

**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
APRIL 5, 2011**

ATTENDANCE: Andy Conroy, Chairman; Laurel Lindstrom; Kelly Straniti;
Doug Hempstead; John Tobin; Nora King; Fred Bondi

STAFF: Hal Alvord, Director DPW

OTHER: Michael Ward; Bob Wagman; Jackie Lightfield;
Marybeth Becker

Chairman Conroy called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT

Public Input (visitors to the Committee meeting may speak to any item on the agenda. Comments shall be limited to no more than five (5) minutes per speaker.)

Mr. Michael Ward, 11 Rainbow Road, said he was a member and officer of the Norwalk Boat Club. He said the club was founded in 1912 and is coming up on its 100th anniversary. He said he is representing the Norwalk Boat Club with over 100 members and is requesting that the Committee reconsider its March 2011 recommended approval of the removal of the flock process dam. He said that during the May 1, 2007 Public Works Committee meeting, Director Hal Alvord spoke against removing dams after flooding occurred on the Five Mile River. Mr. Ward provided photographs of damage incurred on Princess Pines Road to provide evidence of what the removal of a dam did to properties downstream from the dam. He said that while the dam is privately owned, he understood that the owners did not have the funds available to repair it after the Army Corps of Engineers condemned it. The flock process dam is structurally sound and the removal of it would allow fish to swim further upriver. He also said that there are no engineering or environmental studies to show what would be impacted by the removal of this dam. He said he does not know if the removal of the dam would help or hurt the club, and they oppose the removal of it. He said the Norwalk Boat Club is sympathetic to environmental issues. He requested the Committee to reconsider their vote of March 2011 until a thorough review is done by the CT DEP, Corps of Engineers, and others or rescope the project to provide a fish ladder for migrating fish. He then provided pictures of storm damage incurred to the Princess Pines area, the 5 Mile River, and the Norwalk Boat Club's docks.

Mr. Robert Wagman, of 36 Morehouse Lane, said he was there at the request of neighbors who are concerned about the removal of the flock process dam in the 5 Mile River. He said some believe that the removal of the dam had caused flooding dating back to 2006/2007. He echoed the devastation of the property in the pictures that Mr. Ward showed. He said the area used to be a feeding ground, now it is a swamp. There is a combination of concern that the

removal of the dam might create the same condition, until a detailed professional study is performed that such removal cannot cause flooding and catastrophic damage. Also, he requested that the grant be used to study the issues cited above.

Ms. King asked Mr. Wagman if this was similar to what Mr. Jim Himes is doing. Mr. Alvord said this grant that the Council approved at the last meeting is not to remove the dam, but to do an analysis/study on the impact downstream. This will be done with a consultant the DEP applied for. Mr. Alvord said the dam is 75 ft. wide and 22 ft across. It is privately owned and now there are environmental issues surrounding it. He suggested that an analysis be conducted to determine the structural integrity of the dam. Mr. Ward said that the Norwalk Boat Club will fight to avoid losing the marina.

Some discussion followed regarding the language in the grant and the intention of the study, and it was agreed that the Committee would rescind the vote of March 2011.

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO RESCIND THE PREVIOUS AUTHORIZATION ON THE APPLICATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY GRANT FOR ENGINEERING AND DESIGN FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE FLOCK PROCESS DAM IN THE NORWALK RIVER, AND TO REQUEST THAT THE COMMITTEE GET MORE INFORMATION FROM THE REQUESTOR OF THIS PARTICULAR ITEM.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Jackie Lightfield, 21 Ann Street, spoke on the condition of Smith Street, saying that it had been closed a few years ago when the Pottery Building was taken down. She had done some research on why it had been closed, and the only emails she received back were to say that it was deemed unsafe by DPW Principal Engineer Dick Linnartz. Since then, the barricades have been moved, and a landscaper has leased the property and installed a landscaper's yard. That is not permitted use of the zoning. In addition, there are a lot of plants that need to be watered and fertilized, with potential runoff into the Norwalk River. This could potentially harm, and possibly close, the shellfish beds. She said that shellfish revenue numbers were down 25% last year based on the closing of the beds. A picture of an 18-wheel truck on Smith Street were provided by Marybeth Becker, who asked how an 18-wheeler filled with plants and shrubbery could be on a street that has been deemed unsafe.

Ms. King asked Mr. Alvord if he was aware of the situation, and if anything was being done about it. Mr. Alvord said it is not in his jurisdiction, and that a cease and desist order had been issued to Mr. DiScala, Penna, and Sara's Flowers. Mr. Conroy asked Mr. Alvord to give the Zoning Department a call. Some discussion took place on prior offenses and violations committed at the property, as well as illegal dumping on the street. Mr. Ward will provide Mr. Alvord with pictures of debris dumped on the street. It was agreed that Mr. Alvord will bring up the Smith Street repair situation at this week's meeting with Corporation Counsel and Redevelopment, and talk with Mr. Green to have the zoning enforcement officer follow-up with the Smith Street issues. Mr. Conroy confirmed that it was time to open up the road again, or it will become more of a mess. This will be followed up at the next meeting. Mr.

