

City Council Work Session November 7, 2016

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Nelson, Higbee, Gentili, Remillard, Rozek (7:10 p.m.) and Theberge. Councilor, Morgan Allain was absent.

Others present included: Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, HEB Engineer Jay Poulin, School Department Business Administrator Bryan Lamirande, Assistant Police Chief Dan Buteau, Barbara Tetreault, *Berlin Daily Sun*

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. He asked to add Business Administrator Lamirande to the agenda to speak to the School Funding correspondence from Franklin. Councilor Remillard so moved; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried.

Route 16 Design

Jay Poulin updated the Council on the Route 16 project saying that the drainage and roadway reconstruction is complete up to the Congregational Church. Paving will be done tomorrow. Curbing is expected to be done by November 14th; line striping and clean up to be done by November 23. Utility pole installations will continue throughout the winter. Mayor Grenier asked if removal of the old poles will be done and Mr. Poulin noted that utilities (fire alarm, cable, fiber optic, telephone) have to move their equipment in the order that it appears on the pole. Once the last utility moves over to the new pole, the old poles can be removed. The new poles will be higher and bigger at the base; and therefore fewer poles will be necessary

In terms of the bump-outs Mr. Poulin noted that they cause a significant change in the traffic pattern. He distributed a handout with details in question form.

Why are the bump-outs being installed? They provide an attractive streetscape and add safety by improving sight distance. Cambridge Street is the perfect example where there is an additional 100 feet of site distance when a car coming down Cambridge is allowed to go into the intersection up to the edge of the bump-out onto Route 16. Bump-outs are installed where cars should not be parking. They provide the shortest possible distance for crosswalks adding to pedestrian safety. They slows traffic down and are great areas for trees and landscaping.

The North Bump-out at Cambridge Street seems abrupt. Mr. Poulin acknowledged that there could be some additional improvements made. When the bump-out was first put in, there was no line striping and lighting was poor. This is also the narrowest section of the road. Mayor Grenier suggested a softer radius and moving the bump-out over about 18 inches. Councilor Otis stated that he is in favor of the bump-outs but suggested that making it longer at Main Street may help alleviate the problem. Councilor Gentili stated that he inadvertently hit the bump-out with his rear tire when taking the turn. Councilor Remillard stated that a yellow line still works and won't present a hazard. Ms. Laflamme reported that Acting Planning Board Chair Tom McCue who lives on Cambridge Street said that the bump-out is very effective when meeting Route 16 by increasing the site distance. The Planning Board agreed that the bump-outs are reasonable.

Councilor Nelson asked what will be in the bump-out and Mr. Poulin indicated that some will have pavers, others will have a tree grate and others will be grass. He added that there will be a good chance to evaluate the bump-outs and see how they perform. Additional bump-outs will go in at Peavey Lane, Hemlock Street and two at Maple Street. Councilor Higbee said that he loves the idea. He asked if the bump-outs could have a more forgiving beveled curve so that if the corner is taken too sharp, it would not harm the vehicle. Mayor Grenier agreed. Mr. Poulin determined that there is no time to make changes now on Cambridge Street; changes will have to wait until the spring. He will come back before the crews get started in the spring. Councilor Nelson confirmed that the plow truck will be able to maneuver around the bump-outs.

Homeland Security Exercise & Evaluation Program

Assistant Chief Buteau reported that the Police Department took part in a multi department exercise that involved 11 regional tactical teams. The training on how best to work together in an emergency was held at the outlets in Tilton. The City's Bearcat was brought to the scene as part of the training. The grant is to reimburse the Police Department for their part in the training.

School Funding Correspondence

Mayor Grenier reported that he intends to go to a meeting called by Franklin Mayor Ken Merrifield regarding RSA 198:41 IV(d) which is set to start phasing out stabilization grants at a rate of 4% per year starting in 2017. Bryan Lamirande added that the stabilization grant started in 2012 (Councilor Rozek entered the meeting at this time.) and the plan with this law is to phase stabilization out over 25 years. Berlin stands to lose about \$220,000 per year if there is no change in enrollment. Councilor Remillard confirmed that reversing the law would involve the legislative process. Mr. Lamirande stated that there will still be adequacy money for Berlin; that is not part of the stabilization. Mayor Grenier asked for the Council's approval to represent the City at the Franklin meeting. Councilor Rozek so moved; Councilor Otis seconded and the motion carried. Mayor Grenier noted that Councilor Remillard will take the chair at next week's Work Session. He asked for school funding statistics from Mr. Lamirande. Councilor Rozek commented that the word "adequate" in the school funding law cannot be defined and it should be gotten rid of in favor of a more definitive law.

State Aid Grant

Ms. Laflamme explained that this funding is reimbursement for work that has already occurred at the Wastewater Treatment plant.

Airport Capital Grant Application

Funding is for improvements to the airport's rotating beacon and wind cone assembly as well as electrical work. It is 90% Federal funding; 5% State funding and 5% local funding. Engineering on the project is already complete.

Non-Public Session

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Theberge to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (d) Land Matters; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Councilor Remillard moved to come out of non-public session; Councilor Rozek seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Councilor Remillard moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session until terms are settled as releasing them would render the action ineffective; Councilor Rozek seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business in Work Session, Mayor Grenier moved on to the Regular Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant