



**CITY OF HALLOWELL**  
**HIGHWAY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**SEPTEMBER 22, 2016**

286 WATER STREET  
 HALLOWELL, MAINE 04347

Attending: Committee members councilors Stearns, Harvey-McPherson, Frett. Also councilors Lindley, Circo. Also City Manager, MaineDOT, and ten or more members of the public (Carolyn Manson for Row House, Ruth Lachance for Board of Trade, Sam Herr for Bicycle Coalition of Maine, more.)

- MaineDOT decision-making milestones: MaineDOT is looking for closure on all city-requested design features that trigger federal thresholds (all design features that would implicate right-of-way, historic review, significant engineering, FHWA waivers, etc.) Many other lesser design issues (no federal triggers) can wait for later changes, change orders, City-only decision-making, etc. The ONLY current proposal being considered by the Highway Committee that MaineDOT would really like input on (sooner than later) is the possible but not yet proposed ADDITIONAL extension of street lights even farther south (discussed more below). If the PUBLIC or COUNCILORS would like the Council to advocate for federal-threshold-design issues that the Highway Committee is not advocating for (example curb extensions, discussed further below), the October Council meeting would be the timely opportunity for dialog.
- MaineDOT public hearing in October: MaineDOT will host another public hearing in October (working with the City Manager on date and location) both to close the design phase (above) and also to update the public (and solicit input) on other issues including more discussion on "constructability" such as nature and pace of construction and detours in 2018.
- Review previous City-requested design features: We reviewed and did not change design features previously supported and funded by City Council resolve. We re-affirmed that the Council resolve called for sidewalk lights on both sides of the street from "park to park to park" (providing lighting along sidewalks to the boat ramp, to the Cotton Mill's pocket park, and to the Granite City Park).
- Sidewalk lights redux: MaineDOT agreed to provide cost estimates for the further extension of sidewalk lights from the Cotton Mill's pocket park, further south (westerly side of Water) to the intersection of Temple. Councilors were clear that the request for cost estimates did not signal an intent to fund. MaineDOT would prefer to have a decision on this sooner than later, to engineer-scope underground conduit.
- Review open issues in spring 2016 Council resolve:
  - Cobra lights (and sidewalk lights redux again): By the time of the October hearing MaineDOT will have analyzed whether the City might request that CMP remove the high-overhead intersection lighting, due to new sidewalk lights, or

whether even further sidewalk lights might allow a removal of the high-overhead lights. These issues are City-CMP decision and cost; MaineDOT doesn't need a decision anytime soon.

- Additional brickwork: After our meeting, MaineDOT agreed that MaineDOT would fund 80% of any new brickwork on currently-bituminous sidewalks, on Water Street. This significantly reduces any City cost. MaineDOT will present the City with a menu of price implications for brickwork south to Lucky Garden, or south to boatramp, or south to Cotton Mill, or south to Temple, and north to Snowdump both sides. Previous ballparks of "full brickwork" exceed \$50,000 at 100% City cost. As such the Council might now be looking at \$0 to \$10,000 in proposed new City costs (20% of \$50,000). City decision-making is not necessary at a MaineDOT pace, but rather is necessary at a City budget-bond pace. While Councilors were guarded about new City investments (at 100% City cost), it'll be hard to resist more brickwork noting 80% state/federal participation.
- Visual crosswalks: All present applauded MaineDOT's proposal for two granite-inlay crosswalks crossing Water, approved through historic review process, at state expense. These will improve visibility (irrespective of paint frequency), and provide other benefits. None present urge local or state expense for more such crosswalks. A third comparable crosswalk (further enhanced by cobblestone) remains in the plans to replace the existing cobblestone across Winthrop at Water.
- Temple Street streetscape: MaineDOT will help the City Manager scope options. All costs and decisions would be city-only. The Council has not approved funds for city engineering, or city expense.
- Congregational Church sidewalks: MaineDOT will upgrade, with ADA access, at MaineDOT expense.
- Central Street parking lot: City continues to negotiation for acquisition of land, at City expense. The City Manager has retained an engineer firm for cost estimates. Need for coordination with MaineDOT, but no need for decision-making on a MaineDOT pace. Resolution of Dummer Lane (remove all vehicles? Realign Water Street crosswalk as a result?) is tied to resolution of Dummer House, Central Street parking.
- ADA access to buildings. Full ADA compliance of downtown entrances/stoops will be all but impossible due to ADA specs. But MaineDOT is making progress to make several entrances levels, and most entrances better than current. (Fewer steps, lower steps, or no steps.) In total (all entrances) MaineDOT will be reducing at least seventeen feet of "rise/steps" between sidewalk and building entrance. In very few cases will the rise/steps increase; in all of those cases there are already steps.

