities learn about their opportunities and empowering them to take action to improve their downtown.

Six students from the UNH Planning Student Organization visited the City of Somersworth to conduct a First Impressions assessment on Saturday, November 5, 2016. The weather was cool and cloudy. The team arrived around 10am, and spent time exploring shopping, and eating in downtown Somersworth, and departed around 1pm.

Team members were asked to assess Somersworth based on the following characteristics: businesses, community art, displays & signage, downtown entrances, landscaping, lighting, parks, points of interest, public facilities, seating, sidewalks, crosswalks & trails, streets & transportation, and waste & recycling.



For more information, contact:

Casey Hancock
University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension
Community Development Program Coordinator
131 Main Street | 202 Nesmith Hall
Durham, NH 03824
603-862-5439
casey.hancock@unh.edu
extension.unh.edu



Extension

Informational Items # 1

RESOLUTION NO. 37-17 TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER
INTO A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES TO ACCEPT A CLEANUP GRANT AWARD

Somersworth, NH

March 20, 2017

WHEREAS, the City of Somersworth has received notification of a cleanup grant award of \$178,000 (One Hundred and Seventy-Eight Thousand Dollars) from New Hampshire's Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) for the purpose of funding a portion of the remediation of the former Breton Cleaners property at 1 Winter Street in Somersworth, and

WHEREAS, the grant funds will be used for the remediation of environmental contamination at the former Breton Cleaners site located at the 1 Winter Street, and

WHEREAS, this grant funded remediation work will include eligible activities such as the abatement by demolition of asbestos and lead-based paint on building structures; the removal of containerized hazardous materials and universal wastes located within the building; and placement of a temporary cap over tetrachloroethylene (PCE) impacted soil,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager is authorized to execute any documents and agreements necessary for the grant's acceptance and execution, and take any and all other such actions relative to this grant determined to be in the best interest of the City.

Sponsored by Councilors:

David A. Witham
Dale R. Sprague
Martin Pepin
Jennifer G. Soldati
Denis Messier

Approved:

City Attorney

Sample

SOMERSWORTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

City of Somersworth
One Government Way
Somersworth, NH 03878



City Hall
603.692.4262
www.somersworth.com

May 12, 2017

Mr. George Primeau
Facilities Manager
Contitech Thermopol LLC
9 Interstate Drive
Somersworth, NH 03878

Dear Mr. Primeau:

First, let me thank you for choosing Somersworth as your Community and home to your business.

The City is reaching out to you to ask your participation in making Somersworth an even better place to work, shop and live! The City has been "on the move" over the last several years in making our Community a premier place to operate your business, and to attract new customers and to make it an inviting place for your business team to live. We have invested millions of dollars in infrastructure improvements; hopefully you have been to our beautifully renovated downtown and walked on our new sidewalks and had lunch on one of our new park benches overlooking one of the new landscape pocket parks!

Because we are a City "on the move", the City Council continues to be more focused on improvements to our facilities and infrastructure including our parks. We are just now starting to create a vision for one of our downtown parks and would like you to become one of our partners for this exciting project. Our Downtown hosts a Veteran's Memorial at Stein Park located on Main Street. Please consider joining our team in a public-private partnership so that we can pay tribute to our Veterans and the Community in creating an inviting Memorial Park that serves as a gathering place for Veteran events and Memorial remembrances.

Please accept our invitation and join us on Thursday, June 22 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall to continue keeping Somersworth “on the move” and invest in our “proud past and bright future”!

An RSVP to the City Manager’s office would be appreciated. Please call Brenda at 692-9503 or email at bbreda@somersworth.com

Sincerely,

Mayor Dana S. Hilliard

Marty Pepin, Ward 1 City Councilor

Jennifer Soldati, Ward 2 City Councilor

Martin P. Dumont, Ward 3 City Councilor

Jonathan McCallion, Ward 4 City Councilor

Denis Messier, Ward 5 City Councilor

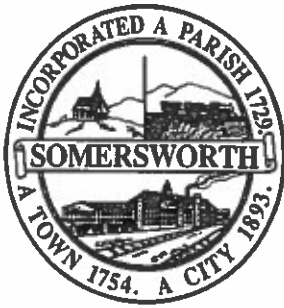
Nancie Cameron, Councilor-at-Large

David A. Witham, Councilor-at-Large

Dale R. Sprague, Councilor-at-Large

Jessica Paradis, Councilor-at-Large

Proud past, bright future



MEMORANDUM

To: Bob Belmore, City Manager

From: Scott Smith, Director of Finance and Administration

Date: May 11, 2017

Re: **Monthly Report**

Finance Department:

- Attended City Council's budget workshop.
- Assisted in preparation of City Manager's proposed budget presentation and attended budget public hearing.
- Interviewed for Tax Collector replacement.
- Assisted in Union Negotiations
- Bids received:
 - Assessing Services – May 9, 2017

City Clerk:

- Prepared for and took minutes at two scheduled City Council meetings, various workshops, public hearings, and standing committee meetings during the month.
- Total Receipts for the month were \$8,897.
- Permits:
 - 04/06/2017 – Strafford County Board of Realtors Food Drive
 - 04/25/2017 - Cocheco Valley Humane Society Signs
 - 04/25/2017 – K of C Tootsie Roll Drive
 - 04/25/2017 – Jass Boxing Show

Tax Collector:

- Motor vehicle registrations were a total of \$156,258 during the month.
- Collected \$5,590 for Municipal Transportation Fund during month.
- A total of 186 Tax Liens were perfected in April.
- Total receipts for the month were \$1,615,831.

