



Lowell City Council

Transportation SC Minutes

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: March 30, 2021
Time: 5:00 PM
Location: Zoom/Remote Participation

PRESENT:

Present on Roll Call were Chairman Elliott, C. Samaras and C. Conway. Also present Manager Donoghue, Eric Slagle (Inspectional Services), C. Chau, C. Drinkwater, C. Nuon, Kara Keefe-Mullen (Asst. City Mgr.), Craig Thomas (DPD) and Christine Clancy (DPW).

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

C. Elliott called the meeting to order.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

C. Elliott noted the two motions to be discussed regarding Master Plan and bridge construction updates. C. Elliott noted discussion would begin with bridge updates and introduced Ms. Clancy. Manager Donoghue noted motions responses sent to the subcommittee. Ms. Clancy noted that the Lord Overpass was in the third phase of a five phase project and projected completion date would be winter of 2023. C. Elliott commented on the traffic patterns and signalization in that area and noted possible ways to improve it. C. Conway noted the traffic issues at Appleton Street. C. Samaras noted that if traffic patterns change the lighting should adapt as well. C. Samaras noted that line striping should be improved. C. Chau noted that outbound traffic is more congested and added signage is needed. C. Nuon commented that improved signage would assist drivers with lane identification. Ms. Clancy noted that there were three more bridges remaining under the Tiger Project. Ms. Clancy made reference to the Central Street Bridge and indicated that both lanes may be opening towards end of June. C. Elliott questioned who had jurisdiction over the Tiger Project. Ms. Clancy noted the different entities involved with each project. C. Elliott noted that MassDOT appeared to have some staffing issues at some projects and that he had spoken to the delegation regarding this. C. Elliott noted that the delegation would support pushing MassDOT forward on these project. C. Nuon commented on Central Street Bridge and the return to two lane traffic. C. Elliott



questioned oversight by the City on these bridge projects. Ms. Clancy indicated the department that are involved including DPD and John Gleason from Engineering. Ms. Clancy finished her updated by reporting that the Newhall Street Bridge would be concluded in the spring and that Beaver Brook Bridge needed a funding source for repairs. Manager Donoghue outlined some possible funding sources for the project. Registered speaker, Patricia Kirwin, of Sen. Kennedy's office indicated that they would be reaching out to MassDOT regarding projects in the City.

C. Elliott opened up discussion regarding Master Plan update. Manager Donoghue noted that the pandemic pointed out the need for Master Plan update. Manager Donoghue introduced the planning team of Camilo Espitia, Francesca Cigliano and Jess Wilson. Mr. Espitia began presentation entitled "Master Plan Update". Mr. Espitia commented on why the update was needed noting need to update partnership relationships and garner more input to complete the project. Mr. Espitia noted that there is a need now as it has been ten years since completion and pandemic highlighted additional needs. Mr. Espitia noted opportunities for added diversity and to implement long range planning. Ms. Wilson commented on approach and guidance by Massachusetts General Laws as well as the use of paid consultants to supplement DPD staff. Ms. Cigliano commented on prior work and the use of input from partners, non-profits and neighborhood groups. Ms. Cigliano noted approach by other communities in the area. Mr. Espitia noted funding sources which could include grants and as well as capital funding. Mr. Espitia noted the next step include Council feedback, identify funding, procure consultant and create workshop group.

C. Elliott opened meeting up to public. John Hamblet and Deb Forgione addressed the body indicating that they were requesting a traffic study for the Market Basket roundabout on Varnum Avenue. **Motion** by C. Samaras, seconded by C. Conway request City Manager provide an update regarding traffic study surrounding the Market Basket project on Old Ferry Road as part of the permitting process. So voted. Mr. Slagle noted that the study was included in Planning Board decision regarding project recommending a traffic study six months post opening. C. Elliott commented on the challenges with affordable housing in the City and urban rezoning. C. Elliott noted City was small geographically and that any revamping of the zoning code is a long and involved process. C. Elliott noted the importance of maintaining neighborhood character and that surrounding cities and towns need to do their fair share as well with affordable housing. Manager Donoghue noted any changes in zoning ordinances is a long process. C. Elliott noted that the discussion should be recessed and addressed at later scheduled meeting.



ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn by C. Samaras, seconded by C. Conway. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 PM.

Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk
