

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
June 26, 2012**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: George Tyler (Village President); Dan Kerin, Andrew Brown, Elaine Sopchak. (Lori Houghton was absent.)
ADMINISTRATION: Dave Crawford, Village Manager; Robin Pierce, Development Director; Richard Hamlin, Village Engineer.
OTHERS PRESENT: Linda Costello, Diane Clemens, Tim Jerman, Julie Potter (CCRPC), Dan Voisin (Stone Environmental), Eric Swiech (Stone Environmental), Christine Deleo (Stone Environmental), Greg Edwards (Stantec), Christine Ford (CCRPC), Jason Starr (Essex Reporter).

I. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Village President, George Tyler, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Add:

- Memo on Byway Sign on Railroad Ave.
- Request to Waive Purchasing Policy for Public Works Purchase
- Memo on Crescent Connector

III. GUESTS AND PRESENTATION

1. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

Linda Costello re: Crosswalk on Pearl Street

Linda Costello, Williams Street, requested consideration for a crosswalk or traffic light by Williams Street to allow pedestrians, especially children, to safely cross Pearl Street to get to the bus stop. Ms. Costello spoke in support of encouraging people to walk and use the bus service and felt the village should act in its own interest rather than the state dictating when and where a traffic light can be installed. Ms. Costello also stated the intersection of Williams Street and Willey Court needs paving because there are large cracks and grass is growing in the street. Richard Hamlin, Village Engineer, explained the warrants per the MUTCD manual for traffic are not met for a traffic light (the warrants must be met to legally install a light) and installing an unsignalized mid-block pedestrian crosswalk would not be safe at the requested location. One option that can be further investigated is to decrease the speed limit on Pearl Street at an earlier point (closer to Susie Wilson Road). Dan Kerin mentioned working with CCTA to possibly adjust the location of the bus stop. The Trustees will further discuss the matter and potential compromise solutions at a future meeting

Diane Clemens re: Crosswalks on Pearl Street

Diane Clemens, village resident, mentioned letters and inquiries that were submitted regarding a crosswalk on Pearl Street. Ms. Clemens also mentioned that Williams Street

was on the list for repair (filling in the cracks), but was removed from the list for some reason without the work being done. Williams Street is the only street in the development that has not been repaired.

2. Village Center Area Wide Environmental Assessment

Julie Potter, CCRPC, explained the purpose of the area wide study was to collect information needed for an environmental assessment for the crescent connector. The study was funded through the brownfield assessment project. Dan Voisin and Christine Deleo with Stone Environmental presented the results of the study showing historic uses and documented contaminated sites in the area of the crescent connector. The information indicates a Phase 1 environmental site inspection should be done. The information from the study is an area wide assessment tool that can be provided to developers.

3. Presentation by CCRPC and Stantec on Pearl Street Corridor Scoping Study

Greg Edwards with Stantec reviewed three street layout alternatives for Pearl Street from the entrance to the shopping centers to Five Corners. The alternatives include an 11' wide travel lane and 4' wide bike lane, a 10' wide travel lane and a 4' wide bike lane, and a 13' wide shared vehicle/bike travel lane. Five percent growth over the next 20 years was assumed relative to traffic increase. Stantec will investigate all three alternatives plus the intersection in depth.

George Tyler observed the choices encompass a wider sidewalk and buffer strip versus a wider bike lane. Dan Kerin commented a bike count on Pearl Street would likely show bicycles are the least amount of traffic volume. Cars and pedestrians are first and second, respectively, so enhancements should lean more toward the safety of vehicle and pedestrian traffic than bike traffic. Elaine Sopchak asked about the impact on businesses and residences that border the sidewalk. Greg Edwards noted the goal is to avoid impacting the street trees by varying the width of the buffer strip. There is disparity in the width of the road and sidewalk as well as the curb elevation through the area that must be addressed. Ms. Sopchak asked about lighting. Dave Crawford stated the type of lighting by the fairgrounds will be extended, but the distance between poles and the wattages may differ.

There was discussion of the option of a roundabout at the intersection at Post Office Square. Evidence indicates roundabouts are safer for pedestrians. There would be a widened sidewalk around the roundabout for bicyclists. Robin Pierce stated roundabouts are safer for pedestrians over traffic lights because there is a center island for people to stand while crossing the street. The center island can be raised and planted with trees or shrubs. There can be directional arrows for traffic circulation. Crosswalks would be located behind the second car in the queue entering the roundabout.

4. Department Head Reports

Planning and Zoning

Robin Pierce reported the Planning Dept. is involved in development, general department activities, regulatory issues, affordable housing, and design review for historic sites in the village center district. Staff will work with Champlain Housing Trust and Housing

Vermont on affordable housing projects in the village. There was discussion of limiting renting of affordable housing as a temporary solution and promoting permanent ownership. Also, increase in affordable housing will likely increase reliance on public transit. Robin Pierce mentioned the approach by the Town of Charlotte to collect money through the property tax to provide grants for affordable housing in the town. Federal guidelines must be met to qualify for affordable housing.