Library

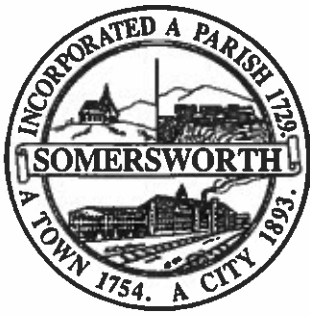
- The Library is in the process of developing a membership brochure. This project is moving forward with the assistance of the Friends of the Library.
- The Library continues to see a great demand for the public access computers, especially in April where many patrons were filing their Federal Tax returns.
- The Library provided 13 programs this month including 3 weekly story time programs and the regular book discussion group.

Human Services:

- Total assistance for the month was \$6,607. That compares to \$4,308 for the month of March 2017 and \$6,341 for April 2016.
- 9 new cases were opened compared to 6 in 2016.
- 19 cases were approved for varying levels of assistance, with 1 case still pending, and 1 denial. 42 cases were referred to other agencies for support.
- Homelessness continues to be a problem. Coordinated Entry currently has 35 cases on the wait list seeking space at one of the local homeless shelters. Local agencies are left no choice but to motel many cases pending entry into a shelter.

Information Technology

- Spent time in general server maintenance, checked systems, checked and cleared logs.



DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Date: May 11, 2017

From: Shanna B. Saunders
Director of Planning & Community Development

Re: April 2017 Monthly Report

In addition to the Department's various activities listed in the attached staff reports, I attended the following Land Use Board meetings:

- Zoning Board - April 5
- Conservation Commission - April 12
- Planning Board - April 19

And attended the following Special Meetings:

- Economic Dev Committee Meeting - April 19
- SRPC TAC - April 7
- SRPC Brownfields - April 12
- SRPC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Comm. - April 18

Office of Assessing- April:

- Assessing staff is finishing the changes made to Reagan Estates
- Permit inspections and by appointment inspections were conducted. Any changes that result will be for the 2017 tax year.
- Tax exemptions for elderly as well as charitable and religious organizations have been received and have begun processing

Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement Activity Report for April 2017

Incident Location		Origin of complaint	Nature of Concern	Date of Complaint	Responsible person notified*	Compliance
26	Union St.	DDS	Trash	4/3/17	CITATION	COMPLETED
20-30	Market	DDS	Roof	4/3/17	NOV	PENDING
72-76	Union St.	DDS	Trash	4/4/17	CN and NOV	COMPLETED
78-80	Union	DDS	Trash	4/4/17	NOV	PENDING
14	Myrtle St.	DDS	Trash	4/4/17	CN and NOV	COMPLETED
117	Green St.	DDS	Trash	4/4/17	CN and NOV	COMPLETED
13-15	Summer St.	DDS	Trash	4/4/17	CN and NOV	COMPLETED
260	Indian Brook Dr.	DDS	Sign(s)	4/4/17	CN	COMPLETED
212	Maple St.	DDS	Trash	4/5/17	CN	COMPLETED
3	Fall Ct.	DDS	Trash	4/5/17	CN	COMPLETED
15	Rocky Hill Rd	DDS	Trash	4/5/17	CN	COMPLETED
1	Beacon	DDS	Trash	4/5/17	spoke with PO	COMPLETED
21	Grove	DDS	Trash	4/6/17	NOV	COMPLETED
18	Rowland St.	DDS	Trash	4/6/17	CN and NOV	COMPLETED
9	Fremont	DDS	MV	4/6/17	CN and NOV	COMPLETED
7	Marsh Brook Dr.	DDS	Sign(s)	4/6/17	CN	COMPLETED
137	W. High St.	DDS	Trash	4/7/17	CN	COMPLETED
17	Silver St.	DDS	Trash	4/7/17	CN	COMPLETED
7	Ash	DDS	Protective treatments	4/7/17	CN	PENDING
19	High	DDS	Trash	4/7/17	NOV	COMPLETED
11-15	Union St.	DDS	Trash	4/7/17	CN	COMPLETED
28	Green St.	DDS	Protective treatments	4/10/17	CN	PENDING
14	Sunset St.	DDS	Protective treatments	4/10/17	CN	PENDING
1	Oakridge Dr	DDS	Sign(s)	4/11/17	CN	COMPLETED
19	Oakridge Dr	DDS	MV	4/11/17	CN and NOV	PENDING
20	Walnut	DDS	Trash	4/12/17	CN	COMPLETED
4	Primrose Ln	DDS	Trash	4/12/17	CN	COMPLETED
10	Central	DDS	Trash	4/12/17	CITATION	COMPLETED
2	Brian	DDS	Protective treatments	4/12/17	CN	PENDING
77-79	Franklin	DDS	Protective treatments	4/12/17	CN	PENDING
102	Green	DDS	Protective treatments	4/12/17	CN	PENDING
11-13	Highland	DDS	Trash	4/13/17	CN	COMPLETED
14	West High	DDS	Protective treatments	4/13/17	CN	COMPLETED
22	West High	DDS	Protective treatments	4/13/17	CN	PENDING
0	Whitehouse Rd	DDS	Trash	4/14/17	CN and NOV	PENDING
118	Whitehouse Rd	DDS	Trash	4/14/17	CN and NOV	PENDING
227	Rt. 108	DDS	Trash	4/14/17	Spoke to PO	COMPLETED
14	Mt. Vernon	DDS	Protective treatments	4/17/17	CN	PENDING
1	Beacon	DDS	Trash	4/17/17	CN	COMPLETED
21	Grove	DDS	Trash	4/17/17	CN	COMPLETED

17	Broad	DDS	Trash	4/18/17	CN and NOV	COMPLETED
22	Bourque	DDS	Fence	4/18/17	CN	COMPLETED
65	Green	DDS	Protective treatments	4/18/17	Email	PENDING
41-43	Franklin	DDS	Protective treatments	4/18/17	CN	PENDING
25	Willand Dr	DDS	Dumpster	4/18/17	CN	PENDING
58	Indigo Hill Rd	DDS	Trash	4/19/17	CN	COMPLETED
264	Green	DDS	Trash	4/19/17	CN and NOV	COMPLETED
76	Indigo Hill Rd	DDS	Trash	4/21/17	CN	COMPLETED
44	Market	DDS	Trash	4/21/17	Spoke to PO	COMPLETED
9	Morrison	DDS	Trash	4/21/17	CN	PENDING
401	High	DDS	Trash	4/21/17	CN	COMPLETED
28-30	Walnut	DDS	Trash	4/21/17	CN	COMPLETED
208	West High	DDS	Trash	4/24/17	CN and NOV	PENDING
33	Coles Pond Rd	DDS	Trash	4/25/17	CN	PENDING
28-30	Linden	DDS	Shed Foundation	4/25/17	CN	PENDING
384	Rt. 108	DDS	Graffiti	4/25/17	CN	PENDING
1-20	Plaza Terrace	DDS	Graffiti	4/25/17	CN	COMPLETED
82	Indigo Hill Rd	DDS	Trash	4/26/17	CN	PENDING
11	Maloney	DDS	Gutter	4/26/17	CITATION	PENDING
67	Green	DDS	Trash	4/26/17	CN and NOV	PENDING
35	Green	DDS	Trash	4/26/17	CN	COMPLETED
78	South	DDS	Protective treatments	4/26/17	CN	PENDING
9	Mt. Auburn	DDS	Protective treatments	4/26/17	CN	PENDING
85	Elm	DDS	Graffiti	4/26/17	CN	PENDING
85	Main	DDS	Graffiti	4/26/17	CN	PENDING
260	Indian Brook Dr	DDS	Sign(s)	4/26/17	CN and NOV	COMPLETED
315	High	DDS	Trash/Recyclables Early	4/26/17	CN	COMPLETED
338	High		Landscaping	4/26/17	CN	PENDING
140	Green		Trash	4/27/17	CN	PENDING
90	High		Trash	4/28/17	Other	COMPLETED
9	Commercial Dr		Trash	4/28/17	CN	PENDING
182	West High		Trash	4/28/17	CN	PENDING
117	Green		Trash	4/28/18	CN	COMPLETED
102	Green		Trash	4/28/17	CN	COMPLETED
26	Union		Trash/Recyclables Early	4/28/17	CN	COMPLETED
9	High		Trash/Recyclables Early	4/28/17	CN	COMPLETED
221	Rt. 108		Fence	4/28/17	CN	PENDING
33-35	Lincoln		Protective treatments	4/28/17	CN	PENDING
In addition to new complaints received, work continues on the Work in Progress (WIP) files from past months. Of the 39 pending complaints from March, 20 have been completed and 19 are still pending.						
*CN=Courtesy Notice; NOV=Notice of Violation						

Building and Health Departments:

Major Building Permits Applied for in February 2017 Construction Costs and Fee

Cumberland Farms	\$1941294.00	\$15539.63
Penta K Realty Trust	35000.00	360.00
Penta K Realty Trust	\$15000.00	\$130.00

Minor Building Permits Applied for in March 2017:

