

1. Call to Order

The Chester Main Street Project Committee held a Special Meeting on Wednesday, May 1, 2019, at the Chester Town Hall, 203 Middlesex Avenue, Chester, Connecticut. Chairman Joplin called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

2. Seating of Members

Members in attendance were Michael Joplin, Charlene Janecek, Ed Meehan, Chuck Mueller and Jeremy Ziemann.

3. Group Discussion with Tenants, Business Owners, Stakeholders of project area and scheduling of project

Chairman Joplin noted this project goes from the Villager to the Lloyd residence next to Otto's. The intention was to go up Maple and Spring Streets but they do not qualify for LOTCIP money, but may for other kinds of grants. By May 14<sup>th</sup>, we will be at 70% of construction drawings. We had hoped to go up Maple Street and get the Maple Street Parking Lot rebuilt but we can't. Funds were set aside at a recent Board of Finance meeting for the pathway up to the Maple Street Parking Lot. Those funds aren't adequate for everything though.

Chairman Joplin reviewed the scope of work in that area –

- Remove the roadbed, drop it a foot and reconstruct
- Curbs and sidewalk will come out
- Planters, benches, bicycle racks, lighting will be put in place
- Subsurface drainage will be done (drainage basins downtown are inadequate)

Chairman Joplin reviewed the work of the CT Water Company to replace the water main. So far there has been no commitment from CWC, but there is a meeting scheduled for this Friday. The water main is over 90 years old, inadequate and in verge of failing. That replacement will probably precede construction, be relatively quick, in and out within 10 days. The sewer lines will not be replaced. There shouldn't be any interruption of service of water. They tend to replace water lines when it's to their advantage and it's to their advantage to do this just before we do our project.

Chairman Joplin noted the scope of work is to take out the roadbed, curbs, sidewalks and plantings.

Andrew Landsman asked if the voids would be filled. Joplin noted the Town has set aside \$81,000 to fill the voids in front of Simons with a slurry, non-structural concrete. Some of that will also be in front of The Villager and a small amount in front of River Tavern.

Virginia Carmany asked if these voids have to be filled in. Chuck Mueller noted the State has offered to fill the voids with flowable fill. Ed Meehan noted that when the bridge was being reconstructed they also had these voids. These are wooden buildings. Being private property, the State took a temporary easement and filled in the voids. The question was asked will the owner of the building or the town be responsible for this. If an owner doesn't want to pay, will that stop the project. Chairman Joplin noted there is already an agreement that the town will pay a certain amount and the State will pay for the fill for the void. Anything else is relatively minor.

It was noted there needs to be a clear prospective of what everyone can expect. The merchants, tenants and stakeholders cannot be on the back burner. Chairman Joplin noted he personally delivered all the notices for this meeting and no one is on the back burner. He has talked to Jeff Jacobson about starting earlier, but the State shut down period is from December 1 to April 1. They don't allow road construction to start 3 months earlier.

There was discussion about ways the contract can be written to possibly speed up the work by maybe working 6 days a week. Joplin reiterated this Committee does care about what happens downtown. There are no construction documents yet.

Ed Meehan explained this Committee is an advisory board to the Selectmen. This will go before Planning & Zoning under Section 8-24 before going to the Selectmen. Bids need to go out early before construction season starts. There is a lot of lead time but a lot of unanswered questions. The money has been committed. This project compliments the bridge work.

Charlene Janecek noted there was a Master Plan approved in 2013. These plans are based on that Master Plan.

Kyle Monroe asked if there would be any loss of parking and if there would be marked lines for parking. Joplin replied one space will be lost and there will be marked lines.

Virginia Carmany asked if the Town would have a chance to vote to approve or not the LOTCIP grant. Joplin replied no.

Ed Meehan noted this project is overdue by about 30 years. We don't meet ADA or drainage requirements. During storms, the drainage flows into the buildings. This project can be managed with good traffic control and a good contractor.

Chuck Mueller noted it makes sense to have more meetings to keep the people informed.

It was noted every State project has a contingency fund of 10%. That is additional money that could be diverted to the voids if necessary.

Everett Reid asked if the project could take on a lot more unknowns and run much longer than anticipated. Chairman Joplin noted the Committee has been planning this for 5 years. We are concerned and that is why we called this meeting. There are some unknowns as there are in every construction project. This is basically a 4 month project with the heavy part taking up about 3 months. Can it start early? Maybe. Can the time be shortened by working 6 days a week? Maybe.

Chairman Joplin noted this is a public works project. The single item a property owner can refuse to fix is a sill. There is the possibility of rot and the owner may not want to fix it. We are doing this because it has to be done. The road drains over the sidewalk. The infrastructure downtown is falling apart. We have a State grant for the full price plus 10%. If we can do it earlier, we will. If we can shorten the time, we will.

Ed Meehan noted there may be things to be done earlier, such as moving street lights, etc. The contractor will figure that out. Chuck Mueller noted it is the contractor's motivation to start early. Charlene Janecek noted there could be incentives for finishing early and penalties for delays.

Location of the Farmer's Market was discussed. Janecek noted if the project could start in March, maybe the Farmer's Market could be in July.

Chairman Joplin noted we will know a lot more as we go on through the summer. A lot of questions will be answered. We can negotiate a direction with the contractor. This isn't the last meeting we will have. The project is probably a year away and as it develops, we will develop precise answers. It will take an intense 3 months with ramp up and ramp down.

It was noted the subject of "no customers coming in the door" needs to be part of this discussion. Question was asked if there are any EDC monies available that could help local businesses. Andrew Landsman suggested reaching out to Christine Palm to see if there is anything available. Another question was can the Committee bring in a contractor to talk about ways to accelerate the project. Joplin noted the Committee could talk to Jeff Jacobson.

It was noted the Merchants Group will be on board and get through this. It's not just the property owners, it's merchants and tenants too. Joplin reiterated that is why everyone was invited to this meeting. The Committee understands the merchants are the life blood of the town. We will in the next 10 months figure out how to ease this as much as possible. Chuck Mueller noted the merchants are front and center for the Committee.

Parking was discussed. Chairman Joplin noted there are planned improvements to the Maple Street Parking Lot. Its possible the town could temporarily reconfigure parking. The contractor needs a laydown area, possibly Norma Terris, Exit 6 Commuter lot or United Church Parking Lot on off days.

Chairman Joplin noted these types of projects produce high anxiety. The Town is very different from the 60's, 70's and 80's and has come alive. There's a need to do something.

There was discussion as to whether both sides of the road will be worked on at once, also what about deliveries. It was noted the merchants don't have much control over deliveries as they do their own thing. It was also noted if the whole road was torn up curb to curb, it could shorten the time of the project. It's a matter of choices made by the people vested in downtown.

Question was asked if anything is being done with overhead utilities. Chairman Joplin replied no. They looked into it 15 years ago and the cost then was \$5-6 million. The cost now is probably twice as much.

Chairman Joplin noted there should be meetings probably every 6 to 8 weeks to keep the merchants in the loop. He also made the commitment to attend the merchants meetings when new information has been acquired.

Everyone was reminded there is a Public Informational Meeting on Tuesday, May 14, 2019, at Town Hall at 7:00 PM.

#### 4. Audience of Citizens

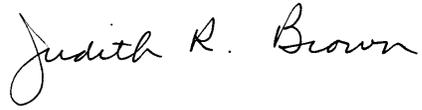
There were 16 citizens present, most of which contributed to the discussion throughout the meeting.

#### 5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Chester Main Street Project Committee  
Special Meeting, May 1, 2019  
Page 5 of 5

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith R. Brown". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted,".

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary