

TOWN OF HOLLISTON

SELECT BOARD

June 20, 2023
7:00PM

Town Hall
703 Washington Street

Present: John Cronin, Chair; Tina Hein, Vice Chair; Ben Sparrell, Clerk.

Also Present: Travis Ahern, Town Administrator; Kevin Conley, Greg Ferrick, Tom Chipman, Karen Apuzzo Langton, Paul Langton, Holliston residents; Mark Kaferlein, Building Inspector and Matthew Stone, Holliston Police Chief.

At 7:00pm J. Cronin called the meeting to order.

LOWLAND STREET FOLLOWUP DISCUSSION FROM JUNE 5, 2023:

T. Ahern met with various Town Public Safety & Public Works staff in an effort to come up with various recommendations on how to address the possibility of installing a barrier on Lowland Street at the intersection of the Rail Trail. T. Ahern presented a printout of the results which include considerations of such a closure, materials needed and communication tools for signage.

Kevin Conley, 44 Cranberry Lane took the opportunity to read a recap of what was discussed at the June 5, 2023 meeting. He noted there are four egresses to the Lowland Industrial Park, one of which is Whitney to Cranberry Lane. K. Conley stated that the proposed closure of Lowland Street at that location will negatively impact those residents on Cranberry Lane and asked that the entrance be closed to trucks only. He also added that better signage was needed regarding the restrictions for Heavy Commercial Vehicles.

Greg Ferrick, 36 Cranberry Lane, noted that he supports the residents in the Lowland Street neighborhood in their efforts to address the problem, however he feels the addition of the barriers may cause a negative reaction, another problem.

Tom Chipman, 53 Jeffrey Ave, 116 Stagecoach Road, business owner and resident stated that there is often a backup of truck traffic in the Industrial Park at the Lista Location. Vehicles often cut through surrounding parking lots, creating a safety issue. T. Chipman also noted that regarding the issue of property damage, wires being pulled from residents homes there are wiring codes which should be addressed and the wires/lines need to be raised. T. Chipman also suggested installing a traffic light on Route 16 at Whitney Avenue, as it is very difficult to make a left hand turn out of the Industrial Park and is an ongoing safety issue.

Karen Apuzzo-Langton and Paul Langton, 100 Woodland Street, stated that on three separate occasions they have had wires taken down by trucks, which has resulted in major disruption of their daily life including revenue as her husband works from home. K. Apuzzo-Langton stated that over the years she has engaged in conversation with business owners in the Industrial Park

in an effort to encourage participation in an effort to rectify the problem. She also noted that the current signage is not adequate in deterring truck traffic. Both K. Apuzzo-Langton and P. Langton expressed their ongoing frustration. P. Langton advocates a permanent solution to the problem and supports having one egress to the Industrial Park.

Dr. Ken Szajda, 676 Fiske Street, stated that if the proposed barrier was installed it would impact the residents in his neighborhood who use Lowland Street to gain access to Route 16.

Dr. Szajda suggested the use of Vehicle Height Barriers and added that he has gathered information he will be happy to share with the Select Board.

Dr. Liz Theiler, 17 Norland Street supports removing truck traffic from the neighborhood and voiced her concern regarding trucks crossing the Rail Trail.

Lynn Weaver, 69 Woodland added her support to a proposed barrier for trucks only, she agrees that better signage should be installed as well.

Linda Nielson, 46 Norland Street, would like to see additional sidewalks installed in the area and asked if there might be other ways to modify the Woodland/Lowland Streets intersection that would deter truck traffic.

Pam Zicko, 180 Fiske Street, stated that she too uses Lowland Street often and has noticed that traffic on Fiske Street has increased over the years as well.

Ellen Troland, 101 Marilyn Street, voiced concern that in closing off Lowland Street at the Rail Trail will cause more traffic at the Lowland/Fiske end, and asked could closing off both ends to truck traffic be considered.

Anne Marie Dorning, 9 Timberledge Road, stated that she lived in the area for many years and would like to see a solution to a problem that has been around for years. She supports the installation of a barrier.

Tom Chipman, 53 Jeffrey Ave/116 Stagecoach Road, offered his services to liaison with Eversource to raise the wires as part of the solution to the ongoing property damage that has been occurring. J. Cronin accepted T. Chipmans offer with much gratitude.

Keefe Bailey, 17 Lowland Street, stated that there are other various wires that are connected to homes other than those that pertain to Eversource and many of those hang even lower, the problem will still continue. K. Bailey noted that Google Maps need to be addressed if and when changes are made as drivers rely heavily on it for their routes. K. Bailey added that cars often speed down Lowland Street and feels it is especially problematic at the Rail Trail crossing.

Karen Apuzzo-Langton, 100 Woodland Street, stated that the issue at hand is "want vs. need". Residents need to have electricity and also to rely on the Town for 24/7 infrastructure. Trucks are the problem, is there a way to resolve this issue while remaining business friendly.

B. Sparrell read several emails from residents:

Dan Alfred, 315 High Street, is opposed to closing Lowland Street and asked if there has been a traffic study on the impact it would have on other roadways in Town. D. Alfred suggests having a TAC (Traffic Advisory Committee) recommendation which would then be brought to Town Meeting for a vote.

Mary Greendale, 198 Highland Street, suggested blocking off Jeffrey Avenue at Lowland Street with barriers. T. Ahern commented that there are three businesses that could be impacted if that was implemented.

Keith Buday, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Finance & Operations noted that if Lowland Street was closed it would negatively impact the bus schedules. There would be the need of an additional bus which would also have a financial impact. He added that there is a Daycare located on Lowland Street that currently uses the services of the school buses that would no longer be able to do so.

