

City of Bristol
Board of Public Works
Meeting Minutes for
June 20, 2024, 2024
With Zoom Access

Members Present: Mayor Jeffrey Caggiano
Council Member Cheryl Thibeault
Council Member Jacqueline Olsen
Council Member Erick Rosengren
Commissioner Michael Dumas
Commissioner David Hartley
Commissioner Frank Stawski

Staff Present: Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works

1. Call to order

Mayor Caggiano called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. There was a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: made by Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Commissioner Dumas to accept as presented and place on file. Motion passed.

3. Employee Recognition

The employee anniversaries were reviewed

4. Public Participation

Michael Plourde, 77 Palmorr Place, spoke to the board regarding the maintenance of the islands on the road. He is here to find out why all of a sudden this has become an issue. He stated that the city has always taken care of the island. There is no official HOA in the neighborhood to take care of it as the developer dropped the ball on this and the city did step up and mow it.

Mayor Caggiano stated that this is in the deeds and the city is not responsible for them based on the deeds. This is also an item in the Director's Report and will be talked about then.

5. Division Reports

The Division Reports are contained in the packet for review.

MOTION: made by Commissioner Hartley and seconded by Council Member Thibeault to accept as presented and place on file. Motion passed.

6. Public Works Project Schedule

MOTION: made by Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Commissioner Hartley to accept as presented and place on file. Motion passed.

Council Member Rosengren asked about how much more work is there to be done at 151 High Street.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated that there has been a fair amount of work done at this property. The roof and mechanical work will be new but it's the only one planned for that building this year.

Mayor Caggiano, stated that there was a request for development in that area and for shared parking potentially. The original plan was to get parks and recreation to the new city hall but no plans for youth and community services. With the interest of a new development might be a good time to make a move. There may be historic value there as well.

Council Member Thibeault, annually the real estate approves the use and lease of that building, which is year to year.

Mayor Caggiano stated that parks and recreation and youth services should come back to city hall and let the neighborhood continue to develop in town.

7. Bldg. Comm Project List

MOTION: made by Council Member Rosengren and seconded by Commissioner Dumas to accept as presented and place on file. Motion passed.

8. Director's Report

The Director's report is included in the packet and the below was reviewed with the board.

Staffing: Tony Laurenzetti has agreed to stay on longer to cover in engineering. A civil engineer has been hired and started this week. The summer intern is in place.

Hope Street – Geo-pier installation is complete and no obstructions were encountered.

Asset Management- is up and running. Some issues are still being worked out.

Maple Court- We are only waiting on one property owner to sign the easement. If not, the project will not be done.

City Hall- The roof safety railing has been installed and the tile is being replaced on the north entrance. The department heads have been asked to contact Public Works in there is any issues to address.

DOT/West End- work is progressing, work will begin along the front of Café Real in July and final pavement installation is scheduled for July or August.

Jerome Avenue- Construction is on schedule to be opened in December 2024. The Terryville Fish and Game club did ask for a pedestrian bridge, but the contractor owns the bridge and they will have to work it out with them.

Bike Path- The North Main Street streetscape is continuing.

Memorial Blvd. – the punch list is in progress. The list was included in the packet.

Organic Waste Collection- This is a CT DEEP initiative. Residents can pick up a container and bags at public works and drop off at Vincent P Kelly Road. This is at no cost to the city and is funded by a Covanta grant.

NCRS 396 Jerome Ave- the property owner verbally agreed to move forward. An attorney was hired to assist with the closing and establish an escrow account.

Wildewood Run Islands- This issue came up a year ago based on complaints received that Public Works was not mowing the islands. Per the deeds, there was supposed to form an organization to maintain it. He stated that not cutting it reflects poorly on the department when its not mowed.

Mayor Caggiano read the deed that states a yearly payment of \$100.00 that maybe wasn't explained to the owners, DPW did previously mow the islands but ceased based on the boards recommendations last year. As previously reported, they do not want the island to look unacceptable, therefore DPW supports maintaining the island, however, removing a portion of the planting to reduce maintenance. Another suggestion was to have Public Works get it back under control and then the land owners would take over.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated the probability of the residents in the area meeting the requirement of the deed and then doing the maintenance is low, but DPW does not have the resources to maintain the island. DPW would go in and cut the grass, but long term would eliminate the mulch, eliminate the shrubs and then eventually remove it entirely

Commissioner Hartley stated he walked the area and everything in the island is unsavable. The city is not responsible and there is real money to maintain this area. I don't think the island can be removed as there is a granite stone in there.

