

Aug 25 2021 10:27 am

City of  
FitchburgDepartment o.  
Public Works**COMMISSIONER**301 Broad Street  
978-829-1910  
978-345-9687 FAX**STREETS & PARKS**301 Broad Street  
978-829-1900  
978-345-9687 FAX**WASTEWATER**301 Broad Street  
978-829-1930  
978-345-9687 FAX**WATER**1200 Rindge Road  
978-345-9616  
978-345-9555 FAX**ENGINEERING**301 Broad Street  
978-829-1915  
978-345-9687 FAX**CEMETERIES**115 Mount Elam Road  
978-345-9578  
978-345-9686 FAX

August 25, 2021

**Public Works Committee Meeting Minutes**

A meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on Tuesday, July 27, 2021, in person at 700 Main Street in the Legislative Building, at 5:00 PM. The video is available from FATV here:

<https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/yycCAZPb0NN3zj2o5qio-YFMNC43NjCG/playlists/3129/media/657901?sequenceNumber=3&autostart=true&showtabssearch=true>

Committee Members Present: Councilors Marisa Fleming (chair), Sam Squailia, Andrew Couture, and Paul Beauchemin  
Commissioner Nicolas Bosonetto  
Superintendent Gary Withington

Committee Members Absent: Councilor Thomas Hughes

Other Participants: Joanne Tulonea

- 1) Vote to approve minutes from previous meetings (1/26/21, 5/25/21): Councilor Beauchemin motioned to approve minutes, Councilor Squailia seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.
- 2) **DPW Updates:** Commissioner Bosonetto gave the Committee a brief update on upcoming DPW projects. Waste Water sewer separation project is continuing on Water Street. Work will then continue over in the area of Clarendon Street. Unutil has started working on gas mains on Ashburnham Hill Rd, Main St from West Street and should get to the Upper Common by the end of the year. Next year they should be working from the Upper Common down Main Street to replace the gas lines in anticipation of the sewer separation project in 2024 and then we'll pave and do sidewalks. The sidewalks on Summer Street are completed on one side of the street and the sidewalks on the side of Moran Square will be next. We have been very happy with Detour Construction, the sidewalk company. Summer Street will be paved from Harvard Street to Moran Square once the sidewalk work is complete. This should be completed in September. The Main Street two-way conversion project has started. This is slow going because of the unknown water pipes. Work should be completed by the end of June, 2022. Road construction will begin on August 9<sup>th</sup> on Williams Road, McIntire Road, and Alpine Road. Drainage and tree work has already started on this project. This project should be completed this September. Drainage and tree work has begun on Oak Hill Road to prepare for paving. Commissioner Bosonetto did state that the DPW is very short handed, currently 11 out of 20 positions are filled. Also there are not enough police to fill details. All in all though, good things are happening in the City of Fitchburg. Councilor Beauchemin asked about DPW maintaining the swale on Oak Hill Rd

after the work is done. Commissioner Bosonetto stated that the work will be added to the DPW regular maintenance schedule(s) and the overgrowth would be maintained by DPW. Oak Hill Country Club will maintain the cart crossings but not the overgrowth. Councilor Squailia asked about the positions currently open in DPW. Commissioner Bosonetto stated that all vacant positions are currently posted with the exception of the DPW Head Mechanic. Councilor Squailia asked about the swale on Oak Hill Road and wanted to know if we were planning on using salt or sand on Oak Hill Road during winter. Commissioner Bosonetto replied that we would be using salt in that area. We only use sand on the hills and where appropriate. Councilor Squailia asked about the work MassDOT will be doing in the area of Boutelle St. Commissioner Bosonetto stated that MassDOT will be doing work to improve the ADA accessibility on the sidewalks of Boutelle St/Lunenburg St. This is not a project to improve the intersection but just to improve the ADA ramps and make sure they are in compliance. Councilor Couture asked about runoff on Pepper Rd/Oak Hill Rd to a constituent's property that is washed out during rain events. Commissioner Bosonetto explained that the work being performed currently does not go down to the area of Pepper Rd/Sarah Ln. Councilor Fleming asked that the issue being discussed be put forward in a petition as it is specific to one property. Councilor Squailia asked about sidewalk work being performed in the areas of Reingold School. Commissioner Bosonetto explained that we applied for a grant but the City also applied for a grant for sidewalk work on Cushing Street and that was the one that was awarded (Community Development). We will continue to pursue ways to get sidewalks in the areas of schools done. Councilor Couture asked for an update on work that was supposed to be done on Roosevelt Street. Commissioner Bosonetto reiterated that he believes it is on a list and that DPW is short-staffed and will get to it soon. Councilor Fleming stated that all Councilors should continue to take pictures and submit requests for work through See-Click-Fix.

