

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Capital Improvement Plan

January 30, 2006 – 6:30 p.m.

Council Chambers

City Council Present: Mayor Marchand, Assistant Mayor Ferrini, Councilors Grasso, Dwyer, Reynolds, Pantelakos, Whitehouse, Smith and Hynes

Officials Present: John P. Bohenko, City Manager; Cindy Hayden, Deputy City Manager, Robert Sullivan, City Attorney; David Allen, Deputy Public Works Director; Peter Rice, City Engineer; Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director; David Holden, Planning Director; Gail Cunningham, Controller; Chris LeClaire, Fire Chief; Bill Irving, Police Captain; Mary Ann List, Library Director; Robert Lister, Superintendent of Schools; Alan Brady, Communications Supervisor – Information System Projects; Andrew Purgiel, Auditor; Judie Belanger, Finance Director; and Dianne M. Kirby, Deputy City Clerk

I. Call to Order

At 7:10 p.m., Mayor Marchand called the work session to order and advised the City Council and members of the public that this meeting is for review of the Capital Improvement Plan and input may be available by the public at future City Council meetings

II. Introduction

City Manager Bohenko advised the City Council that the staff has put together a presentation on the proposed Capital Improvement Plan for FY2007-2012. He stated that this is a six-year Capital Improvement Plan that is being presented in accordance with state and local requirements. City Manager Bohenko went on to explain that in August a memo was sent to all departments asking them to update the plan and to identify any new projects or equipment that they felt needed to be included in this document. He stated that when all the proposals were submitted, a sub-committee of three members from the Planning Board, the City Manager and City's staff reviewed them. He stated that for FY 07, the departments submitted requests from the general fund in the amount of 2.8 million dollars. The committee reduced these requests to 1.5 million dollars - a reduction of 1.3 million dollars. City Manager Bohenko stated the total CIP for FY07 is estimated at 22 million dollars, of which 60 percent will come from either grants or private funds. He stated that tonight's work session continues the CIP process.

City Manager Bohenko reported that on January 19, 2006, the Planning Board adopted this CIP as presented in accordance with their requirements under state statute. After tonight the City Council will conduct a public hearing on the CIP at the March 20, 2006 meeting. After the public hearing the City Council may adopt the CIP by simple majority vote. He stated it is anticipated that the City Council will vote on the CIP no later than April 3, 2006. City Manager Bohenko stated that the CIP, in accordance with the City Charter needs to be adopted before he can submit the proposed FY07 budget to the Council. He went on to state that the CIP, once adopted, does not bind the City Council to any of the projects listed, but only identifies them as part of the actual plan. He went on to state that the actual appropriations for projects do not occur until adoption of the FY07 budget. He further stated that all projects that require

bonding would need a separate vote of the City Council, which will require a 2/3 majority vote to pass.

City Manager Bohenko stated that the City staff would make the presentation of the CIP. Please note that when they get down to the water and sewer projects, they will just do a brief summary because the City Council has already spent two work sessions on each of these areas.

III. Presentation

Members of the City staff provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining the CIP. Christopher LeClaire, Fire Chief, discussed the need for a fire/rescue boat, as well as replacement ambulance and fire vehicles. Chief LeClaire went on to state the need for upgrading the fire department's communication system infrastructure and repairs and improvements to the fire alarm system. He discussed the need for replacement of Fire apparatus and equipment. He addressed the need to replace Stations 2 and 3.

Police Captain Irving spoke to the funding request for a mobile communication post, this project is identified for FY08. He addressed the need for improvements to the indoor training range and an additional two bay garage expansion. Captain Irving spoke to the funding request for a Reverse 911 – Community Notification System. This project is identified for FY08.

Robert Lister, Superintendent of Schools outlined school facilities capital improvements, Phase II and Phase III School Department building renovations. He also discussed the Portsmouth Middle School Needs Assessment Study Committee and their recommendations for replacement or renovations to the Portsmouth Middle School.

Mary Ann List, Library Director addressed their request for furnishings and equipment for the new Library.

Cindy Hayden, Deputy City Manager addressed funding for Phase I and Phase II redevelopment of the McIntyre Federal Office Building. She discussed Land Acquisition, which funds the purchase of land that has been determined should be municipally owned. She also discussed the implementation of the Peirce Island Master Plan. She spoke to the open space public access improvements at Sagamore Creek Headlands and the Piscataqua Riverwalk project. She discussed the continuation of playground improvements in the City.

Alan Brady, Communications Supervisor spoke to a Mobile Data Terminal System, Updating the Television Studio and upgrading/replacement of City Hall Servers and workstations.

Steve Parkinson, Director of Public Works, spoke to improvements to the stump dump for the creation of recreational fields. He addressed the various projects recommended for FY07 and those identified for future years. He spoke on the transit infrastructure improvements that would be federally funded and discussed funding for major renovation projects for the High Hanover Parking Facility. He discussed public transportation improvement projects as well as citywide traffic signal upgrades and funding for the replacement of various bridges throughout the City. He also spoke to building, road and infrastructure improvements throughout the City.

He also spoke to the need to aerial photograph the City, which is an important tool for mapping the City's infrastructure.

