

CLASS V ROADS STUDY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, June 4th, 2018
4 PM
TOWN OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
Approved

Present: Sue MacKenzie, Karen Henry, Steve Williams, Frank Bowles, Bill Malcolm, Carola Lea (citizen)

Agenda

- Minutes from 5-15-2018
- Report on Baker 1
- Gravel Roads Project for 2018
- Hewes Brook Bridge Project report
- Project Manager feedback and discussion
- 10 year plan process

Sue called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

Minutes – The minutes from the 5-15-2018 were approved as amended. Carola Lea asked about receiving copies of the minutes, and Sue told her that they are available on the web shortly after they are approved by the Committee.

Report on Baker 1 - Friday at 1130, Dennis Thompson will be meeting with the Select Board along with a representative from Michie Corporation (aka Michiecorps) to discuss the possibility of replacing the culvert with a concrete bridge. Bill asked whether we have any alternatives, and Sue pointed out that the most current plan is to install a 20' long culvert (approximately 12' in diameter, pipe arch shape – aka “squashed”). The long culvert is not well liked by most stakeholders. Bill recalls that the culvert is overdesigned for the current hydrologic conditions and is wondering why a bridge or culvert is being proposed without having the results of a hydrologic study on which to base it. Frank said that the study information would be required for DES to permit any design. Bill said that the size of the concrete cast bridge that is present for the old road is about 5' x 4' and has been adequate historically. Frank said that DES is often requiring larger hydraulic openings. The Committee discussed the project and generally agreed that doing a hydrologic study to estimate volumetric flow rates that must be carried by the culvert and/or bridge seems like it should be the first step of the planning and design process. Sue is asking Dennis for a second opinion on the plan/design. Bill said that this is a waste of time until we have the required hydraulic opening. Karen asked what the current size is – there was some discussion of this, but no accurate answer. Sue said that the hydraulic information will be obtained before we go further with this project, and she thinks that a bridge will likely be a better long-term investment than a culvert.

There was further discussion about various aspects of bridges resisting lateral earth forces, and how precast foundations are constructed.

Gravel Road Project for 2018 – Sue asked Steve what he suggested for the 2018 “gravel road project.” Steve replied that his top choice is Dorchester Road – the furthest mile – adjacent to the Town line with Dorchester. He said that Dorchester Road and Grafton Turnpike are always the most work during the spring (meaning mud season).

Sue said that if we all look at that section of road, we can come up with a plan to fix it. Frank and Karen both had ideas about techniques that might work. Sue suggested that we work up a plan and a cost and then we will be able to decide how long of a section to repair. Culverts, ditching and roadside maintenance should be considered.

Bill Malcolm asked whether we had a traffic count for that road in the winter, and Karen replied that it was 468 vehicles per day one weekend this past March when there was good skiing at the Green Woodlands.

Project Report - River Road over Hewes Brook bridge. Sue reported that she stated (yesterday) that she wanted the contract proposal by the end of today so that the Select Board can review it, sign it on Thursday and have it go out to contractors on Friday. Frank said that he read over the changes that the legal counsel provided and noted that the term 'observation' was often used instead of 'inspection.'

Sue said that the Town hasn't yet heard from the landowner, but that we cannot start construction until September 1st anyway. The contractors have informed the Town that they will need 2 to 3 months to move the required construction material to the site.

Karen asked what if the landowner does not cooperate (ever). Sue answered that construction would then have to wait until the closed portion of River Road is open. Further, if the bridge should fail, a temporary bridge would have to be installed until construction can be completed.

Project Management – how is it working?

Sue asked the Committee how project management is going. Frank said that we occasionally get information and sometimes move forward. He said that if he was managing the project as a project manager typically would, he would be after all the people involved in the project personally.

Karen said that she had doubts about it when we first implemented project managers but decided to try it. The doubts that it would work come from the lack of authority on the part of the Project Managers. There is no contractual obligation between the Project Managers (a volunteer position) and the Town. Erin Darrow at Right Angle Engineering calls Sue MacKenzie when she needs a decision because project decision authority lies with the Select Board. That leaves the Project Manager out of the loop on significant activities of the project. Karen said that she had envisioned that both she and Erin would work together on the Dorchester Road culvert proposal and that that is not what happened.