Elaine Sopchak mentioned the need for senior housing in the village and suggested a joint meeting with the Planning Commission, Trustees, and staff to discuss the code and housing in the village. Robin Pierce noted accessory apartments are an option as well. Staff has been proactive in getting various developers (residential and commercial) to discuss potential development plans.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Acceptance of Village Center Area Wide Environmental Assessment

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to thank CCRPC for conducting the village center area wide environmental assessment and to accept the report. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to use the data contained in the CCRPC assessment to provide environmental data for the planning and construction of the proposed crescent connector. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to ask CCRPC to integrate the information in the area wide assessment into the database of environmental information for Essex Junction for future planning purposes. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

2. Discussion of Joint Work Session with Selectboard and Next Steps

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, that the Board of Trustees approve a six member committee consisting of the two municipal managers (village and town), the two chairpersons of the boards (trustees and selectboard), and two community citizens to investigate administrative efficiencies between the village and town governments pending mutual agreement by the Essex Junction Trustees and the Essex Selectboard.

DISCUSSION: Dan Kerin noted, for example, through attrition of department heads the committee will have the opportunity to determine where there can be efficiencies.

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

George Tyler will correspond with the chairperson of the Essex Selectboard for input on the matter.

3. Discussion of Trustees Action Items and Priorities

Andrew Brown noted he and Lori Houghton will be meeting to discuss moving forward with the capital program analysis committee. Rick Hamlin volunteered to serve on the committee. Dan Kerin will serve on the water rate study committee with George Tyler.

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to approve the draft list of Board of Trustees priorities as presented. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to appoint Rick Hamlin to the Capital Program Analysis Committee. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

4. Discussion/Action on Amtrak Station Future Action Plan

Dave Crawford suggested the professionals who volunteered their time and expertise for the Amtrak station project to date be asked to form a committee and be reimbursed for their services to take the concept to the next stage. The work could be funded by money in the Capital Improvement Plan. Another possible source of funds is the Congressional delegation. A response and input from Amtrak on the proposed station plan is anticipated. The Trustees are in support of the Village Manager pursuing possible funding sources and pursuing a more finished design if this will likely result in funding of the project.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss/Approve FY12 Year End Departmental Budget Transfers

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to approve use of any anticipated surplus in the FY12 Street and Planning budgets to cover deficits in other general fund budgets.

DISCUSSION: Dave Crawford explained through the year staff is cognizant with expenditures that funds will be available via transfer if needed. There were no further comments.

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

2. Set FY13 Water and Sewer Rates

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by George Tyler, to set the FY13 utility rates with 1500 c.f. minimum per six month billing as follows:

- **Water Rate - \$.02684/c.f.**
- **Sewer Rate -\$.02423/c.f.**
- **Sanitation Rate - \$.01674/c.f.**
- **Large Water User (IBM) - \$.066/1,000 gallons**
- **Waste Water Wholesale - \$2.4248/1,000 gallons of sewage flow**

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

VI. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

The Trustees received a memo on items in the Manager's Report.

1. Meeting Schedule

- July 10 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- July 31 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting

- August 14 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- August 28 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- September 11 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- October 9 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting
- October 23 @ 6:30 – Regular Trustees Meeting

Special Meetings/Events:

- July 21 – Annual Block Party (4 PM – 9 PM)
- September 5 – Semi-Annual Joint Meeting with Prudential Committee
- September 25 – Heart and Soul Kick Off
- October 4 – VLCT Town Fair at Fairgrounds

2. Pump Station Update

Staff provided a brief written update on the high school pump station project.

3. Byway Sign

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to add the byway sign to the FY13 Capital Reserve Fund Plan. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

4. Waive Purchase Policy

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to waive the Trustees Purchasing Policy requiring bids for purchases greater than \$10,000 to allow the Public Works Department to purchase spreader controls for the dump truck for consistency from TENCO of New England in the amount of \$18,250. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

5. Crescent Connector Project Meeting Reports

Dave Crawford reported costs for the project can now be billed. A request for qualifications is being drafted for a design engineer with expertise in railroad signals and traffic control.

VII. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/CONCERNS

- Dan Kerin suggested the analog tape recorder for the meetings be replaced with a digital MP3 player as part of the upgrade of the meeting room.
- Dan Kerin reported meetings with the Essex Police are ongoing regarding security cameras at Maple Street Park and neighborhood watch programs.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA & READING FILE

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Andrew Brown, to approve the consent agenda as presented:

1. Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings (6/6/12 & 6/12/12)
2. Approve Annual Meeting Minutes (4/4/12)
3. Approve Warrants
4. Reading List Acceptance (Letters & Communications)
 - Construction Update Newsletter on High School Pump Station Project
 - Email from Vermont Rail Action Network on Federal Grant

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION and/or ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to adjourn the regular meeting and convene Executive Session to discuss personnel issues where premature public knowledge would place the Village of Essex Junction at a substantial disadvantage and to invite the Village Manager to attend. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

The regular meeting was adjourned and Executive Session convened at 9 PM. Executive Session was adjourned at 10:17 PM.

RScty: M.E.Riordan