City Engineer Peter Rice reviewed the sewer projects. He addressed Phase III and IV of the sewage improvement program.

Deputy Public Works Director Allen reviewed the water projects. He discussed the annual water line replacement program, water source augmentation, water tank replacements, and the Madbury Treatment Plant upgrades.

IV. Questions and Discussion

Councilor Dwyer stated that Superintendent Lister alluded to an ongoing study looking into the cost for renovating as well as building a new middle school. She requested where the figures for this cost study were and were they from prior years. Superintendent Lister stated that the study was from prior years and that the study is available if the Council members wish to review it. Councilor Dwyer requested if the cost of the study was part of the Capital Improvement Plan. Superintendent Lister stated that it was not included at this point. City Manager Bohenko stated that it might be something that could be placed in the CIP for FY07/08.

Assistant Mayor Ferrini stated that the only way to know if renovations or building a new school is to conduct a comprehensive study. He suggested convening a Joint Building Committee to study all the options.

Councilor Whitehouse stated that the public is concerned and wants to know why renovating the middle school is not at least being looked at. He said he supports the suggestions by Councilor Dwyer and Assistant Mayor Ferrini to convene a Joint Building Committee.

Councilor Reynolds stated that he agreed with Assistant Mayor Ferrini and Councilor Dwyer. He stated that he is not on board that a new building is needed.

Mayor Marchand stated that anytime you have a project where you cannot confirm or deny the needs, a study would build public confidence in the final decision.

Councilor Grasso stated that she would like to see the middle school project moved to an out year in the Capital Improvement Plan. She stated that the FY08/09 budget is too soon to allow for time to convene a committee and do the study. She also stated that the City is not ready to fund another new school. Councilor Grasso stated that a site has not been selected yet and she would like to ensure that the school administrators research into which type of teaching system they want, so that we do not run into the same problems that were encountered with Little Harbour School. She again stated that FY08 is too soon and would like to see the project be pushed forward to FY10/11 in order to have time to do a thorough study and procure a site.

Superintendent Lister stated that the study is available to anyone who wishes to review it. He stated that there is a lot of work to do on this, however he feels it is an important project.

Councilor Smith agreed with Councilor Grasso that we need to move the Middle School projects to FY10/11. City Manager Bohenko stated that for planning purposes, if we are going to add the study to the Capital Improvement Plan, he will need the numbers as soon as possible.

Assistant Mayor Ferrini stated that he heartily endorses the study, but disagrees with Councilors Grasso and Smith. He stated that despite the best efforts of staff and all concerned, he feels, the middle school should not be used by our children in its current state any longer than is necessary. Councilor Reynolds stated that, like Assistant Mayor Ferrini, he feels that whatever is needed, be it renovations or a new school, we need to do it quickly to make sure that our middle school kids have a first class facility.

Councilor Whitehouse stated that the CIP is talking about a 2.5 million dollar figure in FY08 to replace Fire Station 3. He stated that the Council has strictly talked about the problems with Fire Station 2 and nothing on Station 3. City Manager Bohenko stated that Councilor Whitehouse is correct. The two stations should be flipped.

Councilor Whitehouse stated that the figure for Library furniture and equipment is listed as \$350,000.00. The last CIP stated the figure as \$300,000.00. Why has the amount increased? Mary Ann List, Library Director, stated that the cost of steel for the bookcases has caused the increase in the price.

City Manager Bohenko commended the library staff for the efforts they have put into keeping the program intact and within budget limits. There has been a tremendous amount of valued engineering that has gone into the project.

Councilor Reynolds stated that he is very concerned with the term valued engineering. Too often, this means cheaper and not better. Dave Allen, Deputy Public Works Director stated that they have worked at getting the best energy-efficient building for the buck.

Councilor Smith stated that he did not see anything in the CIP on the study for noise barriers at Pannaway and Atlantic Heights. City Manager Bohenko stated that he would like to get DOT to fund this. Assistant Mayor Ferrini stated that the City is in a better position to lobby the state if we know what the cost is. City Manager Bohenko stated that we could maybe place this item in an out-year.

Councilor Grasso stated that she would like to see the Council stick as close to the one million dollar line as possible on the general fund in the CIP as she feels this year is going to be a hard budget year.

Councilor Dwyer stated that she noticed the CIP says that we will do a fitting memorial at the African burial grounds. She stated that with all the news coverage, both local and national, she hopes that we do not go lightly in the design of the memorial and that the memorial is fitting and will make Portsmouth proud.

Councilor Reynolds stated that he has made an observation in the CIP concerning bicycle access and according to the goal of the Master plan it was agreed to build a citywide bicycle and pedestrian plan. He is pleased that there are some projects in the CIP.

Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director, stated that all road projects have looked into a sidewalk and bicycle path, but some roads do not allow to safely accommodate a bicycle path.

City Manager Bohenko reminded the City Council that the next time they will be reviewing the CIP would be at the March 20, 2005 public hearing. He stated that the only addition to the CIP is to add to the plan a study on the Middle School with a dollar amount.

Mayor Marchand thanked the staff for the presentation and the residents that attended this meeting.

V. Adjournment

At 9:00 p.m., Mayor Marchand closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dianne M. Kirby, Deputy City Clerk