Jack McCarthy, 48 Mechanic Street, stated that he thought by closing off Lowland Street it would send a negative message to businesses in the area.

T. Ahern presented several types of gates and signage to the DOT and Town Counsel for a preliminary review. A Pipe Gate would have an electrical component so that it could be opened and closed remotely and would be left open during weather events. A Height Gate, one which is similar to those found on Storrow Drive is designed to stop trucks that are of a certain height. The price range of such gates starts in the \$60,000 range. The Town currently owns four electronic message boards and may find need to purchase or rent additional units, including purchasing signage defining "Local Delivery's".

The DOT, Department of Transportation, made a recommendation to make the section of Lowland Street to Jeffrey Ave a "one-way" in that direction. The Select Board, unanimously, did not support that idea. T. Ahern stated that the authority to install a barrier is within the Select Boards purview. A Public Forum may be held under Chapter 82, section 32A., however does not need DOT approval. Abutters will be notified if and when such a forum would be held.

B. Sparrell noted that large commercial trucks appear to be the biggest issue and that any amount of property damage is unacceptable. His concern regarding a barrier is the likelihood of vehicles getting "stuck". He supports a Heighted Gate as well as additional and better signage.

T. Hein would like to see the Select Board be mindful in the decision process. Does not want to see resident vs. resident vs. business. She would like to evaluate both temporary and permanent solutions.

J. Cronin agreed that a barrier and additional and better signage is needed as part of the solution. He proposes scheduling a Public Hearing to discuss the road closure/barrier. J. Cronin added that he supports finding a solution that allows cars access to Lowland Street. On behalf of the Select Board J. Cronin also accepted Dr. Szjada offer to assist with research of various barriers.

The Select Board will circle back in a week or so time with further information and determine when to schedule a Public Hearing on the matter.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT – RATE REVIEW:

Holliston Building Inspector, Mark Kaferlein joined the meeting via zoom with a proposed fee

and payment schedule, which will increase the fee per inspection as well as the inspector pay amount. M. Kaferlein stated that the last increase to the inspector pay schedule was in 2014 and this will bring Holliston more in line with comparable Towns. He also added that he was unable to determine when the last time there had been any change to the inspection fee schedule.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the updated Town of Holliston Plumbing and Gas Fee Schedule as presented effective July 1, 2023, and further to increase the rate of payment from \$27 to \$35 per inspection, also effective July 1, 2023. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS:

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve/appoint the list of those Public Servants under the direction of the Holliston Select Board per the Towns' bylaws including but not limited to selected employees, special employees, inspectors and various Board and Committee members. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

WARRANTS:

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$3,327,307.74. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

B. Sparrell read a memo confirming that the on Monday July 3, 2023 trash and recycling will be picked up as normal, then Tuesday through Friday pickup will be delayed by one day.

T. Hein attended the Metrowest Visitor's Bureau annual meeting with the Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director K. Buckley. The focus of the meeting pertained to incentives for attracting tourism to Holliston and also helpful information for the future Economic Development Coordinator.

J. Cronin attended the retirement party this past Saturday June 17, 2023 for various Fire Fighters. He noted that their service totaled 253 years.

COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

T. Ahern stated that next week the Select Board will be holding a joint meeting with the Finance Committee on Monday June 26, 2023 at 6:30pm to appoint a new FinCom member. There are currently three interested candidates for the one open seat.

The 9 Green Street project has been awarded a \$10,600 grant for the installation of EV Stations. BarryDunn met with Envision Future Holliston last week with an update. The information will be posted online shortly. They will schedule a Public Forum after Labor Day.

The first of three Public Forums for the proposed Downtown Sewer Project was held on June 14, 2023. The remaining two will be held in July and August.

The Economic Development Committee position will be posted in the next several week.

A request has been made by the Town to the Department of Environmental Protection to obtain permission to begin testing at 20 Cross Street while it is still in Land Court. The Marshall Street Solar Project should be ready to start operations in the next month, July 2023.

BOARD BUSINESS:

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve and execute the Metrowest Regional Transit Authority Contract Extension as presented. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve and execute the Contract Extension for Holliston Police Chief Matthew Stone for Fiscal Year 2024 – 2026. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0. Each Select Board member took the opportunity to express their appreciation for all the positivity Chief Stone brings to the Department and his dedication to the Town.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 19, 2023 as written. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the contract for R.M. Pacella Inc. for curbing and sidewalk installation for FY24, July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 not to exceed an amount of \$543,087. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve a Seasonal Common Victuallers License for Arcadian Farm, located on 258 Norfolk Street effective today, June 20, 2023 – December 31, 2023. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

The Select Board reviewed a letter of support to the Planning Board regarding the property located at 555 Hopping Brook Drive. The letter acknowledges the ongoing review of the various proposed projects at that site which have been brought to the Planning Board over the past several years and offers to work with them regarding any future proposals should they so choose. Each Select Board member signed the letter.

During the meeting Gene Muller, 76 Courtland Street asked that a copy of the letter be sent to him via email. T. Ahern sent the letter upon the request.

OTHER BUSINESS:

T. Hein stated she will use the preliminary data from BarryDunn regarding strategic planning when developing her goal as Planning Board Liaison.

J. Cronin asked that each Board member be prepared to discuss FY24 Goals and Liaison assignments at the next meeting.

J. Cronin stated that the contract for the Sustainability Coordinator has been reviewed and the Town will be posting for that position. He added that the current Sustainability Coordinator is welcome to apply.

At 9:30pm B. Sparrell made a motion to adjourn. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Driscoll

Approved__08-07-23