Alvord said the width of the road would have to be measured to see if both parking and travel would be allowed on the narrow road.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Norwalk transfer station (February report; March report to be provided at meeting).

Mr. Alvord explained that the February report is included in the package, which shows volume is down. He said that corrections were made to the March report, which are noted with asterisks. March numbers were down, also. Mr. Alvord said the lower volume numbers are due to the recession, and neighboring towns and cities are experiencing the same low volume. Mr. Hempstead mentioned that curbside recycling numbers are up.

2. Project updates – See attached project status sheet.

Bridges and Structures:

Mr. Hempstead asked about the overpass on East Rocks Road. Mr. Alvord said it will be May. Mr. Conroy asked if there will be a horrendous mess on their hands with bridge closings and street closings at the same time. Mr. Alvord said no. He said that the Cedar Street, Rampart, and Scribner bridges will be replaced as part of the I-95 widening project. This will be done in phases, and should take a little over a year for each one to be completed. Ms. King asked about the Westmere bridge final design, saying it should have been done by now. Mr. Alvord said that the public meeting will be held soon. He said there are many issues to work out with the neighbors, as well as safety issues. Ms. King suggested that the design meeting be set up soon.

Some discussion took place about the footbridge design, and what the timing is for the design concepts. Mr. Alvord said he has tried to reach out to Darien but has not heard anything. Mr. Alvord said he will give Ms. King a photograph of the pre-fab bridge design, and it is similar to the Silvermine footbridge design.

Drainage/Sewer Extension:

The chillers are on-track to be installed in City Hall.

Mr. Alvord said the contract has just been received back from the Law Department regarding Lockwood/Buckingham, and they sent it back with a few comments. Keeler Brook won't be done until next year. Some funds may be able to be appropriated to the Keeler Brook project.

Traffic:

Mr. Alvord said the correction to the delamination of the S-turn on Highland will be done shortly. He said the pavement was done 15 years ago, and the problem could be in the mix with the asphalt. This will be rectified to avoid future problems.

Ms. King said she received a letter that property in her neighborhood will be dug up as part of an artifact study. Mr. Alvord said there will be a public hearing on April 13, 2011.

Ms. Straniti spoke about the left turn signal from Ponus Road to New Canaan Avenue, saying that it is an 8-second green light. It can take three lights to make the left turn. Mr. Alvord said he will look into it.

It was mentioned that Mayor Moccia will be holding a press conference at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 7, 2011 to address potholes and paving. Ms. King urged everyone to attend if possible.

Roads:

Mr. Hempstead asked where the pothole patrols are. Mr. Alvord said he has as many crews out as possible, depending on staff, which varies daily. He said that three teams are out in one day. Mr. Hempstead suggested he put more crews out if possible. Mr. Tobin mentioned the curb damage done by snowplows, and Mr. Alvord said that the curbs aren't scheduled to be repaired until June.

3. Additional information items.
 - a. Review flock dam removal grant.

BUSINESS PORTION

1. Approve the Minutes of the Public Works Committee meeting of Tuesday, March 1, 2011.

The change to the minutes of Tuesday, March 1, 2011 is as follows:

On page 5, change the first motion from **“MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. CONROY)”** to **“MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY”**.

**** MR. TOBIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2011.**

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (BONDI).**

- 2a. Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an Agreement with Sealcoating, Inc. for Project No. PM 2011-3, Proposed Crack Sealing at Various Locations, for a sum not to exceed \$181,300.00.

2b. Authorize the Director of Public Works to Issue Orders on Contract to Sealcoating, Inc. for Project No. PM 2011-3, Proposed Crack Sealing at Various Locations, for a sum not to exceed \$18,130.00.

Account No. 0911 4021 5777 C0021

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH SEALCOATING, INC. FOR PROJECT NO. PM 2011-3, PROPOSED CRACK SEALING AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$181,300.00.**

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS TO ISSUE ORDERS ON CONTRACT TO SEALCOATING, INC. FOR PROJECT NO. PM 2011-3, PROPOSED CRACK SEALING AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$18,130.00.
ACCOUNT NO. 0911 4021 5777 C0021**

Ms. King asked how the location of the cracks is determined. Mr. Alvord said it is based on an annual assessment of the pavement condition by the consultant.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

NEXT PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING:

Tuesday, May 3, 2011 7:00 p.m.
Room 101, Norwalk City Hall

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Marr
Telesco Secretarial Services