

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
SELECTMEN'S SPECIAL MEETING
MAIN STREET RECONSTRUCTON
MINUTES
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2012
7:00 P.M. – TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: STEPHEN BANNON
 ANDREW BLECHMAN
 ALANA CHERNILA
 DEB PHILLIPS
 SEAN STANTON
 KEVIN O'DONNELL, TOWN MANAGER

7:00 PM – PUBLIC SESSION – BOARD ROOM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Sean Stanton called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. SELECTMEN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS:

A. GENERAL COMMENTS BY THE BOARD.

NONE

3. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

NONE

4. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME:

Jenny Clark spoke about the traffic control signals and said that using suspension cables does not obstruct the view and does not look 'so heavy.' She feels that the signals voted upon makes Great Barrington look like a city. Jenny asked if there could be traffic synchronization under the road-bed instead of using a camera on the signal itself. Jenny also asked if one light could be taken out at Church and Pleasant St; she feels that there are too many. She also said that the lighting is too bright.

Bob Montgomery – 28 Church St - said that he was surprised by this topic being on the agenda. He understood that each phase would give ample time for research. He asked why, at this point, is there discussion about items of such significance.

Patricia Ryan – 14 Oak St - said that she is appalled at the light design. She feels that they are very obtrusive. They should reflect a more historic town with delicate features.

Dana Dapollito – 34 Castle Hill – said that she drove through Lenox and there was no lighting in their historic district. She also studied the traffic lights going in and out of Lee which were all a "suspension wire design." She said that this is the least obtrusive option.

Sharon Gregory – 32 Hollenbeck Ave. – said that there have been concerns presented in the past by a group in regards to the reconstruction (about 2 years ago) and now, 2 years later, we are 'still trying to figure it out.' She said that she would hate for there to be a compromise on the essence of the project and the town in order to get the project done.

Jane Iredale said that she is concerned about the signal design because it is the first thing that you see when entering the town. The color and the arch are two characteristics that are 'off-putting.' Jane added that the scale seems out of context with out town.

5. LICENSES OR PERMITS:

NONE

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Continued Discussion re: Main Street Reconstruction – Traffic Control Signals

Sean Stanton said that these comments echo the concerns of the Board.

Alana Chernila said that the Board is only as good as their advisors and the Board depends on Kevin O'Donnell and Joe Sokul to ask the right questions. Alana asked what other questions were not asked that may need some focus.

Jon Dietrich responded that they started the process by collecting input and asking questions of residents, getting feedback, thoughts and concerns. He said that he is disappointed to hear it said that "you didn't know" since there has been information and plans presented at each part of the process. Jon said that some modifications have been made based on the state guidelines, review, and response. The 75% design phase has been submitted and they are working on submitting the complete 100% design.

Jon Dietrich added that the photo that was given to the board was to show bump-outs and sidewalks. It was not meant to focus on the light hardware. He said that the photo that Jenny Clark presented is not 100% accurate; the thickness is not accurate, the style is off and the photo depicts them as being heavy. The signals will not be as heavy as shown in her photo.

Jon said that mast arms were chosen for functionality and safety reasons. It was important to do something consistent with the support structure of downtown and what is currently in place. The mast arms allow better signal-head alignment over traffic lanes which will help visibility and result in safety. A road safety audit was run by BRPC and the results showed that the signal heads should be over the lanes. The state also prefers mast arms.

Sean Stanton said that motorcycles don't always trigger light sensors.

Jon Dietrich responded that video detection was chosen for this reason and to detect traffic to a finer degree. This mechanism will not work on a span wire; it must be on a rigid mount. The loop detectors that would be used for this purpose on a span wire aren't as effective and require more maintenance. Jon said that the mast pole is 20 feet tall and the span pole is 30-32 feet tall in order to get the wire high enough.

Chris Rembold said that they wanted an option that is not high maintenance and this was the best choice.

Alana Chernila asked if the mast arms must be black.

Jon responded that they can also be galvanized if the town prefers.

Jenny Clark asked if a pedestrian 'push button box' can be mounted on the mast pole.

Steve Savaria responded that this would have to be looked at corner by corner. Some corners require a separate post for the box.

Bob Montgomery asked how many signs would be hanging off each mast arm.

Jon Dietrich responded that there will be 1 on each, which is a Mass. DOT requirement.

MOTION: Deb Phillips to go with straight mast arms with galvanized steel for the traffic signals

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 4-1 Andrew Blechman against

MOTION: Steve Bannon to use cameras and not imbedded loop

SECOND: Deb Phillips

VOTE: 4-1 Andrew Blechman against

Chris Rembold said that there were some landscape changes. There are ongoing discussions about a few planned tree locations.

There was discussion about the desire to have a complete rendering made showing all of the details.

Alana Chernila said that this rendering would help the Board make final decisions; however, the Board has been receiving public input for 2 years. She said they need to decide what they will do with this rendering. She hesitates to open it up to the whole town.

Steve Bannon said that it is too late and too expensive. He said that they have been asking for input all along.

Jon Dietrich said that he will get a cost estimate for photo realism and water color renderings.

James Mercer, representing the Historic District Commission, said that they feel that they were not kept in the loop on the project. This project is very important to the Historic District Commission, and they feel as though they have been given very little attention. Jim said that they still have concerns and requested another meeting for discussion.

Sean Stanton said that he would like to meet with the HDC about this.

7. SELECTMEN'S TIME:

NONE

8. MEDIA TIME:

NONE

9. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Steven Bannon, seconded by Deb Phillips, the Board adjourned its meeting at 9:12 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Cara Becker
Recording Secretary