

**CITY OF MONTPELIER
CAPITAL CITY OF VERMONT**

City Manager's Weekly Report – 1/18/2019

**City offices will be closed on Monday, January 21st in honor of
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

UPCOMING MEETINGS...

Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2018	Design Review Committee Meeting, 5:30 PM, City Council Chambers
Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2018	Development Review Board Meeting, 7:00 PM, City Council Chambers
Thursday, Jan. 24, 2018	City Council Meeting, 6:30 PM, City Council Chambers <i>Please note this is a Thursday, not the usual Wednesday night meeting</i>

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT...

1 Taylor Street/Recreation Path

Construction on this project remains on schedule. The Transit Center work is well underway. The first floor of the upper-floors housing segment of the project is underway. This week the team started putting in the abutments for the pedestrian bridge. The full schedule:

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

Budget

I will have a new presentation for the public hearing which reflects these new numbers. You will vote on a final budget for the ballot on Thursday.

Public Parking Garage

The Act 250 hearing was held on Wednesday night. The District Commission will issue a recess memo which outlines all remaining questions and information. We will have 30 days to respond. Other parties will have 15 days after our response to offer any comments. The Commission will determine then whether another hearing is needed. Once all evidence is closed, the Commission has 15 days to issue a decision. It's also possible that some people may contest party status determinations made by the commission.

The DRB appeal could add costs to both the hotel and garage projects. Any delays may also jeopardize other projects such as Confluence Park, the North Branch East property plans, bike lanes and other initiatives made possible through use of garage parking

River Ice Formation

With the formation of ice now covering the rivers in town, a freeze up ice jam occurred on Sunday the 13th near the confluence of the North Branch River. Freeze up jams occur when frazzle ice accumulates under the ice cover and attaches to the banks and river bottom. The North Branch rose to just below the action level with one basement experiencing minor flooding. The water receded later in the afternoon. Considering the formation of river ice and forecast for a period of extreme cold, the waste water treatment plant effluent by-pass system was activated on Tuesday to open a clear channel on lower State Street which will weaken the ice and mitigate the threat of both an ice release jam and freeze up jam where these obstructions more typically occur. The by-pass system will remain in operation until threat subsides.

Use of Area on the East Side of the North Branch

My advisory group is meeting again next week. Our current thinking is to make sure that we do not preclude a building opportunity, a park opportunity or any possible combination while undergoing a downtown planning effort to look at all properties and needs comprehensively rather than focusing on this one small parcel.

We also collectively understood that many of the options on the table were linked to the parking garage project and we will watch the appeal process closely.

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.

Legal

The DRB site plan and subdivision permits were appealed by a group of residents. Our attorneys have reached out to their attorney to learn more about the reason for the appeal and whether the issues being appealed are the same as those in this group's petition or raise additional concerns. Thus far they group has not chosen to meet with us or discuss issues. The appellant has to file a statement of their issues and matters of law after which the city can respond.

WEEKLY REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS ...

Fire

With the heavy snow predicted for this weekend it is very important to make sure all vents around your house stay clear of snow build up. This includes pellet stove vents as well as furnace vents. Blocked vents can cause a rapid buildup of Carbon Monoxide in your home. If you have neighbors with outside vents please remind them. If you are not sure about vents at your house, or are unable to clear them **CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT** and we will come and assist.

Also, with the predicted cold for Sunday night and Monday if you have pipes that are prone to freezing leave a faucet running slightly to prevent a freeze up. If you unfortunately do get frozen pipes **DO NOT TRY AND THAW WITH A TORCH** call a plumber or other assistance.

If you have elderly relatives or neighbors please check on them, if you have concerns or are unable to check on them call 911 and we will assist you.

Any question or concerns call the Fire Station at 229-4913 or Fire Chief Robert Gowans at 371-9633

Assessor

The sixteen 320 watt Lost Nation Theater "house lights" were replaced with 80 watt LED bulbs.

Public Works

Water Leaks:

This week the Water/Sewer division combatted 3 water leaks, two of them were on Hubbard Park Drive. The first leak was reported by 4 PM on Tuesday the 15th and the on call man was able to shut the water off by 6 PM and provided sand bag protection for 2 resident's basements. Catch basins were cleaned off to help drain water from the street. A crew could not be assembled to repair the leak immediately so the main was left off over night and crews started work early the next day. Water shut off notices were handed out to all affected homes before the crew left on Tuesday night. The repair made on Wednesday did not hold and water began to leak again before Thursday morning.

The crew repaired the leak a second time and water was turned back on in the afternoon on Thursday. (NOTE: ground frost depth was about 2.5' in the street) In accordance with State requirements, a precautionary boil water notice was issued to the affected residents and coliform sampling was performed late Thursday afternoon. We expect to lift the boil water notice at the end of day today (1/18/18) once the results have been received from the lab.

The second leak was detected on Granite Shed Lane at a former granite shed. The sprinkler line froze and ruptured inside the building resulting in a loss of approximately 400 gallons a minute. We believe the break occurred on Sunday the 12th which caused a significant strain on the treatment facility to maintain flow. The line is on a private service so it was isolated but a portion of the city's main is now shut off temporarily until the property owner is able to replace the ruptured valve.

