

**CITY OF MONTPELIER  
CAPITAL CITY OF VERMONT**

**City Manager's Weekly Report – 03/03/2017**

**UPCOMING MEETINGS ...**

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Monday, March 6    | Design Review Committee, 5:30 P.M. in the City Council Chambers                                   |
|                    | Development Review Board, 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers                                  |
| Tuesday, March 7   | TOWN MEETING DAY!! Voting will take place in the City Hall Auditorium from 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. |
|                    | Montpelier Transportation Infrastructure Committee, 5:15 P.M. in the Memorial Room                |
| Wednesday, March 8 | City Council Meeting, 6:30 P.M. in the City Council Chambers                                      |
| Thursday, March 9  | Cemetery Commissioners, 12:00 noon in the City Manager's Conference Room                          |
|                    | Conservation Commission, 7:00 P.M. in the City Manager's Conference Room                          |

**ATTACHMENTS ...**

-  2017 Town Officers Education Conference

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT ...**

**Annual Report Reminder**

The Annual Report was released two weeks ago. It is available on line at:  
<http://www.montpelier-vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/4057>

Hard copies are available at City Hall, the Kellogg-Hubbard Library, the Montpelier Senior Activity Center, each Public School and the Recreation Department.

## **CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY REPORT**

**March 3, 2017**

**Page 2**

The decision was made two years ago to reduce the number of printed copies, eliminate home delivery and use the online capability. If people have difficulty obtaining a report, please contact the City Manager's Office, and we will assist you.

### **Assistant City Manager**

The vacant position has been posted with an April 3<sup>rd</sup> deadline. In one week since posting, I have received 25 applications, many of which are quite strong. Applicants thus far hail from 11 different states. 11 are from Vermont with 6 being Montpelier residents. 17 are male and 8 are female. The position is posted on the City's website and was advertised in the *Times-Argus* and *Seven Days* newspapers. It is also listed in newsletters and websites of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT), New Hampshire Municipal Association and Maine Municipal Association.

### **Parking Strategy**

Still on target for the March 22 meeting.

### **Econo Lodge**

I will have a recommended course of action to you for the March 22 meeting.

### **Northfield Street Construction Project**

Documents and information related to this project are available here:  
<http://www.montpelier-vt.org/925/Northfield-Street-Reconstruction>

### **Downtown Paving Project**

Information about this project is available here: <http://www.montpelier-vt.org/929/State-Paving-Project-STP29501>

### **Legal**

*Illuzzi vs City, et al:* Status conference requested by Court was convened on Monday the 27<sup>th</sup>. It was concluded that this case will proceed to trial.

## **CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY REPORT**

**March 3, 2017**

**Page 3**

### **WEEKLY REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS ...**

#### **Planning and Community Development Department Highlights**

##### ***Zoning Bylaws and River Hazards Bylaws Update***

On Monday, February 27, the Planning Commission completed their work on the Draft Zoning Bylaws and Draft River Hazard Bylaws. They have instructed staff to make all the changes and return to the Commission on March 13<sup>th</sup> with a final version to vote on to the City Council for consideration. We look forward to presenting this draft to Council at the March 22<sup>nd</sup> City Council meeting.

Copies of the draft regulations and associated maps will be uploaded as they are completed to the City website. They can be found online by going to the City website and clicking on the "how do I" link. The regulations are found under the "View" tab to the right. A short-cut is: <http://www.montpelier-vt.org/833/Proposed-Zoning-and-Subdivisions-Regulat>

#### **Public Works Department**

##### ***Follow-up to Questions Raised at 2-22-17 Council Meeting***

During the City Council's regular meeting of February 22<sup>nd</sup>, two questions were asked concerning the 2017 construction projects. One was in regard to the sufficiency of public notice for the waiver of the Noise Ordinance to permit night time construction. The second was about the impact on the net quantity parking spaces in the downtown area and on Spring Street as a result of either revisions to the ordinances or alterations necessitated by the application of required parking standards.

Question: What methods were used to notify property owners and tenants about the downtown construction projects and specifically concerning the night time construction noise?

Answer: Two project public meetings were held with attendance relatively high at both: December 6<sup>th</sup> for the downtown projects (Rte. 12 and Business Rte. 2); and February 15<sup>th</sup> for Northfield Street. The notices were posted on the City's web site, face book, Front Porch Forum and listed as upcoming meetings in the City Manager's Weekly Reports. A mass mailing was issued via the USPS to give notice using an informational flyer which included a note about proposed night-time construction. A follow-up letter was sent to give specific notice about night work

## CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY REPORT

March 3, 2017

Page 4

construction proposed and the waiver of the Noise Ordinance being considered by the City Council at the February 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> meetings. These letters were sent to all potentially impacted property owners using a list obtained from the City Assessor's Office. We have concluded that receipt of notices by tenants cannot be confirmed. However, The Times Argus ran a story about the projects on February 24<sup>th</sup> which includes mention of night construction and the lack of feedback from the public.

We are now working with a public outreach coordinator, Francine Perkins, FRP Enterprises under contract with both VTrans and the City. She will assist with connecting with tenants through personal visits, door knob flyers and by all available means. To ensure all residents who may be impacted by night-time construction noise receive advance notice and know who to contact with concerns, a [follow-up flyer](#) is being sent (see attached). Consistent with our overall communications plan, the flyer will identify Francine as the point-of-contact because it's important that we communicate through a single coordinated spokesperson. The mailing will utilize a general list of all known mail-able addresses which was purchased by the Clerk's Office, also known as an occupancy file. This list has now been refined into a workable database and sorted by our IT staff because previous use resulted in a high volume of returned undeliverable letters. Informational flyers about the downtown, and the Rte. 12 projects in general, will also be included in the April water bill mailing.