Council Member Rosengren stated that if we do this one, how many more will we end up doing.

Council Member Theriault said that there are many islands in Bristol and it is a burden for residents to take care of. She stated should it could be taken down to grass and be removed next time the roads are paved unless the residents agree to maintain it. The granite stone could maybe be moved.

Commissioner Stawski, stated that we voted a year ago to turn this over to the property owners as indicated in the deeds. If the closing attorney didn't tell them about this expense they should go after them. However, it does set a precedence and agrees that the owners should be maintaining it as stated in the deed.

Commissioner Dumas stated agrees with the board. In the short term we can mow it.

Michael Plourde, 77 Palmorr Place, stated that the city has mowed it since 1988 by the city. The second island is the bigger issue as its way to big. There is also a raised bed inside of the island with stones that is falling apart. One of the reasons why it has been maintained by the city is due to the catch basin and when they would come maintain that they would do the island.

Mayor Caggiano stated that the city does maintain the detention ponds three time a year, and we could allow a one time clean up and give discretion to Public Works to work with a landscaper and make the area maintenance free.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated that we could remove everything in the island and pave it, but that would be a danger. We can look at it and determine what can be put in for landscaping. If Public Works does have to maintain it, we would get it to a manageable position and look at it to reduce the maintenance on it.

Commissioner Hartley stated he walked the area and there is nothing growing in there. It would be a lot of time and money to maintain it. I agree we should clean it out once and take it down to dirt and be done with it. We were clear we did not want to do that and the developer had a process in place.

Council Member Thibeault said maybe it could be paved and then have signs put up so no one drives out on the island. She also stated there could be a flower container in the center as well.

Council Member Olsen agreed with Council Member Thibeault

MOTION: to allow Public Works to remove the material in the island and give Public Works the discretion to come up with a solution to make it maintenance free, and providing direction signs for safety of the drivers made by Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Council Member Olsen. Motion passed.

MOTION: to amend the previous motion and add that the this will be a one-time event and the residents will be advised regarding this decision made by Commissioner Hartley and Seconded by Council Member Olsen. Motion passed.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works stated that we will inform the residents with letters of the solution.

Rte. 6- Raymond Rogozinski stated that the road will be closed in the area of Maple End for around three days for the railroad crossings to be replaced. Detours will be posted as soon as the schedule is confirmed

A discussion was held regarding Maple Court and what options we have to get the last property owner to sign the easement.

Commissioner Harley asked about the addition of bus shelters and is asking if there is an agreement worked out on who is going to clean and take care of the shelter.

Raymond Rogozinski stated that there is a Bus shelter policy that we only take care of ones that are on our property and thinks the DOT is working with the same issues. If a request comes that we maintain them, it will be brought to the board to determine if they want to modify the policy or not install the shelter.

MOTION: made by Commissioner Hartley and seconded by Council Member Rosengren to accept as presented and place on file. Motion passed.

9. New Business

a. Shrub Road

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, reviewed the Shrub Road Plans from AI Engineers. There are painted islands in two areas which widens the road. Pigeon Hill will have off street parallel parking of three spaces. The addition of a stop sign is waiting for approval from the Police Board. Item 5 of the memo talks about the sidewalks in front of the Learning Center. Traffic Calming was presented in December of 2022. There was discussion about roadway widening near the Learning Center and Oak Hill. There are 34 trees being removed and replanting of trees will be done. Shrub Road would be reduced to 10- foot wide near Jerome Avenue. Public Works proposed to reduce the 8- foot island to 4 feet which lessens the widening of the road at some areas. The posted speed limit has been discussed with the police department and the speed limit would be reduced to 25mph and must be approved by the state. Included in the memo is a list of concerns that was received. This project is being funded by a grant and does require state approval. He is asking for approval from the board that the project moves forward with the adjustments indicated.