New issues/other issues:

- Downtown buildings -- new sprinklers? City Manager Nate Rudy outlined his dialog with the State Fire Marshall's Office to provide technical assistance to building owners (working with the Hallowell Water District?) to use street reconstruction as an opportunity for more building owners to get (free, subsidized, much cheaper, or at cost) sprinkler pipe entrances. Since the road will be open....
- Temporary bollards: The Bicycle Coalition of Maine outlined the benefits/possibility of seasonal bollards (temporary-seasonal break-away posts) at crosswalks, to define crosswalks-pedestrian zones. Decisions-installation of such features can wait until after constructions.
- Great Wall Rail Trail crossings: After the meeting, MaineDOT updated the manager that they have found pedestrian light sets that could be installed at the rail trail crossing south of town, for safety.
- Historic review: FHWA and MHPC have completed (?) historic review and found that current proposals satisfy state/federal required historic requirements. Curb extensions and other features, if proposed, would require re-opening the historic review process. Row House and other argue that curb extensions would not survive historic review. Neither the City Council nor MaineDOT have proposed curb extensions.
- Curb extensions (bumpouts): No Councilor or City Committee has urged consideration of bumpouts. Row House opposes. HABOT appears to continue to oppose.
- Crosswalk of Water at Temple: A crosswalk of Water at Temple would require federal process to build transportation infrastructure (sidewalk, pedestrian landing) in a federally-funded recreation area (boat ramp). The City and MDACF could do this much easier, almost no cost, with no MaineDOT involvement.
- Trees along Water at boatramp: MDACF replaced the trees a few years ago. The new trees are mostly dead. The City Manager might approach MDACF requesting trees. No need to involve MaineDOT
- Crosswalk at snowdump and/or granite crane: The Committee discussed proposals to relocate this crosswalk. The proposed location is the best location for south bound bicyclists.
- Even more brickwork (brick sidewalk extensions across driveways, across intersections/local streets). The committee received written comment urging more brickwork at vehicular crossings. A comparable example is the deteriorating brickwork across the entrance to HPD (off Winthrop), or the alley behind Buddy's (off Winthrop). None in attendance (early in meeting) advocated for this additional expense.
- Striped bike lanes. Striped bike lanes would require federal design waivers; Maine DOT is not inclined to request those waivers. The City has not requested striped bike lanes. Crowding bike lanes between travel lanes and parked cars (doors opening;

parallel parking) is not the current proposal; rather "share the lane" is the current proposal (and current practice.)

#### SUMMARY/POSSIBLE OCTOBER COUNCIL ACTION:

Our committee meeting adjourned without noodling October Council action or report. Below is my summary.

- The Council should invite public input at its October Council meeting; not all members of the public concur with the Highway Committee's lack of recommendation on (or rejection of) some issues of substance and process.
- The Council might make a motion (but need not do so) at its October Council meeting, in order to communicate clearly to MaineDOT the Council's position (unchanged, or enhanced, or changed, or nuanced), at MaineDOT's late October public hearing. Council silence in October would be viewed a continued support of the Council's approach (continuation of the May Resolve's approach).
- The only new proposals for Council action coming out the Highway Committee MIGHT BE new expenses for brickwork, for a few more sidewalk lights, or other incidental expenses. Temple street might vary, depending on staff findings. Only sidewalk light decisions are requested promptly by MaineDOT, but council support of the new offer for 80% state-federal cost of brick sidewalks is an offer we might promptly accept. The other decisions, or even these, might wait, or might merely be referred to the Finance Committee. Increasingly, there's no reason (?) for the Council or a Council Committee to make recommendations on such issues; increasingly the manager might manage this issues within budget/bond/Finance Committee/Council constraints and timing.
- Increasingly, design decisions that don't involve MaineDOT are the critical path decisions. Especially Central Street parking acquisition, design, cost estimates, etc. Recently, the full Council (with heavy staffing from the manager), rather than any specific committee, has been reviewing-vetting Central Street issues.
- Increasingly, "constructability" should be the focus of the Council-MaineDOT relationship, not design details. Councilors should continue to hold themselves accountable for understanding MaineDOT decision-making on contracting decisions, construction schedule decisions, and resulting business and residential and detour impacts.
- Soon, also, Council attention should turn toward our approach to communications-marketing during construction, and parking alternatives during construction.

Respectfully,

Alan Stearns, Chair, Highway Committee, Hallowell Council  
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