Question: Considering the remarking of parking spaces as a result of the downtown paving projects and the impacts from parking ordinance amendments as approved, what is the net change in the overall number of parking spaces (metered / non-metered)?

Answer: See the [attached table](#) describing the existing available parking spaces and the number of spaces post construction including impacts resulting from the Parking Ordinance amendments. In summary, there will be a reduction of 4 metered parking spaces on State and Main Streets, but an additional 3 ADA accessible parking spaces will be developed on State Street giving us a net loss of one space. Also, 6 spaces are being removed on Bailey Avenue to develop an uphill bike lane.

In regards to Spring Street where on-street parking demand is typically high, the ordinance amendment was presented as a "housekeeping" measure to update the ordinance consistent with allowed parking as currently marked. The result is a net gain of 7 parking spaces compared to the former ordinance. We believe the development of the roundabout was the primary reason more parking spaces are now available but the ordinance was not updated.

## **CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY REPORT**

**March 3, 2017**

**Page 5**

### ***Northfield Street Rock Fall Hazard***

On the morning of February 23<sup>rd</sup>, DPW was notified that a sizable (10") rock had rolled down from the embankment landing on the sidewalk near 29-31 Northfield Street. An inspection was then conducted and it was found that thawing ground conditions with saturated soils had weakened the support for some exposed weathered ledge located precariously above the sidewalk. This 15' – 20' tall embankment along the westerly side of the street consists of natural ledge outcroppings with an overburden of soil and vegetation flanked on the northerly and southerly ends by stone walls. A small stone wall 2'-3' in height located at the northerly side of the ledges was also found to be partially collapsing.

Considering the potential risk to pedestrians, a concrete barrier was immediately ordered to be placed on the sidewalk below the deteriorating ledge where loose rocks were found; the barrier serves as temporary protection leaving a small section of sidewalk available for continued pedestrian use.

The VTrans District Transportation Administrator (DTA) was asked to provide technical assistance because Northfield Street is a Class One, State & Federal Aid Highway. The DTA arranged a site visit with the VTrans Geologist and that meeting was conducted on Monday, the 27<sup>th</sup>. The geologist agreed the ledge posed a risk of additional isolated failure and a more in-depth review and assessment should be conducted. Risk to the traveling public is minimal due to the low height of the ledges and shape of the rocks. A written assessment plan will be prepared by the geologist which we will use to obtain proposals from qualified consultants. The consultant will be asked to provide remediation recommendations likely to consist of hand scaling of loose and weathered ledge rock, removal of small tree growth along the crest of the ledge slope, and the use of specialized soil stabilization measures. It's also possible ledge support systems may also be needed.

As an interim protective safety measure, a 4' tall chain link fence will be installed at the base of the ledge slope along the back of the sidewalk to capture and break up the energy of rocks that may break free. This fence will replace the concrete barrier and will be installed as soon as the contractor is able to schedule it. The fence will remain in place until the danger of rock falls has been abated.

Note, this issue will not impact the schedule of the planned reconstruction of Northfield Street including replacement of the sidewalk in this area. The small deteriorating wall noted above will be partially disassembled and a determination will be made as to whether or not it should be replaced, but this work will not be part of the reconstruction project.

# CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY REPORT

March 3, 2017

Page 6

## *Northfield Street Reconstruction*

Final Vermont ANR-required permit matters are now in the process of being addressed and resolved. A determination has been made that certain storm water quality measures must be developed to address the proposed new impervious area resulting from widening of the road to add room for an up-hill bike lane. The water quality measures will primarily consist of grass lined treatment swales within the road right-of-way. The project remains on schedule for construction contract advertising by March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Construction bids will be received, but a contract will not be considered for award unless the bonds are approved on Town Meeting Day.

## *Taylor Street – Parking Lot Re-opening*

With favorable weather conditions, the contractor was able to improve production and work is now wrapping up on the retaining wall project. Backfilling the new wall is nearly complete, and the contractor will be addressing the remaining contaminated soils tasks including disposal and removal. At this time, it appears the parking lot will be re-opened early next week and possibly on Monday if clean-up, etc. goes well.

## *March 11<sup>th</sup> is the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of 1992 Flood*

For those of us living or working here in Montpelier, it's a date we still remember well. Thankfully, those extreme circumstances precipitating that awful day have not occurred since, although we've certainly had some close calls.

## **Note from City Manager**

Thank you to the Council Members who will be leaving municipal service. You have made a great contribution to our community.

Thank you, as well, to all the candidates for office. It's wonderful to see people stepping up to serve the city. Please feel free to contact me at any time with any questions about the city government, particularly those two or three of you who will have to attend your first meeting on Wednesday night, the day after the election!

For the candidates, all meeting material is available on the website. We can also send you the material directly – simply contact the City Manager's office. 802-223-9502

# CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY REPORT

March 3, 2017

Page 6

## TOPICS FOR UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS ...

March 8	Organizational Meeting Elect Officers Rules of Procedure Ethics Policy Discussion of Goal-setting Process Discussion re: Orientation/Retreat
March 22	Zoning Parking Strategy Building Code Tax Stabilization/Development Agreement Planning Commission Appointment Vermont Mountaineers proposal
April 12	Zoning Approval of Goals -tentative
April 26 (school vacation week)	Zoning



William J. Fraser

City Manager