3) Action was taken as follows on NEW petitions:

- a) **135-21. Councilor Marisa Fleming, petitioned to install a barrier at 113 Summit Street to mitigate property damage caused by driver error at this dangerous corner. (REFERRED from City Council on June 15, 2021)**

**Discussion:** The resident of 113 Summit Street, Joanne Tulonea, attended the meeting in person. Ms. Tulonea explained how this house has been in her family for over sixty years and numerous fences they have installed have been destroyed. One vehicle went as far as landing on her property inches from the corner of her home. Commissioner Bosonetto did agree that signage could be a possibility as well as trying to get GPS services to re-route traffic. The police department will have to be involved in this and DPW will work with the traffic division about putting up restrictions. Councilor Fleming stated she has driven the location at various times of day to see traffic flows. She agreed that we cannot put up barriers in the roadway and that trying to put up signage and deter traffic off the road/corner was the best solution. Councilor Couture stated that he had Google Maps up and was looking at the location and the boulder that is there is not going to stop anyone from cutting the corner. Councilor Couture suggested working with the local companies in the area to see if they can run their trucks and any customers/suppliers to use other routes. Keeping

industrial trucks off the residential area is they key as the large trucks do not fit on the road when they take the sharp corner. Councilor Squailia stated she did not see how trucks could be detoured off of or restricted from this road. She also recommended we put up boulders along the grassy area in front of the fence. Commissioner Bosonetto explained that DPW cannot put obstacles in the roadway such as boulders for liability reasons and we cannot install any type of barrier on private property. Councilor Squailia asked what the homeowner could do to protect their home from being hit and suggested jersey barriers, boulders, or fencing. Commissioner Bosonetto explained jersey barriers, boulders, and bollards are not an option because you are introducing a hazard to the roadway. Councilor Couture stated that he understands completely and agrees that DPW cannot put up any barriers in the roadway but that the homeowner could put up barriers on their property if they need to to protect their property. Councilor Beauchemin asked why we don't make trucks coming from Whitney take a left behind Kelly/Jackson to John Fitch. Commissioner Bosonetto stated that was one of his recommendations. Councilor Couture made a recommendation to hold the petition until DPW can review signage and other recommendations with the police department. Councilor Squailia seconded the motion.

**Recommendation:** The Committee voted 4-0 that the petition be HELD.

- b) **137-21. Councilor Marisa Fleming, petitioned to assess the sidewalk located in front of (6 Myrtle Ave.) Moran Square Diner, to insure individuals with handicaps are able to walk, use wheelchairs, walkers, and canes on a smooth surface. Currently private property is being used as the thoroughway. (REFERRED from City Council on June 15, 2021)**

**Discussion:** Councilor Fleming explained how the sidewalk in front of the Moran Square Diner has grooves in them unlike other sidewalks. These grooves make it difficult for individuals using wheelchairs, canes, walkers, etc. These grooves are causing individuals with handicaps to take a left and cut through private property to avoid this sidewalk completely. Councilor Fleming brought up skim-coating the sidewalk as a temporary fix. Commissioner Bosonetto brought up that the sidewalks in question are in good shape, Councilor Squailia agreed to this. Councilor Fleming asked how long it would be until all the sidewalks in that area would be addressed. Commissioner Bosonetto brought up that it would be at least five years before these sidewalks are addressed as part of a larger project to improve the whole area. Commissioner Bosonetto also explained that skim coating would probably make the sidewalks worse when it starts to lift. Councilor Fleming proposed holding the petition to reevaluate in the future. Councilor Squailia suggested giving the petition leave to withdraw. Councilor Beauchemin seconded the motion. Councilor Couture explained that at this point in time he doesn't see any other option but to withdraw the motion at this time.

**Recommendation:** The Committee voted 3-1 that the petition be WITHDRAWN. (Councilors Squailia, Beauchemin, and Couture voted to withdraw) (Councilor Fleming voted against).

- c) **146-21. Councilors Sam Squailia and Andrew Couture to petition the city to replace the broken guardrail boards along the street at 97 Appleton Circle as shown in the attached pictures. (REFERRED from City Council on July 6, 2021)**

**Discussion:** Councilor Squailia explained that all the boards are unkempt at this point and the homeowner would prefer that the boards are replaced and not just removed. Commissioner Bosonetto explained that the inside boards are not necessary. He stated that the DPW could remove these inside broken boards and leave the posts. The DPW can fix and replace the outside wood. Councilor Beauchemin asked if it would be the fencing around the entire area or just in the area in the petition. Commissioner Bosonetto explained that the fencing is not required in the entire areas it is in but it is necessary in the petitioned area due to the steep slope. Councilor Couture motioned to approve. Councilor Squailia seconded the motion.

**Recommendation:** The Committee voted 4-0 that the petition be APPROVED.

### 3) HELD petitions for review

- d) **089-20. Councilor Bernie Schultz and resident Alex Freeman to remove the “No Turn on Red” sign at the intersection of John T. Cetrino Memorial Drive and Water Street. (HELD on the 10/28/20 meeting and the January 2021 meeting). (Amended the spelling of Cetrino at the January 2021 meeting).**

**Discussion:** Commissioner Bosonetto stated that he could perform a traffic study but this wouldn't be able to happen until possibly November due to the current detour. Councilor Schultz also suggested that Sgt. Boudreau look into this. Councilor Squailia motioned to give the petition leave to withdraw. Councilor Schultz asked if the police traffic division could go out and look at the intersection once detours are complete. Councilor Couture mentioned he liked the petition and the idea behind it but didn't think it made sense to keep holding this petition for years if that is what it takes to get the traffic studies done and traffic signal improvements and would like to see what PD says about it before withdrawing the petition. Councilor Squailia motioned to hold the petition. Councilor Couture seconded the motion.

**Recommendation:** The Committee voted 4-0 that the petition be HELD.

### 4) Any Other Business : None discussed