



TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

GREAT BARRINGTON HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION Meeting Minutes from October 18, 2012

Town Hall

6:30 p.m.

Present:

James Mercer, Chairman
Dan Bailly
Donald Howe
Craig Okerstrom-Lang
Patricia Ryan
Barbara Syer
Holly Troiano

Meeting called to order by Chairman Mercer

October 4, 2012 Minutes edit:

Ms. Ryan corrected her insert; see final minutes.

Motion by Ms. Triano to accept minutes from October 4, 2012 public meeting.

Second by Ms. Syer

All in favor

Discussion of Certificate of Appropriateness issued for the Main Street project per memo issued to HDC dated 10/12/2012 from Kevin O'Donnell, Town Manager.

Mr. Mercer has had conversations and calls with MA Highway, National Grid and Rob Hoogs of Foresight Engineers. Mr. Hoogs is in charge of the lighting design for the project, from the Design Team.

Mr. Mercer, Mr. Okerstrom-Lang, Bob Montgomery met with Mark Moore of MA Highway Dept District One to discuss the traffic signals and pedestrian lighting. The traffic signal arms will be horizontal in nature not slightly curved or arched that was previously presented to the HDC. Discussion focused on seeing if the wire or string poles could be installed at the two main intersections in the downtown project that the COA requested.

This would require up to four string poles required at each intersection. The pole height may be much higher due to the span and soil conditions.



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It may be more viable to consider the horizontal poles that have been installed on Waconah Street in Pittsfield for their recent streetscape project; a photograph was presented by Mr. Mercer. The traffic detection cameras are the most current technology and are being used throughout the Commonwealth.

Jennifer Clark asked if the underground detector loops could be used instead of the the post mounted system. Mr. Okerstrom-Lang asked if the cameras could be mounted directly on the horizontal arm and not protruding on a vertical post.

Ms Ryan asked about the actual traffic signal. The state of the art new signals could be traditional yellow or yellow reflective band with black interior. The back of both signal choices is black. The Commission prefers the more yellow colored signal.

Motion by Ms Triano to choose the yellow on yellow traffic signal head presented.

Seconded by Ms Ryan

Discussion: none

In favor voting yes: Mercer, Howe, Okerstrom-Lang, Ryan, Syer, Triano,

Motion by Mr. Mercer to accept the new traffic signal mast arm similar to the ones installed on Waconah St in Pittsfield

Second by Ms. Triano

Discussion: none

In favor voting yes: Mercer, Howe, Okerstrom-Lang, Ryan, Syer, Triano,

Touch pads for the HC ramps at the crosswalks:

Taking all the details proposed for the project, Jane Iredale mentioned to the Selectmen that items like this will seemingly feel out of context. These need to be in a contrasting color. There is flexibility per the design team for the final color.

Holiday lighting:

There will be conduits installed and stubbed up in the landscape beds. The foundations will be installed for the load centers but no actual load centers or wiring. One is needed on each side of Main Street. Both of these components can be installed at a later date by the Town. Mr. Okerstrom-Lang asked could the load centers be located off of Main Street so they are not so visible. This was done in the Town of Lee. Maybe in or off the alleyway owned by Tom Levin and the Caligari's on the east side or at the back this alley.



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Shade Trees:

Planted size is specified now at 3-3.5" caliper. DOT has established a larger caliper tree size that what is normally done. They could be upsized to say 4-4.5" caliper. MA Highway feels that the specified caliper trees would have the best chance for survival and require less watering. Mr. Mercer pointed out that the larger trees are what have made our downtown attractive. The larger trees could provide that look quicker.

Ornamental Lighting at Crosswalks:

After reviewing the lighting layout and reviewing Ms. Clark's sketch plan it seems that some of these lights could be eliminated. Twenty one are proposed and seven are proposed to be eliminated. The Town has eliminated three of the lights already. Twenty one lights proposed, seventeen now shown on the 75% plans.

