
From: Karen Conard
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 2:27 PM
To: Juliet T.H. Walker; Peter H. Rice; Eric B. Eby
Cc: Jessica S. Griffin
Subject: FW: thank you

From: WatsonJr, Bill [mailto:WILLIAM.E.WATSONJR@dot.nh.gov]
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 11:25 AM
To: Karen Conard <kconard@cityofportsmouth.com>
Cc: Rick Becksted (mayorbecksted@gmail.com) <mayorbecksted@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: thank you
Importance: High

Good Morning Mayor and Karen –

I hope that things are well in NH. This weekend's snow has delayed me getting back to NH until tomorrow night. However, technology certainly is wonderful for managing activities remotely!

With regards to our phone conversation, and your approach to tonight's meeting, I would suggest a motion/discussion that encompasses the following points:

- The City of Portsmouth, through the Mayor and City Council, have expressed concerns over implemented infrastructure changes along Middle Street in Portsmouth. Specifically, in the area of Middle Street from Cabot Street to Lincoln Avenue, changes in parking (moving bikes to the curb line and parked vehicles away from the curb) has created concern and controversy
- Many within the City would prefer to flip flop parking and bike access back to the way it was, and perhaps reroute bikes along adjacent parallel streets. Doing so, without justification of safety or engineering review support would jeopardize all federal funds invested in the total project, not just the section in question.
- An independent review of the work completed vs. what was on plans shows that most of the work was done as intended. Only minor modifications were recommended as part of the review completed.
- This review has not addressed the safety concerns expressed by the City Council, Mayor and others.
- The Department recognizes that these concerns exist and continues to be open to discussing and entertaining alternative approaches, as long as there are publicly supported engineered solutions that any final decisions are based upon.
- The Department is open to allowing the City of Portsmouth six months to explore alternative solutions to the current implemented solutions. In this six month time frame, the following would be acceptable to occur:
 - In the six month interim, the City of Portsmouth is allowed to flip-flop the car parking/bike lane back to its original configuration
 - In this six months, City staff (or a consultant) should be reviewing crash and traffic data to be able to compare to previous data collected.
 - In this six month period, the City will engage with a consultant to design and hold public meetings to explore and determine if there is a solution that allows for continued safe bicycle route as the original purpose and need of the project.

- At the end of the six month period, there will need to be final discussion and decision between City Staff, Elected Officials and the Department as to what the final configuration of bike lanes along Middle Street (or other acceptable options) will look like.
- If the final decision is that the current configuration is still appropriate, then the lane configuration will need to be flopped back. If another configuration is chosen, then an acceptable timeframe to implement those changes will be agreed to.
- Upon completion of all of these steps, whatever is considered acceptable to the City and State will not require any payback.

This is probably too much for a motion, but it includes all of the points that I think we talked about, with a little more detail about logistical steps.

Please do not be afraid to cut this down as you feel appropriate. If you feel that any changes you make may affect our shared understanding, please reach out to me.

My direct cell # is 603-724-4777.

Regards,
Bill

William Watson Jr., PE Administrator
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NH Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance
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From: Karen Conard <kconard@cityofportsmouth.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 5:01 PM
To: WatsonJr, Bill <WILLIAM.E.WATSONJR@dot.nh.gov>
Cc: Rick Becksted (mayorbecksted@gmail.com) <mayorbecksted@gmail.com>
Subject: thank you

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Good afternoon Bill –

Thank you for speaking with Mayor Becksted and me earlier. The Mayor is copied here. We look forward to receiving your suggested motion language prior to our next Council Meeting on Monday evening.

Take care, thanks again and safe travels back to NH –
Karen

Karen S. Conard
City Manager