Marian Dauphinais, 409 Shrub Road, spoke regarding the 10 feet they are taking, is it from the curb or the property line. She also asked if the arborvitaes would be taken out as well as the dogwood trees. She is concerned about the water line on her property as well. She stated she understands you can take the property but that she will have to maintain the sidewalk and am liable but it is not my property. Where the retaining wall I also have to maintain the wall as well. I have seen the signs out there so if something happens to the wall and the sidewalk am I responsible to fix it.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated that 409 Shrub Road will require a retaining wall added due to the grade and the sidewalk. This should not impact the water line and if it does, we will replace the water line. He stated he will meet with property owners to discuss individual concerns they have.

Mayor Caggiano stated that if you have individual concerns to take them up with Ray and the team directly. He has spoken to many of the owners already. Also, the original plan was 4-foot sidewalks, but we do have a handicap accessible trail thru arpa funding with a 5-foot width sidewalk but things do change as we go along.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works stated that the sidewalk ordinance is common that the resident maintains them. The retaining wall policy would be in the right of way and would be maintained by the city.

Jane Murdock, 400 Shrub Road, asked that there be a stall on the vote tonight. She stated there is a dangerous precedent. She stated she looked up the ADA standards on their website and it says at least 4 feet. I understand the funding says 5 feet. I request that the ADA sidewalks go from Oakhill up to property the city of Bristol owns on the north side and the rest of the area, the hills are too steep and be 4 feet. The residents of Shrub Road have been forced into this. I am not opposed to ADA compliant, but we are the owners paying the taxes and the learning center doesn't pay taxes and should not be catered to. We are talking about saving an oak tree for a nonprofit and then they are taking property from a tax payer to not move the oak tree. The letter that was received was inflammatory and it was unsigned and that most of us on shrub road were distressed about this letter. The last set of changes on line there was a crosswalk at Fallsbrook, Sherwood and long hill road. There is nothing at oak hill. Either all the crosswalks from north to south all go in or all come out. I want to see everyone treated equally and if 5-foot sidewalks go in I will go after every street that has a park or rec center and demand that those sidewalks now become 5 foot wide.

Jim Quick, 223 Falls Brook Road, stated he owns 223 Falls Brook Road and own all the property across from the park. He gave a history of Shrub Road. Pigeon Hill, The Barnes Nature Center and Seymour Park, people come here to get away from the city. Whether the sidewalk is 4 feet or 5 feet doesn't matter, it will take away the look of the road and make people drive faster on the road. The speed calming measure which is a non-raised island with stripes going across it, is the least effective and most expensive to the taxpayers. Nobody wants the islands. I propose to let this decision tonight go on to another meeting. These islands become dangerous to cross the road, and will make the road look like an urban area and look terrible. We have not had transparency with the city. Bottom line is we did not see the plans and I have been to all the meetings. We do want the sidewalks on the road, but we wanted the 4- foot ones. We are turning it into an urban road.

Mayor Caggiano stated that this information has been online. There are 34 trees that are coming down and be replaced. We moved mailboxes to the right side of the road. We are trying to get the road to be 25 mph as well. The painted islands are not the most expensive.

Anna Romanowski, 415 Shrub Road, stated that this is the first time she had seen the island and the widening of the road. This is unfair treatment of the taxpayers on this road. Why accommodate the learning center as they do not pay taxes and you should be accommodating the residents? Also asked if anyone has studied power lines being underground or bringing in natural gas and encompass other improvements. Retaining walls and bring the grade down only at 409 or is that happening anywhere else. The city is picking the vendors and construction company, what is the warranty for the sidewalks? The stop-sign on Jerome and Shrub, has there been a traffic study there as the stop sign at Stevens is there and will be a parking lot there. The traffic study is from 2021, and a new one should be done.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated the islands were discussed at a meeting in December of 2022.

Mayor Caggiano stated that the reason we moved the parking from the park to Pigeon Hill is because the neighbors across the street asked it to be done. We catered to them because they were worried about the playground and people backing in to their cars in their driveways. Gas and powerlines were looked into. This is a responsible project we are doing.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated there is a one-year warranty from the company on the sidewalks.

