

# **MONTAGUE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 29, 2023 3:15 PM**

### **Meeting Held Remotely**

#### **In Attendance:**

CIC Members: Gregory Garrison (GG), Ariel Elan (AE), Jason Burbank (JB), Chris Menegoni (CM)

Town Staff: Water Ramsey (WR)- Assistant Town Admin, Tom Bergeron (TB)- DPW Superintendant

Meeting convened 3:15, GG presiding

#### **1.Approval of Minutes:**

**MOTION** by JB to approve the minutes of 3/1/23 and 3/8/23. Seconded by CM. GG-AYE, JB-AYE, CM- AYE, AE- Abstaining. *MOTION CARRIED.*

#### **2. Review and Consider Recommendation of Capital Requests for FY24 Annual Town Meeting: Department of Public Works request for \$100,000 for 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Repairs**

TB presented the request. The 11th Street Bridge is a town-owned bridge over the Turners Falls Power Canal that connects the Patch Neighborhood to Avenue A. The bridge was last rehabilitated by the state in the 1980's. In October of 2022, MassDOT, as part of their routine inspection cycle identified a structural deficiency in the bridge relating to the bearings under the floor beams of the bridge. The report rates the finding as 'as soon as possible' urgency. In response, the town hired the engineering firm Weston and Sampson to evaluate the condition and identify a course of action for the town. The engineer recommends a schedule of short-term repairs which include the following:

- replacing damaged bolts at the connection between the floor beam and stringer connection plate
- repairs to sheared anchor bolts at the West Pier's floor beam
- concrete repair at bridge piers and sidewalk
- welding repairs to hand rail system
- replace bolts at handrail land truss systems

The Special Article request will cover the cost to engineer the repairs and secure a qualified bridge construction firm to execute the short term repairs identified in the Weston and Sampson report dated 2/24/23. The work will be fast tracked to be completed in the summer 2023 construction season. DPW has demonstrated to the CIC's satisfaction that that deploying Chapter 90 funds for this project is not advisable, as it would prevent the Town's ability to repave the entirety of Wendell Road in summer 2023.

Service Interruption: Failure to act within the budget cycle risks the imposition of weight restrictions or closure of the bridge. Approval at Annual Town Meeting is timely because certain concrete repairs need to be accomplished during the annual canal drawdown in September. The work will have to be carefully timed with that annual window. Further, MassDOT has programmed \$60M to replace 3 nearby bridges in FY26 including a replacement of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge to the Patch neighborhood. Strategically, it is important to shore up the reliability of the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge prior to the reconstruction of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge by MassDOT. Closure or weight restrictions of this bridge to the Patch Neighborhood would cause serious circulation issues as the 6<sup>th</sup> Street bridge is only wide enough for one-way traffic.

Public Safety: MassDOT has advised the town to make structural repairs to the town-owned bridge as soon as possible. The Town owns the asset and ultimately has a responsibility to maintain structurally safe bridges. This capital project will address the immediate safety concerns while the town formulates a plan with MassDOT for long term rehabilitation.

WR: This has already been supported by the FinCom and Selectboard.

**MOTION** by GG to recommend the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Repair project at \$100,000. Seconded by CM. GG-AYE, JB- AYE, CM- AYE, AE- AYE. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The CIC directed WR to update the CIC FY24 Annual Report accordingly to accommodate this newest vote.

### **Capital Plan Discussion- Initial Review by CIC**

WR reviewed the initial working draft of the capital plan project inventory. WR has assembled project based on existing reports. WR reviewed project schedule has been reviewed with each relevant department head and edits have been made accordingly.

The CIC agreed that WR should continue to 'fill in the blanks', develop some narrative and work directly with department head stakeholders.

The CIC agreed that a meeting with the GMRSD would be wise given the huge capital needs and the proposal for a new elementary school. That will happen April 12.

### **ARPA Discussion**

There remains some pressure to develop a timely, but prudent plan to expend ARPA funds. The CIC wishes to continue to remain involved in the discussion. In general, the CIC has consensus around several potential capital projects: the CIC would support investment in durable projects that will reduce future financial liabilities. There was general consensus for support for projects like sewer relining and combined sewer overflow upgrades. There was also consensus support for a large scale roof solar project at the DPW. That project could offset over \$46K in annual electricity costs at the facility. Additional data will be gathered for both projects. Other ideas were briefly discussed, but there were the types of projects with universal consensus among the CIC. Discussion to be continued.

**Next Meeting: 4/12/2023 3:15PM**

***MOTION** to close the meeting at 4:47 PM by JB. Seconded by AE. GG- AYE, AE- AYE, JB-AYE.  
Motion Carried*

Respectfully Submitted,

Walter Ramsey