One Taylor & Shared Use Path Project:

With the nice weather on Tuesday concrete was able to be poured into the bike path bridge abutment #1. Framing and panel installation continues on the building. Construction of site retaining walls to begin.

Shared Use Path Project Granite St. – Gallison Hill Road:

The contractor will be excavating the path section along Barre Street from its crossing near the Caledonia Spirits driveway to Old Country Club Road and hauling away excavated material. They will have flaggers, signage, etc. Additionally, due to the predicted storm and cold temperatures, they will not be working Monday.

The environmental remediation work was completed allowing the demolition of the house on Old Country Club Rd to proceed, which was completed on the 17th. They will begin using the site for material storage and staging next week.

DPW Winter Operations:

With the parking ban in effect the night of Monday the 14th, the city's streets division supplemented by the water/sewer division crew were able to remove snow from sections of the downtown area including portions of Elm St and all of Barre St. Daytime snow bank removal continued through the week to free up parking spaces in parking lots and open up narrow streets and make room for additional snow expected over the weekend.

We're anticipating the need for a two consecutive night snow removal operation during the week of the 21st and will then return to daytime snow removal operations once the crew has some rest. Given the forecast, we plan to implement the winter on-street on Saturday and we fully expect this will be a multi-night parking ban event.

Water Resource Recovery Facility:

The Organics to Energy project kickoff meeting was held this week. DPW staff met with the contractor, Energy Systems Group, to review scope, schedule and the equipment submittal process as well as grant funding conditions (if awarded). Over the next two weeks it is anticipated that the long lead time equipment will be ordered to allow for an early spring construction start.

Community Services

Tickets to Parent-Child Valentines Dance Now on Sale!

Tickets to the Parent-Child Valentines Dance are on sale and can be purchased at the Community Services Department Office located at 58 Barre Street. This year, the dance will take place on Tuesday, Feb. 12 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at Capital Plaza in downtown Montpelier. Early Bird pricing through Feb. 11! Prices currently: \$20/couple and \$5 for each additional guest. Day of ticket purchases are \$25/couple and \$7 for each additional guest.

February Day Camp Registration is Open

February break day camp is now accepting registration. This year, camp will run Feb. 25 – March 1, 7:45 am – 4:45 pm at Main Street Middle School. February Day camp provides youngsters with a well-balanced selection of activities to engage all kids and all interests; camp is supervised and staffed by a Director and qualified counselors. Pre-registration is required! The Montpelier Rec. Dept. is a licensed childcare provider and can accept state subsidy for eligible children – call 225-8699 and ask for Norma for more information. Deadline to register is Feb. 8 and no children will be enrolled in the camp after that date.

Additional Volunteers Welcome for 2019 Tax Clinic

Would you like to make a difference and help fill an important community need this winter? The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide clinic is happy to have additional volunteers to help with basic tax return preparation. The required training is available on line and experienced volunteers provide support. Additionally, they could use another greeter or two for the clinic hours, to help ensure that clients have the required identification and other documents, and to assist with the intake forms. If interested in learning more, please call coordinator, Georgia Valentine, at (802) 229-2928

Upcoming Blood Drive at MSAC

Friday, Feb. 1 from 1:00 – 6:00 pm, Red Cross will be having a blood drive at the Senior Center at 58 Barre Street. Did you know only 3% of Americans give blood? Now's a great time to give, especially you type Os out there! The Red Cross has issued an emergency appeal for blood donations, stating they have less than a three day supply—O-positive is the most transfused and O-negative (only 7% of Americans have this) can be given to anyone.

On Demand Micro Transit in Montpelier Being Explored: Help Needed

Would you like a local transit service that operated on your schedule rather than you operating on theirs? How about a transit service that could go where you need to go, not just where its route map takes it? It might be possible. The Sustainable Montpelier Coalition is exploring a new service that's called On Demand Micro Transit. It's a service that would be called when you need it through a computer app or a regular phone. It will pick up multiple people headed in the same direction, so it's a shared ride, not a taxi. It will be a lot more affordable than a taxi. But, to make this service a reality, we need some help. We will need people to survey current bus users and other older adults who don't yet use transit. To design the best future service, we need to find out what people want and what they would use in a more sustainable public transit system. If you would like to help with this fascinating project, please let staff know at the MSAC office by sharing your name and contact information. Sustainable Montpelier Coalition is hoping to do this research later in the winter, and your volunteer help will be crucial. We will keep you updated.

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UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS (TENTATIVE)...

Jan 24 (Thurs)	Budget public hearing CM Warning Public hearing CM Charter Public hearing CM Approve warning CM Audit Report – Finance State's Attorney presentation Farmers Market on State Street CM Committee appts: ATCM -Social & Economic Justice Advisory Committee -Investment Committee -Tree Board -Solid Waste Management Committee	Feb 13	Restructure revolving loan funds P&D Voluntary rental inspection program P&D Tax Stabilization CM Community Indicators - CM North Branch East plan CM Social Equity Committee Charge – CM City Manager Review CM Zoning Fixes – P & D
Feb 27	Main/Barre Implementation Plan DPW Charter Change PH - CM Zoning Fixes PH – P&D Scooters ATCM	Mar 13	Organizational Meeting Livable Wage/Min wage ordinances CM Personnel Plan Open Meeting/Public Records Complete Ordinance review –?? ATCM



William Fraser
City Manager