Eric Madsen, 70 Oak Hill Drive, stated he has lived here his whole life. These are shocking changes for Shrub Road. The city has grant money to spend and may have been intended for the addition of painted bike lanes, then adding a sidewalk for work at pigeon Hill. Now they want to build a 5- foot sidewalk on the opposite side of the road where most people live when a 4-foot sidewalk would be adequate for wheelchair, bike and pedestrian uses. Additionally, they want to widen Shrub Road to make it safer for cars and pedestrian. Urban planning has shown that this always results in more traffic, speeding and accidents. He suggested the city check out a book from the public library any book on traffic calming that emphasizes safe, pleasant, desirable neighborhoods. Look in the glossary terms like road narrowing, tree scapes, stop signs, speed humps, cobblestones, chokers 25 mph speed limits etc. They are adding a three way stop sign on Jerome Ave, this is a disaster as in the evening rush hour will back up traffic to Stevens Street. This project either invites a lawsuit from those neighborhood associations or another project in area neighborhoods. Be careful neighbors of the city's motivations or good intentions. This project will increase impermeable surface water runoff by 1/3 with the water going directly to the drinking water supply streams that often flood people's homes. I can support and embrace a 4-foot sidewalk along the south side of shrub road and no new stop signs at Jerome Ave, adding in medians, parallel parking, 5-foot sidewalks and a 10-foot-wide pedestrian bridge and I say stop it all. This creates more negative than positive. If you worked with the neighborhood from the beginning you could have a project we could embrace and support.

Mayor Caggiano stated that regarding the speed humps, we had lots of input from the police department and the fire department was against them. It takes to long for them to get over them with the trucks. For a 25-mph road or greater road speed humps are dangerous and cost lots of money to the city and the fire trucks have to stop three times to get over them which slows down their response time.

Scott Heth, 175 Shrub Road, Executive Director Environmental Learning Centers, spoke in support of the sidewalks to connect the recreation opportunities. We appreciate the effort to save the oak tree, it is a historical tree and we granted an easement for the sidewalks to come onto the property even though we will have a fairly large financial burden to maintain that length of them since we probably have the longest amount on Shrub Road. We are not supportive of the islands, we appreciate that they went from 8 feet to 4 feet, but we don't think that the island and associated widening of the road is appropriate for Shrub Road as it will increase the site lines and make the traffic faster. We are not supportive of the parallel parking adjacent to Pigeon Hill as

we feel it will take away from the viewscape. In terms of the ADA, we have a lot of experience looking at the regulations there is a grade requirement for ada and it is less than 5% and the grade on most of Shrub Road is greater than that.

Mayor Caggiano, stated that did receive comments from several residents and they were in favor of the sidewalks.

CJ Strand, 160 Sherwood Road, stated that we have three great assets the city has and is very supportive of the sidewalks. It is a safe connection to the playgrounds. I take my kids to the park everyday and it scary to go there safely and sidewalks will make it much easier and safer to get to the areas. He thanked the board for the work they are doing and the responsiveness.

Rich Bartosch, 95 Shrub Road, stated he is all for it and that it will add value to his house. Traffic calming will take time. He stated he is 100% behind the project.

Jennifer Furlong, 470 Shrub Road, stated that she loves the ADA trail and is happy that she can take her 91-year-old father there in his wheelchair and we did pass another person in a wheelchair and it was just fine to pass. She is happy with the sidewalks and She wants to share her concern with the painted islands and if they will even work. She is not in favor of the land being taken to widen the road. Many of us received a paper on our door yesterday and wanted to ask about, which is digging out of a 30-foot gash at Pigeon Hill at the nature preserve and the other is six elaborate storm water runoff systems and parallel parking for dozens of cars. I don't know if any of these are accurate.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, regarding the 30- foot gash, is indicated that there are only three parallel parking places at Pigeon Hill. Storm Water collection is staying as is, there is one area at the Environmental Learning area along the road without catch basin and those will be put to match ones in the area.

Jennifer Furlong, 470Shrub Road, continued saying that many people are opposed to it and that the message is clear. They are opposed to widening the road just to narrow it again.

