



Storm Water Task Force Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 7, 2013

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Hearing Room 18, City Hall

210 Main Street, Northampton, MA

1. Members present: Emory Ford, Alex Ghiselin, Chris Hellman, David Teece, John Shenette, Megan Murphy Wolf, Norma Roche, Rick Clarke, Robert Reckman, Ruth McGrath, Dan Felton

Members absent: James Dostal

Other Attendees: Terry Culhane Board of Public Works Chairman; Jim Laurila, City Engineer; Ned Huntley, Director of Public Works; Doug McDonald Stormwater Coordinator; Fred Zimnoch, resident

2. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Emory Ford.

3. Announcement of Audio/Video Recording of Meeting

The meeting was video recorded by North Street Association, Ruth McGrath. Videos of these meetings will be posted on youtube and a link will be placed on the DPW website.

4. Committee Member Introduction

Each member briefly described their background and appointment to the Task Force.

5. Election of Committee Chair

Committee decided to elect a Chairman at the end of the meeting.

6. Reading of the Charge to the Committee

The Charge of the Committee was read aloud and discussed. The question was asked who the Task Force reports to and Terry Culhane explained that the Task Force will make recommendations to the Joint Committee of the City Council and Board of Public Works. The committee agreed that the charge should be broadened to include both the stormwater system and the flood control system and that the charge should include a timeline for the Task Force to complete their work. Emory Ford will discuss making these changes to the Charge with City Councilor Paul Spector.

7. Discussion of the Committee Operating Procedures

Discussion moved to the end of the meeting.

8. Presentation by Terry Culhane, BPW

Terry Culhane made a presentation to the Task Force which was titled “Flood Control and Stormwater Infrastructure Challenges”. Terry presented the following information and general discussion occurred through-out his presentation.

- The City’s flood control system and its condition was described. Army Corps of Engineers mandated assessments and improvements were discussed.
- The City’s stormwater drainage system and its condition was described. Pending EPA permit requirements and the associated increase in operating costs were reviewed. The need to replace aging drainage system was also reviewed.
- Areas within the City that have brook and erosion problems that threaten public and/or private property were reviewed.
- Preliminary budget estimates were discussed from FY2013 through 2016. Ways to meet the City’s revenue needs were reviewed including the General Fund, Over-rides, a new fee or a combination of funding sources.
- Fee structures, rate methods, and possible credit systems were introduced.
- The presentation will be posted on the Public Works website. See <http://www.northamptonma.gov/dpw/engineering/floodctrl/>

9. Discussion of Presentation

There was some discussion about the budget numbers presented. It was discussed by the Task Force that they were not charged with developing a specific budget but responsible with determining an equitable way to meet the City revenue needs to meet its obligations for flood control and stormwater systems. It was also discussed that the City would require an annual budget on the order of \$2 million to meet the obligations as presented by Terry Culhane. The Task Force discussed that a new source of revenue would be needed and that the General Fund would be unable to fund these City obligations. There was discussion about various fee systems and the need to consider making credits available. It was suggested and discussed that the Task Force should consider the cost of stormwater management off of City streets and that each property owner should pay for a portion of these costs.

10. Election of Committee Chair and Committee Operating Procedures

The Task Force elected Emory Ford Chairman and Dan Felton Vice-Chairman. The Task Force discussed the need for meeting minutes. Jim Laurila agreed to take minutes for Task Force review. Approved Task Force minutes will be posted on the DPW web site. The Task Force agreed that a public comment period would be provided at each meeting. The Task Force also requested that web-site with other applicable resources should be established. The Task Force agreed to follow the Best Practices that were developed by the City. The need for public meetings in the City to discuss Task Force progress was discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.