

**CITY OF MONTPELIER
CAPITAL CITY OF VERMONT**

City Manager's Weekly Report – 12/21/2018

City offices will be closed on Tuesday, December 25th

UPCOMING MEETINGS...

Wednesday, January 2 City Council, 6:30 PM, Council Chambers

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT...

1 Taylor Street/Recreation Path -- unchanged

Construction continues. Timeframe for 1 Taylor Street project:

- Weather tight building – March 22, 2019
- Substantial Completion – Aug. 15, 2019
- Project Completion – Aug. 22, 2019

Budget

You have the budget books for holiday reading – enjoy! [The worksheet and books are on the website for the public to review.](#) We'll be prepared to discuss the police officer, fire overtime, parks/trees staffing and any other issues on January 2nd.

Use of Area on the East Side of the North Branch

I have reached out to interested parties for a discussion and will be following up with suggested dates. My plan is to have the working group identify options along with pros and cons of each option. We'll then hold a public session when people can offer comments on the alternatives. After that session, the small group will prepare a summary for the city council to consider.

Public Parking Garage

Our team is focused on meeting the conditions of the DRB approval in anticipation of receiving a permit. In addition, we are preparing for our Act 250 (abbreviated version for a designated downtown) hearing on Jan. 16. We are pushing forward with our schedule since extended delays could add costs which might make either the hotel or garage less financially feasible.

French Block – unchanged

Downstreet Housing & Community Development and Housing Vermont are holding a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to celebrate the rejuvenation of the French Block Apartments in Downtown Montpelier. The event is on January 3rd:

4:00 - 5:00 PM: Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Memorial Room of City Hall, 39 Main Street, Montpelier

Hear from community leaders and project partners, and watch the ribbon fall!

5:00 - 7:00 PM: Community Celebration and Open House

French Block Apartments, 34 Main Street, Montpelier

The public will be allowed to browse through the halls and all 18 apartments to admire the renovations. Lite-fare will be provided by local restaurants!

Legal – unchanged

The City's petition to enter the proceedings concerning GMP's re-construction of the Marshfield Dam has been

approved. We are now a party to the matter, for the purpose of monitoring the information in case there is anything relevant to the city.

Legal – unchanged

In the appeal by Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) of the City's WWTF discharge permit, the matter has now been fully briefed by all parties, including motions for summary judgment, responses thereto and reply filings. In its submissions to the Court, the City supported the legal briefs filed by the State of Vermont, Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and also filed a separate reply memo addressing the issue of whether the discharge permit authorized an increase in phosphorous, as CLF has claimed. A hearing before the Environmental Court was held on July 30th to present oral arguments on the motions. We are now awaiting rulings on the motions and summary judgement.

WEEKLY REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS ...

Fire

With the predicted heavy rain for the next 24 hours, this is a reminder to keep an eye on basements that are prone to flooding. If you do experience basement flooding, DO NOT enter the water because of the possibility of electric shock. Instead, call 911 or the Fire Department directly at 229-4913. We would all like to wish everyone a very happy and fire safe holiday.

Planning & Community Development

We are happy to announce that the French Block Housing project received its final Certificates of Occupancy from the City for 18 new units of affordable housing downtown. This project has been a goal of the city for decades as the space had been vacant for more than 70 years. We would like to thank Downstreet Housing & Community Development for undertaking such a challenging and critical project. We look forward to welcoming our new residents to the City in 2019.

Community Justice Center

The MCJC is excited to announce that we will be showing Bess O'Brien's latest film "Coming Home" on Friday, January 4, at 6:30 in City Hall. The movie provides an in-depth look at the work of Circles of Support and Accountability (COSAs) in Vermont and features a Montpelier COSA. "Coming Home" focuses on five core members as they navigate the challenges of reentering their communities after incarceration. The film highlights volunteers, staff and core members of the Barre, Montpelier, St. Johnsbury and Hartford CJsCs.

Bess O'Brien is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and theater producer whose work focuses on pressing social issues. Her films shed light on the human stories behind opiate addiction, foster care, domestic violence, eating disorders, incarceration, and bullying.

Public Works

Shared Use Path Project: Granite Street – Gallison Hill Road:

The contractor, J. Hutchins, Inc. is making plans for the water main relocation on Barre Street which must be completed before the new retaining wall can be constructed. A pre-construction meeting was conducted which included the city engineer and the water/sewer division foreman to prepare for the water main work including staff support, establishment of work conditions and expectations, shut down procedures and emergency contingencies. This work will be scheduled during the 1st or 2nd week of January. Other work planned for the next couple of weeks includes construction of new drainage systems, retaining wall preparation and other miscellaneous tasks.

One Taylor Street Transit Center, housing project & Shared Use Path:

The contractor will continue to work on the new shared use path bridge with work taking place on both sides of the river. The steel foundation piles have been driven allowing work on the concrete abutment and wing walls to begin. Work on the replacement storm water culvert is wrapping up for the season and the contractor will make the final connection to Main Street in the spring. For the transit center, the contractor has tented the building structure which is being heated to allow temperature sensitive work to proceed.

Water Resource Recovery Facility

The contract with Energy Systems Group for the Water Resource Recovery Facility Organics-to-Energy project will be signed today. The contract terms were reviewed and revised by the City Attorney and Department of Public Works staff and now includes eligibility provisions for USDA Rural Development loan and grant funding. New equipment purchases will begin early next year with construction anticipated to start in mid-April, 2019.

Miscellaneous

The Gallison Hill Road water leak on the service line for Capital City GMC is proving to be elusive to locate and repair. An excavation at the connection to the City water main was performed on Tuesday but no issues were found. The contractor is now making plans to excavate on the river bank as a last effort to find the problem before determining whether the entire service will need to be replaced.

The dramatic change in weather with rain and a forecast for a return to below freezing temperatures, the street division is working to clear the numerous puddles around town and open drainage channels to reduce the potential for ice formation. The crew will be on standby over the weekend and prepared to respond to the predicted flash freeze expected on Sunday.

Community Services

MSAC Holiday Hours

There will be no MSAC programs, classes or drop-in groups Dec. 22 – 30. MSAC will be open on Dec. 31 and closed on Jan. 1. There will be no FEAST Together Meals Dec. 25, 28 or Jan. 1.

Rec Center Holiday Hours

There will be no Sunday Basketball on Dec. 23 and 30. The gym on Barre Street will be closed on Dec. 24, 25, 31 and Jan. 1. There will be normal open gym hours Dec. 26 – Dec. 29.

Park Trails

Trail conditions are fairly good as of Thursday rain but predicted rain on Friday is likely to cause park trails to become unfriendly in many spots. Until we get some snow coverage, please use proper foot gear!

Fat Tire Bikes

The Park Commission has just given permission for a trial year for fat tire mountain bikes to use some of the North Branch River Park trails. While there is some concern about this from park goers, a couple of things to keep in mind...

- 1) fat tire mountain biking is usually much slower than regular mountain biking
- 2) fat tire bikes have a surprising amount of traction and brakes; and their cyclists usually have more control than the average skier.

Trails signage will be added to indicate which trails are open for fat tire biking and an announcement will be made when the trails are officially open for use. We ask that no fat tire bikers use the trails before then. Fat tire bikers will be asked to yield to all other trail users. If this year is deemed a success, more trails may be opened in coming years. Look for a map on Parks webpage and/or Facebook page soon.

Many Thanks from MSAC

“Thank you” to the almost 180 MSAC Volunteers who have served throughout 2018 in a wide variety of ways from leading classes, trips and drop-in groups, to preparing and delivering meals, to preparing mailings, to helping in the office and with special events, to serving on committees and more! We are also grateful to the following city leaders who helped serve 90 of our volunteers at our annual recognition luncheon on December 12: City Manager Bill Fraser, Fire Chief Robert Gowans, Recreation Director Arne McMullen and Exec. Director of Montpelier Alive, Dan Groberg. Finally, thanks for another tasty and nutritious year of FEAST senior meal production by Good Taste Catering under the skilled leadership of Chefs Justin Turcotte and Michael Morse and in partnership with Central Vermont Council on Aging and other organizations and businesses and dozens of community volunteers.

“Thank you” to the over four dozen MSAC instructors (volunteer and paid) who have led classes in Fine and Culinary Arts, Humanities, Technology, Active Living, Wellness and more in 2018. Our members and staff are grateful for the professionalism, skill, talent, creativity, joy and energy you exhibit in your weekly classes here – many committing your time year-round to our lifelong learning and healthy aging programming. We know your service makes a difference in the lives of those in your classes!

And lastly, “Thank you” to Hunger Mountain Coop for contributing 75 holiday gift bags of food for area older adults. The bags were distributed to grateful households in the past week – including recipients of home delivered meals-- and met with great delight!

Still Space in Winter Classes!

Some winter classes, most scheduled to begin the week of Jan. 7, still have space. A complete list of classes and descriptions can be found at: https://www.montpelier-vt.org/winter_classes. Please stop by the office at 58 Barre Street to register in person or go online to register. After January 4, a late fee of \$10 applies! Classes at risk of being cancelled if enrollment doesn't pick up include: Beginning Harmonica, Feldenkrais at Westview (chairs/standing), Yoga and Pilates in Middlesex and Worcester (now open to age 18+!), Somatic Movement Series (also for age 18+), Self-Care Sampler, Yoga for Stroke Survivors, Advanced Voice, Insights into Conflict, Tennis and Zumba.

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UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS (TENTATIVE)...

Jan 2	Budget Finance/CM	Jan 9	Budget public hearing CM Warning Public hearing CM Riverfront Access plan P&D Community Indicators CM Investment Policy Finance Scooters ATCM Parking Ordinance DPW Social & Economic Justice Charge CM
Jan 24 (Thurs)	Budget public hearing CM Warning Public hearing CM Charter Public hearing CM Bond public hearing/necessity res. CM Approve warning CM Audit Report – Finance State's Attorney presentation Main/Barre Corridor Study DPW Committee appts: ATCM -Social & Economic Justice Advisory Committee -Investment Committee -Tree Board -Solid Waste Management Committee	Feb 13	Restructure revolving loan funds P&D Complete Ordinance review – 1 st , ATCM City Manager Review CM Voluntary rental inspection program P&D Tax Stabilization CM North Branch East plan
Feb 27	Main/Barre Implementation Plan DPW Ordinance review – 2 nd reading ATCM Sabin's Pasture Plan? CM	Mar 13	Organizational Meeting Livable Wage/Min wage ordinances CM Personnel Plan Open Meeting/Public Records



William Fraser
City Manager