

Municipal Corner – When is my project going to get done?

I remember vividly a citizen asking me at Annual Meeting if they approved the capital projects would they get done this year. I said, “Yes, if Mother Nature cooperates.” Mother Nature didn’t cooperate yet again. We had extensive stream bank erosion due to heavy rains in the spring that put a sewer main at risk, eroded sections of the Recreation Path and caused other damage.

Public Works also had to review several unplanned development applications from an infrastructure standpoint and take a lead role in negotiating utility development agreements (e.g. Spruce Peak Adventure Center, Trapp’s Brewery, and Alchemist Brewery). These Agreements allow developers to transfer infrastructure and treat wastewater while protecting existing ratepayer’s interest.

As a result, Public Works had to shift their focus and potentially delay some projects. Some projects we have to do to meet deadlines to protect public health or tie to other projects. Others are highly desirable, but do not have the same degree of necessity.

With this being said, the following is a status update of various capital projects:

**Mountain Road Sewer Main Embankment Failure:** A section of river embankment failed as part of the heavy rain this spring that abuts the Mountain Road sewer main. The stabilization project has been designed, permitted, bid and awarded for construction which will be commencing shortly.

**Recreation Path Embankment Failure:** The Town suffered embankment failure that eroded several areas of the Recreation Path and is threatening Bridge #7. Staff is working with property owners as well as funding and regulatory agencies to design, permit and fix the Recreation Path embankment failures. The goal is implement the work in the 2015 construction season. The work around Bridge #7 involves major design work and is much more involved than just rip-rapping the river bank.

**Mountain Road Village Sidewalk:** The Town has completed the design, obtained easements and permits bid and awarded the project for construction. Work will commence this fall and be completed in the spring. If we are not able to pave the sidewalk this fall, we will not be able to plow it this winter.

**Quiet Path Bridge:** Design work is substantially complete and permit applications are in progress. We intend to bid over the winter for construction in the summer of 2015.

**Main Street/Recreation Path Parking Staircase:** The Town has obtained required easements and has remediated the contaminated soils at the old Village substation. The design development of the staircase is in progress The goal is to complete the design this winter and bid in the spring for construction during the 2015 construction season.

South Main Street Sidewalk: The Selectboard is going to be asked to consider accepting the conceptual design and an Amended Cooperative Agreement with the State at their September 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. The State intends to undertake a full depth reconstruction of Rte. 100 from Exit 10 to the Public Safety Building during the 2016 and 2017 construction seasons. The goal is to incorporate the sidewalk construction into the States road reconstruction project or construct the sidewalk independent but immediate prior to the State's work

Bridge Street Bridge Water Main: The State is planning on replacing the Bridge Street Bridge during the 2015 construction season. The municipal water main is located on the Bridge must be temporarily relocated and then reconstructed on the new bridge. The Town has completed the design and permitting for this work. The project is currently being bid and the temporary water main construction is scheduled to be constructed this fall.

Gables Bridge Water Main: The State is planning on replacing the Gables Bridge during the 2016 construction season. The municipal water main is located on the Bridge and must be relocated prior to the bridge construction. We plan on a permanent relocation using directional drilling under the river. The Town has completed the design and permitting and anticipates bidding this winter and construction in 2015.

While undertaking existing work we also have to find the time to plan for future infrastructure work. Key among those is planning to replace the village sidewalks. The Town can no longer buy replacements to match the existing pavers and the sidewalks are in poor condition. Included in the conversation will be discussions on whether the town should further consider burying Main Street Power Lines. Conceptual Cost estimates range from 1.5 million to replace the sidewalks on Main Street to \$4.1 million to replace them throughout the Village Center. Burying the power lines is estimated to cost from \$2.5 million to bury them on Main Street to \$.5.5 to bury them in the Village Center. These numbers are very preliminary and do not include other associated work, like drainage improvements. The Selectboard is tentatively scheduled to continue discussions at their September 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting on how to approach the project over what period of time.

In addition to the planning and delivery of capital projects, Public Works provides technical assistance to other departments and oversees the Towns highway, sewer and water systems. Although the full time resident population of Stowe may be relatively small, these systems are the size of a small city. . Next time you see Harry or Dick from Public Works, please be sure to thank them for their hard work and dedication to the Town.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can be of any further assistance ([Charles@townofstovermont.org](mailto:Charles@townofstovermont.org) or 253-7350).