

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
October 7, 2019 – 5:00PM

Committee Members present: Councilor Dale R. Sprague, Chair
Councilor David A. Witham, Vice (entered at 6:12pm)
Councilor Martin Pepin
Councilor Kenneth S. Vincent

Administration/Staff present: City Manager, Bob Belmore
Finance Director, Scott Smith
Director of Public Works, Michael Bobinsky
City Engineer, Gary Lemay
Dir of Planning and Community Dev, Shanna Saunders
City Clerk, Trish Harris

Other: Councilor Richard Michaud
Phil Johnson, Unitil
Robert Reid, Resident on High Street
Mike French, Resident on Buffumsville Road
Residents of Nadeau Street

Chairman Sprague called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion made by Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Vincent, to approve the minutes of the October 4, 2019 meeting. Motion was approved 3-0.

ROAD EXCAVATION MORATORIUM (CH. 12) WAIVER REQUESTS:

- 124 HIGH ST., ROBERT REID

A letter from Mr. Robert Reid and memo and maps from Director Bobinsky were provided to the Committee. Mr. Reid is requesting a waiver to the excavation moratorium on High Street, to run a natural gas line to his property at 124 High Street. The gas line is located across High Street. There is currently a 5-year moratorium on High Street which expires November 30, 2020.

Councilor Sprague explained to Mr. Reid the reason for the moratorium is to protect the City's assets, specifically after they have invested millions of dollars in improvements. Councilor Sprague also noted that we have had others before us requesting a waiver from the excavation moratorium and denied a waiver, furthermore we should enforce the moratorium otherwise it serves no purpose.

There was discussion as to why Unitil did not run lines to extend the gas service while they were doing construction on High Street in 2015. Mr. Johnson noted it was simply a business decision to control costs.

Mr. Reid stated that he purchased the property after the road construction was completed, but understood the situation.

Councilor Sprague said there is one year left on moratorium, perhaps the work could be accomplished next year.

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to move the request for waiver of the moratorium on High Street to full Council. Motion passed, 3-0.

- MAPLE STREET, UNTIL FOR 3 EMERY STREET

Mr. Johnson explained this is an elderly couple, at 3 Emery Street, and their furnace has failed. They are looking to purchase a gas furnace. There is a letter and photo in packet. There is no gas line on Emery Street. They will have to come in from Maple Street. They are requesting a waiver on the moratorium on Maple Street. There is a 3-year moratorium that expires in the fall of 2020.

Councilor Sprague, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to move the request for waiver of the moratorium on Maple Street to full Council. Motion passed, 3-0.

SEWER ORDINANCE (CH. 8A) WAIVER REQUEST: MIKE FRENCH, 72 BUFFUMSVILLE RD.

Mr. French is requesting a waiver of Chapter 8A, Article III, Section 4 of the City Ordinance, Sewer ordinance which states “The owner of all houses... will connect such facilities directly with proper public sewer in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance, provided that said public sewer is within 200 feet of the property line.”

Mr. French stated that they have attempted to connect the property to the sewer line and have hit solid rock. Blasting would be necessary to continue, at a cost of \$20,00-25,000. There is concern with blasting because of an 8” water main that is close to the blasting area.

Councilor Sprague asked if Mr. French has an approved septic design from the State.

Mr. French currently has plans that he states are approved by the State.

Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to move the request for waiver of Chapter 8A to full Council. The motion passed, 3-0.

DISCUSS STREET STATUS

- CHURCH ST.

The committee discussed Church Street, an ally/street that is not used very often and in bad shape. The committee asked staff if we have any utilities on Church Street. Engineer Lemay responded that we don’t believe there are, but will review and confirm. The City plows and maintains the road and there are concerns about digging up more road with the plows this winter season.

Councilor Vincent stated that the fire apparatus cannot go up or down that street.

Councilor Pepin would like City Staff to check with the all the abutters and get an understanding of any concerns they may have should the City consider discontinuing the road.

Consensus of the Committee is for City Staff to further explore utilities on the road and to contact all the abutters before further action is considered.

- NADEAU ST

Several residents of Nadeau Street were in attendance. City Manager Belmore explained it has come to the attention of the City that there is no record of Nadeau Street being a public road. The City has been plowing, picking up trash and recycling, and maintaining the road for a number of years. Staff also informed the committee that there are utilities on that road.

City Manager Belmore informed the committee that it would take a vote by City Council to accept Nadeau Street as a City road.

There was discussion of deeds; 1 Nadeau Street encompasses the boundary of road as well.

Councilor Sprague explained that the City wants to fix this oversight. It will be a process of deed research, drafting legal docs and public hearings.

Consensus of the Committee is to continue to maintain Nadeau Street through the process.

SEWER ORDINANCE (CH. 8A), INDUSTRIAL USE CHARGE

This item was Tabled.

OAKS TIMBER CUT PROJECT

City Manager Belmore gave an overview of the request. He stated that this has been in the works for a few years. The Oaks is a City owned property, and they want to do an extensive cut that may involve up to 1,000 trees. The purpose of this is because the shading from the trees is affecting the maintenance of fairways and greens. The harvesting the trees will pay for the cut, and they are requesting that the City hold the excess funds, if any, in escrow for future maintenance of the property. The ideal time to do this is in January, when the ground is frozen, to not do any damage to the property. There is conservation land that cannot be touched.

Consensus of the Committee is to see the plan from the Oaks.

MISCELLANEOUS

Councilor Sprague brought up the topic of crack sealing on High Street. Crack sealing from Sinclair to the Dover line will cost of approximately \$13,000. Pike is agreeing to crack seal Winter Street at no cost. It was paved 2 years ago, and they don't want the derogations of the hot top.

There was lengthy discussion of pros and cons of crack sealing.

Councilor Witham entered at 6:12pm.

Councilor Witham stated that he is concerned about the routing that would take place and might expand the cracks further.

Councilor Sprague explained these quotes do not include routing; it is more of a surface application.

Councilor Witham stated that if we do the crack sealing this fall, we will need to do pavement striping as well.

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Pepin, made a motion to approve crack sealing on High Street, from Commercial Drive to Tri City Road, in both directions, and touchup of pavement markings as needed. Motion passed, 4-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor Witham, motion passed 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Harris, City Clerk