10	Centre Rd	\$9,700.00	\$87.60
452	High	\$130,000.00	\$1,050.00
26	Mt. Vernon	\$27,845.00	\$234.00
45	Mally Farm Rd	\$10,595.00	\$0.00
74	Franklin	\$1,600.00	\$26.00
2	Joyce	\$400.00	\$25.00
448	High	\$2,300.00	\$28.40
426	Rt. 108	\$9,500.00	\$86.00
4	Brian	\$400.00	\$25.00
16	Lilly Pond Rd	\$3,100.00	\$59.60
1	Deer Creek Run	\$10,000.00	\$90.00
20	Rule	\$7,000.00	\$66.00
16	Midway Park	\$4,000.00	\$42.00
55	Sunningdale Dr	\$8,500.00	\$78.00
31	Crest Dr	\$1,531.00	\$25.00
63	Franklin	\$2,000.00	\$30.00
10	River	\$10,000.00	\$90.00
3	Albert	\$4,628.00	\$50.00
3	Pinkham Ave	\$2,186.00	\$27.49
1	Somersworth Plaza	\$40,000.00	\$330.00
164	Old Rochester Rd	\$5,400.00	\$53.20
333	Sherwood Glen MHP	\$500.00	\$25.00
5	Hickory Ln	\$1,000.00	\$25.00
38	Franklin	\$5,375.00	\$53.00
132	Green	\$5,000.00	\$60.00
44	Union	\$60,000.00	\$490.00
34	West High	\$350.00	\$50.00
7	Works Way	\$15,000.00	\$130.00
109	Rocky Hill Rd	\$3,000.00	\$34.00
132	Green	\$3,000.00	\$34.00
260	Main	\$2,640.00	\$31.00

PERMIT RECEIPTS						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	DIFFERENCE this year to last	% OF CHANGE
January	\$1,820.00	\$2,157.00	\$6,148.85	\$15,262.40	\$9,113.55	148.2%
February	\$3,864.00	\$2,408.00	\$4,440.00	\$9,170.40	\$4,730.40	106.5%
March	\$2,191.64	\$5,287.28	\$27,399.40	\$23,232.82	-\$4,166.58	-15.2%
April	\$4,768.15	\$8,277.80	\$6,608.52	\$6,269.89	-\$338.63	-5.1%
May	\$26,049.95	\$7,194.16	\$12,089.70			
June	\$24,286.88	\$4,234.80	\$5,107.95		N/A	
July	\$3,646.20	\$4,914.41	\$14,315.00		N/A	
August	\$6,156.50	\$6,829.37	\$5,197.60		N/A	
September	\$6,224.10	\$4,438.20	\$5,247.60		N/A	
October	\$6,880.63	\$4,652.40	\$10,448.80		N/A	
November	\$2,377.78	\$18,322.40	\$27,353.16		N/A	
December	\$2,338.80	\$7,886.00	\$6,633.66		N/A	
Year total	\$56,008.37	\$90,604.63	\$76,601.82	\$129,723.00	\$9,113.55	
Difference of change this year to last (completed months only)						

Total Permits

ROW		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	DIFFERENCE this month to last year's month	% OF CHANGE
4	January	42	34	31	26	30	33	51	18	54.5%
5	February	20	30	39	29	24	49	34	-15	-30.6%
6	March	27	29	44	29	48	71	78	7	9.9%
7	April	42	42	60	48	58	57	56	-1	-1.8%
8	May	77	43	65	66	55	60	0	N/A	
9	June	55	29	77	66	73	77	0	N/A	
10	July	54	51	54	47	51	89	0	N/A	
11	August	66	53	62	55	67	79	0	N/A	
12	September	53	51	72	67	69	69	0	N/A	
13	October	56	61	60	63	58	57	0	N/A	
14	November	61	36	50	47	64	49	0	N/A	
15	December	36	48	42	38	52	54	0	N/A	
16										
17	YTD Totals	589	507	656	581	649	744	85	-3	-88.6%
18	Difference of changed this year to last (completed months only)							85		3.7%

Land Use Boards:

Conservation Commission April 2017:

At the regular meeting the Commission discussed the following:

- Town/Community Forest Survey with Andrew Fast of UNH.
- Middle School project at Mast Point.
- SRPC Regional Trails map.
- Sunningdale Conservation Easement.

Historic District Commission April 2017:

The Commission formed subcommittees and they held a workshop meetings to examine the Historic District Ordinance and the boundaries of the District.

The entire Commission held a workshop meeting to discuss what the subcommittees have reviewed.

At the regular meeting the Commission discussed the following:

- Seeds of Faith, Inc., 21 Grand Street, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 17, HDC # 02-2017.
Application to close off a window was
- Breitling Holdings, LLC, 67 Elm Street, Assessor's Map 10, Lot 174, HDC # 03-2017.
Application for a building renovation for apartments and commercial space was

Planning Board April 2017:

The Board held a workshop meeting is review and amend the Site Plan Review Regulations. Suggested changes will be made and presented to the Board at a May workshop meeting.

At the regular meeting the Board reviewed the following:

- Goodwin Community Health, 311 Route 108, Assessor's Map 48, Lot 24E, SITE # 01-2017.
Application for a building addition was **tabled** until the May meeting at the applicant's request.
- Velcro USA, Inc., 300 Route 108, Assessor's Map 47, Lot 01, SITE # 02-2017. Application for a solar array was **tabled** until the Map meeting for further information on utilities and landscaping.

Zoning Board April 2017:

At the regular meeting the Board reviewed the following:

- The DesMarais Family Revocable Trust, 230 High Street, Assessor's Map 14, Lot 18, ZBA # 03-2017. Request for a variance for an office space was **tabled** until the May meeting at the applicant's request.
- Kenneth Faucher, 206 Green Street, Assessor's Map 08, Lot 78 & 79, ZBA # 04-2017. Request for variances to allow more than 2.5 dwelling units per acre and for multi-unit dwellings was **tabled** until the May meeting at the applicant's request.