Ms. Triano asked if some ornamental lights could be installed between Bridge and St James Place where there are only Cobra Head lights. Mr. Howe stated that these lights are meant for the crosswalks and meant to focus attention to pedestrian traffic. Mr. Howe suggested that ornamental lights could be very attractive at the NE corner of Town Hall Park and the diagonal corner to the NE at "Subway".

Ms. Clark noted that the "Subway" corner may become too crowded with the added light with all the traffic poles there. She would really prefer a less illuminated Main Street so we do not look like a mall.

Mr. Okerstrom-Lang asked if the designers had considered using a "QL-Induction" light system which has a white light and a 100,000 hour life. Mr. Okerstrom-Lang has spoken with a number of merchants who do want these lower lights be high pressure sodium due to its orange glow and no true color rendition. They prefer a white light.

Mr. Howe feels that we should weigh the look of the ornamental lights on Main Street and making a statement using a stylized light.



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Motion by Mr. Okerstrom-Lang to provide an ornamental light at each side of each crosswalk on the Main Street crosswalks as designated on Ms Clark's plan and not the side street crosswalks for a total of approx 16 lights with locations listed below:

- St James: one on each side (2)
- Bridge and Main St: one on east side at Subway (1) and one at the NE corner of Town Hall (1)
- Railroad St: one on each side (2)
- Rotary Way: one on each side (2)
- Elm Street: one on each side (2)
- Dresser Street / Post Office: one on each side (2)
- Rosseter: one on each side (2)
- Cottage St: one on each side (2)

For a total of 16 lights

Second: Mr. Howe

In favor voting yes: Mercer, Howe, Okerstrom-Lang, Ryan, Syer, Triano,

The Williamsville Light and Funding Options

Ms Ryan asked why we are using a clear luminaire. National Grid owns, maintains and operates all lighting and the town pays a rental fee plus the power cost. National Grid has a very limited light and luminaire selection to offer.

Mr. Mercer said in order to accommodate the aesthetic concern of these luminaries, there is an interest in private funding for a more distinct and appropriate ornamental luminaire, benches, trash receptacles, upsizing the tree sizes, etc.

The private sector would maintain these luminaries. Nat Grid is researching this request (Joanne Rosa will review with Corporate).

This private group would be organized like "GB 250th Committee" or equal and operated for the public benefit.



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A dedicated private account would pay for the maintenance of these luminaries and amenities. The maintenance of the globe would be private the actual light bulb maintenance would be by Nat Grid.

Mr. Bailly wanted clarification of how this private entity would work with the Town. This needs to be clear.

Mr. Howe feels that the HDC focus should be on the ornamental luminaries for review again.

There is no federal enhancement funding available for this project per Mr. O'Donnell. DOT has established that funding may be available for benches, receptacles, bike racks. If these are not funded the private sector could sponsor or pay for these.

Michael Thomas is looking for funding to replace the artist-made recycle bins that have been well received on Main Street. The current concrete and wood benches have become very expensive to replace. The new benches will be all metal.

Mr. O'Donnell said that if a BID (Business Improvement District) was established it could pay for all of these amenities and more.

Project Schedule:

Mid November 2012 100% submittal due to DOT. PS&E (plans, specs and estimate) due in December 2012 in order to stay on schedule to issue the bid docs in February.

Noting this schedule, Mr. Mercer said that the design team has not been forthcoming in presenting the details of the Main St Project to the HDC. The HDC was never contacted at the very beginning of the design project which would most likely have solved any of the current disagreements and discussions.

Mr. O'Donnell said dealing with upsizing the trees will affect the project schedule.



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Motion by Mr. Mercer :

Recommend that we as a Commission facilitate a discussion between the private sector and the town regarding various components that have not finalized including the touch pads, wiring for the conduit that will provide holiday and events, and luminaries for the historic lighting of these items are proposed to be paid for by a private committee coordinated by the HDC.

Second by Ms Syer

In favor voting yes: Mercer, Howe, Okerstrom-Lang, Ryan, Syer, Triano,

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Mercer

Second by Mr. Howe

In favor voting yes: Mercer, Howe, Okerstrom-Lang, Ryan, Syer, Triano,

NEXT MEETING: November 15, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.