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**Town of Middlebury
Infrastructure Committee
Thursday, November 12, 2020
Meeting Minutes**

NOTE: Due to the need for separation to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus, the meeting was held remotely via video conferencing with participants.

Members Present: Heather Seeley, Candy McLaughlin, Judith Wiger-Grohs, Luther Tenny, Matt DeBisschop and Alternate Erik Remsen. Lindsey Fuentes-George entered the meeting later and Gary Baker was absent.

Staff Present: Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay, Accounting Services Manager Jackie Sullivan, Director of Public Works Planning Dan Werner, Director of Public Works Operations Bill Kernan and Recreation Superintendent Dustin Hunt.

Others Present: Judith Harris of Harris & Harris

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Chair Heather Seeley

2. Approval of Agenda

Wiger-Grohs moved to approve the agenda and DeBisschop seconded the motion. There were no changes to the agenda, so the agenda was approved as presented with 5 in favor, 2 absent.

3. Approval of October 22, 2020 Minutes

Tenny moved to approve the minutes of 10/22/20 and Wiger-Grohs seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with 4 in favor, 2 absent, 1 abstention (DeBisschop)

3. Citizen Comments

There were no Citizen Concerns.

4. Project Updates

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Police Department Reuse Project – Werner reported the paving and sidewalks are complete and the explosion safe building has been installed. He said the rough framing is done and the wiring was almost complete and the plumbing was being installed. He said they’re making good progress.

(Fuentes-George entered the meeting at this time.)

Downtown Sidewalks and Curbing – Dan said he met with Jamie Simpson of Green Mountain Engineering and they walked the area this week and they’ll be coming to us with a proposal to do this project.

Maple Street Storm Sewer/Rail Project – He said it was learned on Monday that the State was not doing the project this year and they’re trying to figure out when it will happen. He said this caused us to drop our portion of the project this coming spring, but we think the work can begin by next September, with the storm sewer portion starting earlier since that doesn’t conflict with the rail project. He said the project is being advertised now so we can go to bid this winter, since the COVID issue will drag things out and there are a lot of unknowns.

Seeley asked if the numbers from Kubricky Construction came in way higher than expected for the downtown sidewalks. Werner said it’s a \$175,000 project and he’s apprehensive to give it to someone without bidding, and the timing of it was fuzzy as to when they would be able to get it done.

DeBisschop asked what the project entailed. Werner said it was from Mill Street/Bakery Lane heading towards Merchants Row and would be granite/concrete curbs and concrete sidewalk, and there are some curbs by the Post Office, and some on the Town Green side of Main Street as well.

5. Radio Repeater for Public Works

Kernan said there had been problems with radio coverage in certain areas of town, so they had demoed various systems and looked at renting, but we ended up getting the old repeater from the Fire Department, which will be installed across the road from Public Works and this cost is for the installation.

Seeley pointed out the money was already approved by voters in last year’s Capital Improvements budget.

82
83 Tenny asked if the location would be impacted should Public Works be relocated.
84 Kernan said that if the adjacent property is acquired for the new Public Works facility,
85 then there would be no need to move it.
86
87 Wiger-Grohs moved to recommend the Selectboard approve the installation of the radio
88 repeater. DeBisschop seconded the motion. The motion was approved with 7 in favor.
89

90 **6. Public Works Building Project**

91
92 Werner introduced Judith Harris of Harris & Harris, who the Town has worked with for
93 many years on various building projects, and said she was here to give a brief review of
94 where we are with the Public Works Building Project.
95

96 Harris said this project began in the summer of 2015 when they reviewed the needs
97 assessment for both Public Works and the Police Department Reuse project, but the
98 reuse project was advanced due to the rapid deterioration of the former wastewater
99 buildings and the need to save them for reuse before they were beyond saving.

100
101 She said the current Public Works building is 13,300 s.f., and a program study
102 (including the pole building) indicated there was a shortfall of desired square footage of
103 about 10,000 s.f., so at that point they thought the target should be 23,000 s.f. She said
104 now, working with the current figures, they're looking at more like 25,000 s.f.
105

106 She said when looking at the condition of the current building they found things ranging
107 from code violations to environmental concerns, undersized areas for the number of
108 employees, interior traffic pattern issues, deteriorating architectural issues, storage
109 issues, no sprinkler system and the pole barn does not have a slab and now has roof
110 leaks.
111

112 She said the current site is 1.87 acres and with the amount of building space needed
113 and associated parking, they felt they should be looking at a site of around 4 acres.
114 She said there are rights-of-way on the existing property that would make expansion
115 difficult, if not impossible, and there are circulation issues for the maneuvering of
116 vehicles. She said the most prominent problem is that the location on RT 7 makes it
117 difficult to enter traffic and with the salt shed across the road, there are times when
118 vehicles have to cross 2 lanes of traffic to get there.
119

120 She said the salt shed on the east side of RT 7 is undersized by about 15% and was at
121 the end of its serviceable life in 2015, so we are now beyond that. She said this site is

122 4.8 acres, but a lot of it is steep ledge, which doesn't make expansion possible, and the
123 access drive is also very steep at 1:3, so they'll be looking at creating a second access.
124

125 She said the ideal would be to put these two properties together and the Foster
126 Brother's property to the north and east of the existing sand facility would probably be
127 the best one. She said they've had conversations with the Foster family about their
128 willingness to part with a 5-acre parcel that is not part of their prime-agriculture activity.
129 She said they've also spoken with Otter Creek Engineering and Town Planner Jennifer
130 Murray so we'd know what the constraints and limitations might be to this property as
131 talks continue with the Fosters.
132

133 Harris said they've added more detail to the program statement and are in the process
134 of doing block diagrams and what spaces are required for various needs, and the final
135 step would be to arrange these blocks on the site to see how the circulation would work
136 and how the access would work.
137

138 Wiger-Grohs asked about the removal of trees, and Harris said the site does not have
139 many trees on it, but there is a wooded area that separates this agricultural land from
140 the Town parcel where the Salt Shed is located. There is also a tree-line on the east
141 side of the property, above a wetland area. Wiger-Grohs said the Tree Committee's
142 EAB policy states two trees should be planted for every one removed. Harris said the
143 plan would definitely include adding trees back when they know what the building
144 placement will be.
145

146 Fuentes-George asked about the access to this property. Werner said there were a
147 couple of options, but they definitely want to keep the Route 7 access to the Salt Shed.
148 He said the second access might be from Boardman Street just east of Middlebury
149 Indoor Tennis facility, but this would mean extending Boardman Street, which currently
150 ends at the tennis facility entrance. Ramsay said the busy Route 7/Boardman Street
151 intersection would need to be examined early in the process, since traffic tends to
152 backup there at high traffic times.
153

154 Tenny said he did a quick estimate of cost based on 25,000 s.f. of structure, and
155 wondered if we were looking at a \$4-5 million dollar project, since this is a significant
156 amount of work. He said he used \$175/s.f. for his estimate. Harris said from the
157 building perspective the percentage of office space and maintenance garage is about
158 15,800 s.f., so the rest (9,200 s.f) would be covered slab, but she was unsure of land
159 value. Werner said he had not discussed price with the Fosters, but the piece of land
160 they sold to Rouse Tire that is roughly the same size, sold for around \$180,000. Harris
161 said once the building plan is completed, then they can work with Otter Creek

162 Engineering on the access part of it and add costs for other site development pieces to
163 it.

164
165 Seeley asked if we would be looking to sell our existing site, and Werner said
166 absolutely. Fuentes-George asked if we knew the value of it, and Werner said he
167 wasn't sure but thought many years ago there was an estimate of around \$300,000.

168
169 Wiger-Grohs said she'd like to minimize parking surfaces in favor of non-impervious.
170 Harris said the thought is to get as much equipment as possible undercover, so there
171 wouldn't be any sitting outside, and there wouldn't be a great need for a lot of parking
172 other than for staff and any visitors. She said it would be mostly circulation area that
173 we'd be looking at.

174
175 Werner said right now we're still just looking to see if everything will fit on this property
176 before looking into what costs will be.

177

178 **7. FY22 Capital Budget – Draft #2**

179

180 Seeley said the hope is to approve the Capital Budget today so it can move on to the
181 Selectboard. Ramsay went over the changes made from the first draft that was a total of
182 just over \$2 million dollars.

183

184 Ramsay said the \$200,000 in the budget for DPW site planning would be split over two
185 years, and the Water Department would contribute \$30,000 towards the site planning
186 since they're housed at DPW. This is a reduction of \$115,000 for FY22, she said. She
187 said the Library heating system will be installed in the summer of 2022, so they've
188 pushed \$485,000 to the next fiscal year, with the plan of presenting a bond vote at the
189 2022 Town Meeting for \$600,000. She said we've been planning on \$10,000 per year
190 for the Flood Resiliency Project, but the current estimate is \$6,500 per year. She said
191 that reduces the total Capital Improvements Budget to \$1,438,219.

192

193 Wiger-Grohs moved to recommend the Selectboard approve the FY22 Capital
194 Improvements budget for \$1,438,219. Tenny seconded the motion. The motion was
195 approved with 7 in favor.

196

197 **8. Committee Concerns**

198

199 Tenny asked how water and sewer revenues had been impacted by the COVID
200 impacts. Jackie Sullivan said they were down slightly, but she isn't seeing a big
201 difference.

202

203 Kernan mentioned that he's received several calls from Seymour Street Extension
204 about putting the STOP sign back up at the Pulp Mill Bridge, so that might be something
205 to think about since it would probably require ordinance amendments. Ramsay said the
206 Public Health and Safety Committee would be meeting in December so she'd mention it
207 to Chief Hanley, since they have several other ordinance changes to review.

208

209 The meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m. upon motion by McLaughlin, seconded by
210 DeBisschop.

211

212 The next meeting of the Infrastructure Committee will be Thursday, December 10, 2020
213 at 9:00 a.m.

214

215 Respectfully submitted,
216 Beth Dow

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