Parks and Recreation

- Granite State Track and Field registration is open until April 28th. This program is held at the Idlehurst Elementary School Track on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. It will run May 8- June 23rd concluding with the annual Granite State Track and Field Regional Meet.
- Planning for 2017 Summer Camp is now underway with our Early Bird registration opening in March. This year our Summer Camp will run for 8 weeks; June 26-August 18.
- All parks are ready for spring as DPW helped to install all the swings, trash receptacles, volleyball nets, and tennis nets.
- Employments Ads went out for Summer Camp Counselors/Directors and Park Maintenance Worker. The Dept. has been working to advertise these positions on social media, in the local schools, on our website, etc.
- Our annual Easter Egg-Stravaganza Egg Hunt at Millennium Park was held on Friday, April 14th at 4:30 p.m. This year we had approximately 5,000 plastic colored eggs hidden throughout the park for children to find. Families stayed and had their picture taken with the Easter Bunny. We also held a jelly bean guess jar raffle. The child who guessed the correct amount of jelly beans in the jar won an Easter Basket filled with goodies.
- Millennium Park is currently undergoing a park house renovation. A new exterior door will be installed in the coming weeks and will allow improved access into the building. There is a new layout inside with the addition of the two new bathroom stalls, one of which will be ADA accessible. The new playground will be installed in the next few weeks.

Location is Key



Downtown Portsmouth Skyline and Piscataqua River

The Cities of the Greater Seacoast Economic Development Alliance (EDA)

Our Location is the Key to your success

The Greater Seacoast region provides easy access to national and international markets through robust rail, port and interstate highway systems, as well as multiple airports located in the region. Our world-class workforce is both dedicated and educated. The Seacoast is the home of the University of New Hampshire, which is renowned for its research capabilities as a Land, Sea and Space Grant university. Great Bay Community College offers grant-supported, customized training for your workforce along with an Advanced Technology and Academic Center dedicated to manufacturing skills with a specialty in composite materials and aerospace.

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Let the Greater Seacoast Economic Development professionals work for you in finding the right location for your business. Our team approach ensures you get the personal and professional service you want from the first confidential phone call to the ribbon cutting and beyond.

Contact us today.

City of Dover

Daniel Barufaldi
Director of
Economic Development
Ph: (603) 516-6043
d.barufaldi@doover.nh.gov
www.dover.nh.gov

City of Somersworth

Shanna B. Saunders
Director of Planning and
Community Development
Ph: (603) 692-9519
ssaunders@somersworth.com
www.somersworth.com

City of Rochester

Karen Pollard
Economic Development Manager
Ph: (603) 335-7522
karen.pollard@rochesternh.net
www.thinkrochester.biz

Pease Development Authority

David R. Mullen
Executive Director
Ph: (603) 334-6031
d.mullen@peasedev.org
www.peasedev.org

City of Portsmouth

Nancy Carmer
Economic Development
Program Manager
Ph: (603) 610-7220
nmcarmar@cityofportsmouth.com
www.cityofportsmouth.com

IN THIS ISSUE



On the cover: H. Andy Crews, president/CEO of AutoFair and the 2017 Business Leader of the Year.
Photo by Kevin Harkins



Notes..... 7

Promposals? Are you
Kidding Me?

By Matthew J. Mowry

Biz Bits..... 8

Business news, views and trends
from around the state

By Matthew J. Mowry and Scott Murphy

Letter to the Editor 13

The Office 14

Breast-feeding in the Office
By Scott Murphy

Tech Report..... 18

Bank Branch Revolution
By Matthew J. Mowry

Think Tank 40

Raising Questions About
Education Funding

By Greg Bird and Steve Norton

The Buzz 61

People, places and events
shaping the headlines

Compiled by Scott Murphy

Number Crunch 70

The Granite State by the numbers
Compiled by Scott Murphy

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■ **Letters to the Editor.** All letters must have the name, address and phone number of the author, as well as the name of the author's company and job title. All letters are verified prior to publication. Business NH Magazine reserves the right to edit all letters for appropriate content and length.



MEMORANDUM from Director Public Works & Utilities

TO: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager

DATE: May 9, 2017

SUBJECT: Public Works Department Monthly Report for April/May, 2017

FROM: Michael Bobinsky, Director of Public Works & Utilities

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Highlights of the Department's activities during this reporting period are as follows:

- Shift focus from weather emergency response to city wide spring clean-up activities.
- Prepared for early morning downtown district street sweeping and water main flushing work.
- Indigo Hill Road reconstruction work (Green Street to Davis Street) started on May 1.
- Employees participated in Primex Training on proper work zone safety, chain saw safety, communicable disease control, and lock out –tag out training.
- Held HHW drop off event at Rochester's Turnkey Landfill
- Organized a meeting with the Malley Farm Community Gardeners, obtained updated Agreement and Release forms from participants, filled garden plots with participants on the waiting list. Spring Work Day being planned, Volunteer Garden Stewards appointed.
- Highway Safety Preparing for re-painting lane markings on City streets in later May
- Met with representatives of Affinity LED Lighting to review project start up details.
- Participated in a State DOT Local Public Agency (LPA) training workshop; training required for recipients of TAP funds.
- Developing recommended road repair plans using the recently approved FY18 budgeted road funds and the pavement assessment report for the City Manager's consideration. We plan to finalize a staff recommendation to the City Manager by mid-May.
- Participated in the monthly Skyhaven Airport Advisory Committee (SAAC) meeting, and the Airport Revitalization Committee with Skyhaven Airport Users. Working on the development of an RFP for Fixed Based Operator Services and promote the Airport in the Tri-City region.
- Working with officials of Eversource on specific tree replanting plan for National Guard Armory Facility on Blackwater Road and Maple Street.
- Attended Cemetery Trustees and Sustainability Committee meetings.

HIGHWAY DIVISION

Operations/Maintenance:

- Conducted daily litter control city wide: parks and curb-side barrel trash removal
- Initiated Street & sidewalk sweeping
 - High Street Corridor, Stackpole Road, Commercial Drive, Willand Drive, Milo Lane, Blackwater Road, Whitehouse Road, Laurel Lane, Blackshire Court, Aspen Woods Road, Hickory Lane, Downtown Business District, Currently sweeping "The Hills"
- City Fleet-Conducted preventative maintenance and repairs, reorganized the parts room

- Gravel Road Grading
 - Rocky Hill Road, First Street (Continued Mitigation – Need to ditch drainage swales and replace cross culvert)
- Pothole Repair (Hot Asphalt Application), City wide

Recreation:

- Millennium Park
 - Poured concrete floor trench to encapsulate new plumbing
 - Assisted Water Distribution crew with new potable water line installed to bathhouse

Cemetery:

- Forest Glade
 - Continued spring clean-up
 - (1) four grave lot sold
 - Supported one adult burial service

Water Distribution Support:

- Excavation, trucking & labor
 - Leak repair at #51 West High Street
 - Currently replacing 2 curb stops on Brick Street

Sewer Collections Maintenance:

- Sunset Drive
 - Jetting of 4 lengths of main line
 - Vacuuming of 5 manholes
 - Applied root removal and treatment

WASTEWATER DIVISION

Operations/Maintenance:

- Shifted to (MUCT) process for spring-summer months; this process is used to specifically treat phosphorus and ammonia nitrogen.
- Experienced (1) significant rain event which required us to implement the high flow plan. During this period no effluent quality violations were recorded. A peak flow of 5.0 MGD was recorded as well as a 24-hr total flow of 3.5 MGD. Under dry conditions our 24-hr total flow is 1.2 MGD.
- Conducted (2) tours of the facility which included a class from the Somersworth High school and a professional group.
- Treated a total of 10,250 gallons of septage from residents not on city sewer.

Compliance:

- Prepared monthly reports to US-EPA and NH-DES.
- Treated a total of 61-million gallons of wastewater during the month.

Capital Improvements Plan Items:

- Blackwater Rd pump station upgrade – Apex Construction has been selected as the contractor to complete the upgrade; contract documents are being executed.

WATER DIVISION

Items completed this month:

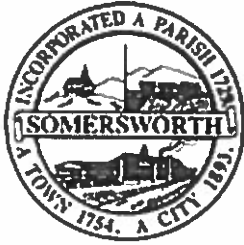
- Bacteria's and TOC's testing completed during this reporting period.
- Had raw water intake blocked due to high flow from spring rain and snow melt.
- Divers from Commercial Divers Plus completed annual river intake inspection.
- Replaced City hall hot water heater/ added re-circulation aquastat
- Pumped 34,680,875 gallons of raw water
- Filtered and pumped to the city 31,802,875 of finished water
- Attended NHWWA technical meeting Rochester NH

Action items:

- The contractor selected to clean Lagoon #1 will start this spring.

WATER DISTRIBUTION

- Operators responded to several emergencies, including a structure fire on Summer Street early in the month.
- Several leaks were discovered and repaired on West High Street near the SAU building.
- All City parks and ball fields have had water service restored for the season. Cemeteries will have water service restored before Memorial Day. A new water meter was installed at the Malley Farm Community Garden water access.
- Hydrant painting will resume as soon as weather allows.



Somersworth Police Department

12 Lilac Lane

Somersworth, NH 03878

Business: (603) 692-3131 Fax: (603) 692-2111

David B. Kretschmar
Chief of Police

MEMORANDUM

Memo To: Bob Belmore, City Manager
From: David Kretschmar, Chief of Police
Date: May 3, 2017
Subject: Monthly Report – Month of April 2017

Bob:

Below are some of the activities of our Department for the month of April:

COMMUNITY POLICING:

- The annual Seat Belt Challenge was held at the Somersworth High School on April 18th. The winning relay team will be competing at the State level against other schools in the State. This is a team relay race to buckle up your seatbelts with the best time. It stresses the importance of seat belt use and how little time it takes to buckle up. This event was organized by School Resource Officer Rick Campbell.
- School Resource Officer Campbell and Detective Chandler presented an internet safety class to a Girl Scout Troop at Maplewood Elementary School.

PERSONNEL/TRAINING:

- Officer Matthew Niciu, a certified police officer from the University of New Hampshire, was hired and has begun our field training program.
- Officers attended the following trainings: FEMA Training, Lethal Force and the Objectively Reasonable Officer, Crime Scene Bio-Hazard Safety Workshop, Armorer Certification, New England Crisis Negotiator's Annual Conference and the Annual New Hampshire School Resource Officer Conference.

Memo To Bob Belmore
Monthly Report – Month of April, 2017
Page 2

OTHER:

Chief Kretschmar and Captains Timmons and McLin attended the New Hampshire Addiction Summit presented by the Opioid Task Force of Strafford County.



City of Somersworth

Fire Department

195 Maple Street – Somersworth, NH 03878-1594



Keith E. Hoyle
Fire Chief & Emergency Management Director
khoyle@somersworth.com

Business: (603) 692-3457
Fax: (603) 692-5147
www.somersworth.com

APRIL 2017 MONTHLY REPORT

EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

Building Fires:	9
Vehicle Fires:	0
Outside Fires:	5
Emergency Medical:	58
Motor Vehicle Crash:	11
Malfunction/false alarm:	6
Accidental/public service:	33
Hazardous Condition:	7
Hazardous Materials:	4

NON-EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

Burning Permits:	123
Fireworks Permits:	2
Oil Burner Permits:	1
Place of Assembly Permits:	0
Fire Safety Inspections:	7
Fire Drills:	4

CALLS FOR SERVICE

- We responded to 26 more emergency calls this April (133) than in April 2016 – an increase of 24%.
- Responded to building fire at 13B Summer St. caused by discarded cigarette. There were no injuries but 3 families were displaced. Damage will approach \$100,000.
- Responded to fire at the abandoned Chinberg mill on Main Street – arson fire caused by vagrants in the building on the 2nd floor. It was quickly extinguished.
- We responded to mutual aid fires in Dover, Milton (2), Portsmouth and Rochester and Berwick ME (3).
- American Ambulance continues to provide excellent EMS services to the city with an average response time that is approximately 4 minutes.

PLANNING/PROJECTS/GRANTS

- Ms. Maley Clark, a 3rd grader at Maplewood School, one of 13 winners in the State Fire Marshal's Office Annual Fire Safety Calendar Contest, was recognized by the School Board.
- Extra staffing added for April 1 snowstorm.
- Attended budget workshop and budget presentations to the City Council.
- Attended pre-construction meeting for Cumberland Farms.
- Attended luncheon with State Education Commissioner.
- Cornerstone VNA here to discuss a plan to refer elderly to an agency when we encounter issues on EMS or fire calls.
- National Guard donated free of charge several gear lockers to us so we could replace older deteriorated units.

TRAINING/MEETINGS

- Attended "Reverse 9-1-1" training at NH Homeland Security.
- Attended educational session at Primex on ADA updates.
- One call firefighter now attending FF II training in Greenland.
- One new call firefighter is continuing basic training in North Berwick.
- Attended Strafford County Public Health Symposium at WDH.
- Attended SRTC and Seacoast Fire Chiefs meetings.
- Met with Strafford County EMDs in conjunction with the "Ready Strafford" organization.

Respectfully Submitted:
Keith E. Hoyle, Fire Chief/EMD

Brenda Breda

From: Claude Comcast <cjg64@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 09, 2017 6:43 PM
To: Brenda Breda
Subject: Re: Chabot's Dairy

Mayor/Council
- FYI - update RB

Bob
Sorry been building away on 7 new homes.
To date
Turgeon construction redid exterior drains. Water was running through building causing major problems.
Repared upper area to help with drainage.
Total clean out of building which filled up 5 dumpsters.
Replaced clapboards and scrape and painted building (three quarters to date) As soon as we get a good stretch of weather remainder will be done. Repaired rubber roof leaking throughout building. New windows are in at some point they will be replaced. All garage doors fixed.

Turgeon construction.	3,500.00
Paving.	9,500.00
Dumpsters.	3,000.00
Painting.	3,800.00
Roof.	2,900.00
Garage doors.	1,800.00
Windows.	2,500.00

Building is 50 percent occupied. And to be fair the city took almost a full year to clear the title. And not happy that the city while under contract changed the assessed value . Raising the value by close to 100,000 dollars. How does this happen! Please make sure the board knows this. Plan on fixing fencing and cleaning up Fayette street area with painting and new paving.

Sent from my iPad

On May 9, 2017, at 3:11 PM, Brenda Breda <bbreda@somersworth.com> wrote:

Hi Claude,

I have left you a few voice mail messages regarding an update you stated you would be giving Bob on your remodeling plans?

Brenda A. Breda

Executive Assistant to
City Manager, Robert M. Belmore
City of Somersworth
One Government Way
Somersworth, NH 03878
Tel: (603) 692-9503
Fax: (603) 692-9571
Email: bbreda@somersworth.com

Bob Belmore

From: Michael Bobinsky
Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2017 12:20 PM
To: Bob Belmore
Subject: FW: National Guard Armory Facility in Somersworth and replacement Tree Planting

*Margot
Council
- FH update
BB*

I was really hoping the folks at the National Guard saw this in more simpler terms. I will keep you posted and I will now need to alert Eversource to cancel the planned tree planting for the end of the month.

-----Original Message-----

From: Annis, Paul NFG (US) [mailto:paul.annis.nfg@mail.mil]
Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2017 12:09 PM
To: Michael Bobinsky <mbobinsky@somersworth.com>
Subject: RE: National Guard Armory Facility in Somersworth and replacement Tree Planting

Sir, I have discussed this with the BA and this will need to be approved by The State Governor and Executive Council. The work cannot start without G&C approval. The parties need to understand that this is State Property and not Federal property. Sometimes people do not understand that. Sgt. Wiggin is a great guy but is a federal employee, he is not authorized to make any decisions regarding State property.

The contacts for this should only be myself and Stephanie Milender the Adjutant General's Business Administrator.

Stephanie Milender
Phone: 603-225-1361

There is a few things that we will need to prepare for the G&C submission.
We will need to know an estimate of what the dollar amount/value of the work will be.

Thank you,

Paul Annis
State of NH Adjutant General's Department Plant Maintenance Engineer IV
Phone: 603-225-1357
Cell: 603-496-2988
Fax: 603-227-1532
E-mail: paul.annis.ngf@mail.mil

-----Original Message-----

From: Michael Bobinsky [mailto:mbobinsky@somersworth.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2017 4:20 PM
To: Annis, Paul NFG (US) <paul.annis.nfg@mail.mil>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] FW: National Guard Armory Facility in Somersworth and replacement Tree Planting

Paul thanks for returning my call and alerting me to the misspelling on your email address. Let me know if you or your team need anything else.; we certainly hope your Agency will allow the tree planting and allow the schedule as set forth

by Eversource. Sgt. Wiggins called me back today to check in on status and if I was speaking with the correct folks as well.

Regards

Michael J. Bobinsky

Director of Public Works and Utilities

City of Somersworth

(603) 692-4266

(603) 817-6452

From: Michael Bobinsky

Sent: Monday, May 08, 2017 5:04 PM

To: 'Paul.Annis.nfgs@mail.mil' <Paul.Annis.nfgs@mail.mil>

Subject: National Guard Armory Facility in Somersworth and replacement Tree Planting

Very good to speak with you earlier today Paul. Attached is a view of the location where Eversource and the City of Somersworth would like to plant (four) 4 Flowering (non- fruit) Crabapple trees .

As we discussed, this replanting effort is a follow-up to our City Council meetings with Eversource regarding the manner in which they removed trees without the City's knowledge along their major trunk line in Somersworth, namely Blackwater Road/Maple Street area. I understand that you and your staff gave the approval to Eversource to proceed with the tree removal as needed and described by Eversource. While the City shares the goal of not experiencing power interruptions due to service impacts from down trees and other emergencies, we were expecting a dialogue with Eversource and or their tree contractors to better understand the purpose , schedule and possible remedies or replanting options before work started. Removing mature trees along any corridor affects the image of the neighborhood and perhaps places the property out of compliance with original site plan review conditions placed on them by either our City Council or Planning Board so there is a serious site plan side to this , though to be sure we want to minimize service interruptions due to down wires from fallen trees.

Our City Council and staff received numerous complaints from residents and others following the Eversource crew and subcontractors removal of several trees along the Blackwater Road and Maple Street areas. Eversource tree arborist, Ian Farley , and Marie Letourneau, Customer Service rep, have been most helpful and apologetic over the tree removal effort and collectively their senior staff has determined that in the future, Eversource will first alert City or Town officials

where they are working to provide an alert about major tree removal or trimming work being implemented along a specific corridor. They also agreed as a gesture of goodwill and to help mitigate the tree removal for all parties, Eversource agreed to plant size appropriate tree species along the Maple St side as part of a replanting effort with the City. We all see this as a joint effort between the National Guard Unit, the City and Eversource. Though Eversource prefers to carry a low key role here on this .

I held a brief on site meeting there this past Friday, May 5 with Eversource officials, and I did reach out to your assigned facility sergeant and invited him to the meeting. He was not able to join us when I met with the Eversource Tree Arborist. Eversource is offering to purchase and install the trees at their expense, and we will need to water them occasionally, of which I will agree for DPW to handle that task initially for the trees to establish, if the Guard is not able. Eversource is available to have the trees purchased and installed toward the end of May and before Memorial Day.

We are all working with best intentions and in support of rectifying the tree removal effort that was implemented without a plan and or a replacement effort. Our City Council was pleased with Eversource willing to replant 4 trees for the City and certainly understands the need to work with the Army National Guard unit on this effort. The photo image is showing the area where the 4 trees will be planted, subject to best practices as prescribed by Eversource which follows national arborist standards. Let me know if you need any further images, Eversource will space the trees appropriately as well when planted.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. We look forward to working together to resolve this issue. I can be reached at 603-692-4266 and or at my cell at 603-817-6452.

Best Regards

Michael J. Bobinsky

Director of Public Works and Utilities

City of Somersworth

(603) 692-4266 office

(603) 817-6452 cell