

MINUTES/DECISIONS OF THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING DATE: AUGUST 26, 2019

In attendance = X Alternate Seated = S Partial Attendance = P Excused Absence = E

Tim Malley
Chair X

Charlie Brackett
Planning Board X

Ed Van der Veen
Planning Board X

Dillon Dumont
P.B. alt. X

Jim Weaver
Budget Comm X

Malcom Price
School Board E

Bob Calzini
Citizen Rep. X

Roger Coutu
BOS Rep X

Marilyn McGrath
BOS Alt. E

Brian Groth
Town Planner X

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- I. CALL TO ORDER AT 7:00 P.M
 - II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
 - III. ROLL CALL
 - IV. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

- A. 15 July 2019 Meeting Minutes

- Mr. Brackett moved to approve the 15 July 2019 Meeting Minutes.

- Motion seconded by Mr. Coutu. Motion carried 6/0/0.

- V. NEW BUSINESS - Discussion of Draft Capital Improvements Plan.

Mr. Groth presented the document structure of the CIP document that contains three main sections: Process, Projects, and Recommendations. The Process section describes the committee process, project criteria, mathematical assumptions, and the goal of the plan. Projects contains a summary of each project submittal, by department, in alphabetical order. Recommendations contains specific committee recommendations for each project and a funding schedule that demonstrates the average tax impact of the capital projects by fiscal year. He also noted the town's excellent debt limit ratio and credit rating, which is beneficial to bonded projects. Mr. Groth concluded the presentation with a recommendation that the committee use the meeting to focus on the Recommendations sections and the nexus of each project to the Master Plan in the Projects section.

The committee discussion began with the Benson Park Committee projects. Mr. Coutu explained that the NH Division of Historic Resources (DHR) is currently assessing the historic value of the Haselton Barn. This followed

with a suggestion that the project be postponed until that determination is made, but plan to repair the roof in FY 2020 so as not to prolong and exacerbate the problem/costs of repair in the event that DHR maintains the structure as a historic resource. Discussion of the Kitchen Building Roof Repair project focused on the question of the condition the building was received (therefore the standard of maintenance per deed). Currently, DHR is requiring the town to repair the roof using the original clay shingles. Mr. Groth said he would try to determine if those shingles were on the roof at time of town receipt, or if they were simply on a palette in storage. In the case of the latter, Mr. Groth suggested the town ask the DHR for guidance in offsetting the cost of the higher standard of repair.

The committee then engaged in discussion on the timing, urgency and coordination of the Twin Bridges Repair project. Mr. Brackett noted that postponement of this repair will result in a significant increase in rehabilitation costs as the deterioration continues. Mr. Coutu noted the matter of shared ownership with Nashua. The committee agreed to add to their recommendation that the town aggressively pursue negotiations with Nashua to reach an agreement on financial responsibility and timing. Mr. Weaver and Mr. Brackett requested more information regarding the logistics of the Lowell Road Bridge repair and the Lowell Rd. & Birch St. intersection update.

The committee agreed that the town conduct a feasibility and alternatives study be done for a potential town hall expansion or relocation project prior to making a decision on proceeding with the proposed expansion. Mr. Coutu noted that the capacity and ability to serve the public is already an issue for the current town hall building, and these challenges will continue to grow as the community grows.

The consensus of the committee was that the Police Station is the most urgent need among the building projects in this plan, adding emphasis to the recommendation that the project be undertaken in FY 2021.

Mr. Groth explained that the School Board called a meeting that evening to discuss alternatives for the Alvirne HS renovation and Kindergarten projects. The recommendations statement will need to be adjusted when more information is received. However, the committee agreed to place the Alvirne HS project in FY 2021. Mr. Groth noted that although that means two “big ticket” items on one year’s ballot, in doing so, the overall tax impact over the course of the next 6 fiscal years is more even in this scenario. Furthermore, there are cost savings to be taken advantage of by scheduling them to both begin in FY 2021. One being the reduced cost in dovetailing the HS project

with the ongoing CTE project and the other being the assumption that construction prices will continue to rise. While the “price tag” may appear to be large for one year, it is noted that both are bonded projects that will spread the costs out over the course of 20-30 years, therefore it does not mean a massive impact in one fiscal year. The current funding schedule in the draft plan assumes the highest cost alternative of the HS project for conservative financial planning purposes.

The committee agreed that the building efficiency program proposed by the Sustainability Committee is worth pursuing, but does not meet the criteria for inclusion in the CIP as the concept is an annual program (not a one-time capital expenditure). The committee recommended that the concept be reviewed by the Board of Selectman for inclusion in future annual budgets as it is an opportunity for long-term cost savings in utility expenses.

The committee then reviewed each project for its nexus to a Master Plan goal. All projects were found to have a nexus. Many projects relate to the Community Facilities goal to “provide cost effective, conveniently located community facilities including schools, recreation, public safety, library, solid waste disposal, public water and sewer facilities based upon community need and the ability of the town to pay.” The Police Station and the Town Hall projects were found to also meet the Community Facilities goal to “plan for the expansion of existing community facilities to meet the existing and future needs of Town residents.” All engineering projects related the Transportation goal to “provide for safe and efficient transportation system based on a hierarchy of arterial, collector and local roadways.” The traffic light upgrade project, funded by impact fees, also related to the Community Facilities goals to “ensure that new development pays for its proportional share of capital facility costs.”

Ed Van der Veen moved to forward the CIP, revised as discussed, to the Planning Board for their review and approval. Mr. Weaver seconded the motion. The motion carried 6/0/0.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Brian Groth
Town Planner