Sue noted that she has not seen the proposal for the culvert/bridge replacement at 383 Dorchester Road AND that it has been submitted. Karen said that she has seen the proposal, but it had been emailed to her for review at the last minute and that she did not have time for any real input into the proposal. However, she (Karen) did email a copy of what she had seen to Sue along with her reply to Erin.

Sue asked what about going forward with Project Managers? Bill replied that responsibility without authority is mostly pointless. He noted that most all communication is directly to Sue, and that he is copied on that communication for courtesy reasons, but not because he is expected to do anything. If the project manager is going to drive the project, there should be a job description spelling out responsibilities. Frank said that we are periodic project advisors. Bill thinks that Project Managers (PMs) is a great idea in concept, but has been impotent so far.

Sue said that she has found the project management to be valuable in some ways and asked how we might change this approach. What has been valuable is having a person with a special interest in the project take over some of the detail work and provide informed opinions on the work progress. Bill said that the PMs should have responsibility AND authority if we are to be effective. Bill thinks that the point of the PM is to keep tabs on the schedule and details of the project. The question was raised as to how much authority the Select Board has in assigning Project Manager responsibilities and authority. Frank noted that his advice was ignored for a long time on the project that he worked on.

Karen suggested job descriptions, and asked what the Select Board wants – advisors or managers. Sue said that this topic should be discussed at the Select Board level at this point in time. Bill said that one of the jobs of project managers is to keep their boss informed at least weekly, and that should be considered as the Select Board considers this. Frank said that if Erin comes before the Select Board about ANY subject, all PMs should be in the room because it is unpredictable when the topic pertaining to a project will arise. Bill added that reports should be in hand prior to the Select Board meetings and not hand delivered to the Select Board.

Sue said that she has told Erin to bring a plan for the River Road Bypass to the Select Board on June 14th. Sue said that she also asked for all the permits to be prepared by June 21st, noting that we are running out of time. Karen asked how the Committee can provide input on the plans. Frank asked about the specific location of the new bypass. Sue said that the ledge towards the North end of the bypass section will be left intact and that the bedrock will be cut into from the South, but will be routed around the highest knob (to the East). However, plans are not yet in hand. Wetland area is likely to be involved.

Sue noted that there is a limited amount of time to reapply funding already paid to DES on the previous planned bypass road to this new project; noting that this is the source of the deadline. If we commit to the new route, we will have to give up the previous DES permit application.

Bridge Reports (provided by the State)

Sue said that we have three concrete box bridges – Market Street, Baker Hill at Dorchester Road, and Highbridge Road. All three have problems with undermining of the lateral edges on the outlet side resulting in broken concrete. She passed some photos around of these three locations. She would like to see them fixed so that they don't continue to deteriorate. She also noted that the Highbridge bridge has concrete wingwalls and that there is one with a crack that a tree is growing out of. Further, that several trees are growing out of the top of the bridge, some of which are of significant size. She said that the Highway Department could cut at least the smaller trees.

Steve noted that many more bridges in Lyme than these four have been red-listed by the State.

Steve noted that the Town does not have equipment to access the locations of the bridge outlets. Sue said that a bridge "expert" could advise on how to stabilize these areas of broken concrete and associated scour. Karen asked whether the bridge reports include any suggestions about repairs or consequences of not repairing and the answer is no. Steve said that some of these repairs might be addressed by Daniels Construction. Also, that the repairs on River Road near Gregory Road cost about \$23000 (note that although this was the cost reported at the meeting the actual cost is estimated to be \$15000), so this limits the 2018 repair budget.

There was some discussion about how concrete bridge foundations are designed and constructed. And, that design-build projects are often more cost effective than projects which are designed first and then bid for construction.

Steve asked where limestone gravel could be obtained. Karen answered that the closest limestone source that she knows of is Western Vermont. There was some discussion of the virtues of crushed limestone vs. hardpack. Steve noted that hardpack doesn't drain well, and that he would like to try crushed limestone on Swamp Road in a well-known bad location. Karen suggested that if he tries that, that a geotextile separator be used between the crushed limestone and the underlying soil.

10 year plan process – We did not discuss the 10 year plan at this meeting.

At 500 PM, the motion was made to adjourn the meeting (Frank), it was seconded by Karen, the motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 500 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Karen Henry