Mayor Caggiano stated 42- mph is the average speed with the traffic studies done and we are proposing to make it a 25-mph road. Also, police traffic patrols have already pulled over around 30 cars for speeding and this will continue. Their will also be a flashing light going on the westbound side to let people know they are speeding and we are doing our due diligence on traffic calming. I am hearing a lot of the painted island doesn't work, several experts have come and talked to all of us about how these measures work adding sidewalks is traffic calming as well as parallel parking is traffic calming. This is a very difficult situation, but there were public meetings at the Barnes Nature Center and we have to make a decision at some point.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated that the goal is to get direction and this project has had more community outreach than most with three public hearing, notices to each property owner to inform them. The options are to move forward with the presented designs and proposed changes by Public Works, or to move forward with just sidewalks and with traffic calming or to cancel the project altogether. The issue with 4 feet to 5 feet has been talked about at length, ultimately it is the city standard and if the board wanted to pursue, we could go back to

the state to get a definitive answer, but is a recommendation from the state and is compliant with city ordinance. As far as crosswalks, can continue to work with PD as this is not driving the project.

Council Member Rosengren, with changing any of these things, will this compromise the funding? Due to the hills with ADA compliance is 5% grade, when I walked it yesterday, I had a hard for me to stop as I got going down the hill and someone in a Wheelchair may have trouble stopping.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated, it needs DOT approval, so 5-foot sidewalks were proposed because of the DOT manual and its also in our city ordinance. The Board adopted an ADA standard that allows us to go with the slope of the road.

Mayor Caggiano, stated that these projects are hard to fund, and this board does have to move forward with this. As a resident of the area, sidewalks are going to happen, people wanted it and it will raise the property value.

Commissioner Hartley, stated that sidewalks are an important part of public policy we should have, they help the quality of life and make things safer. DOT standard is 5-feet and city of Bristol is 5 feet. We should be doing the project and doing the sidewalks at 5- feet because if we don't, the DOT who is funding it is going to say you didn't comply and the money will dry up and we won't be able to do anything.

Council Member Olsen stated that she understands the purpose of the island is for traffic calming, but clearly everyone here doesn't want them. The speed limit is going to be put to 25-mph and they are just going around the island and speed anyway. To me it just doesn't serve a purpose.

Mayor Caggiano stated that it is a 10- foot driving width, for example across from city hall they are putting in the curbing and when coming thru the intersection of Hope Street and North Main Street, it was purposeful and it's for traffic calming. If we are going to spend \$2 million dollars on sidewalks and we don't put them in now, they will never go in.

Commissioner Dumas stated he thinks that the painted islands will work, but eventually people will keep speeding. Cobblestone is too noisy. We came back to the painted islands to slow the traffic down, and I hear the residents are upset about the 5-foot sidewalks but it is a city ordinance and need to follow those guidelines

Commissioner Stawski feels the project should move forward.

Council Member Thibeault states that sometimes when you can't see something visually its hard to see how it would work on your road. Maybe our consultant can show us a video of a road where this was put in using these islands so people can see exactly how it benefits a road. These methods have been proven in other areas to be effective and give a safer neighborhood. The sidewalk length is what the standard is and will get the project done.

Mayor Caggiano stated that in the memo there is a bold point that Public Works will directly contact each property owner where sidewalks will be installed to review specific plans. The outreach will continue and everyone has been heard tonight. The crosswalks will be in consultation with everyone over the coming months.

Council Member Olsen stated she is fine with the sidewalks, but does not care for the islands.

Council Member Rosengren stated his is not in favor of the islands.

MOTION: to authorize the Department of Public Works to finalize the design of the Shrub Road sidewalks and traffic calming measures as presented (5 ft. sidewalks installed on north side of Shrub Road, 3 ft. pole border, 4 ft. wide painted island (area of Env Learning Center east to Sherwood & area of Pigeon Hill east of Oak Hill), stop sign installation at Shrub and Jerome and the reduction of posted speed from 30 mph to 25 mph). Said work shall include road widening in the areas of painted islands and parallel on-street parking made by Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Commissioner Stawski.

For: Thibeault, Rosengren, Stawski, Dumas, Hartley

Against: Olsen

Motion passed.

b. Landfill Mower

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, explained this is a request to transfer \$50,000.00 to purchase a Ventrac mower that is equipped with a flail mowing blade. We do have a machine from Switzerland, but when it breaks down it takes forever to get it repaired/parts. This is a requirement from DEEP for this mowing.

MOTION: to authorize Department of Public Works to submit a Board of Finance request to transfer \$50,000 from un-utilized funds allocated for the purchase of an automated rubbish truck 0013026-570500-24001 for use to purchase a Ventrac mower equipped with a flail mowing blade made by Commissioner Hartley and seconded by Council Member Thibeault. Motion passed.

Mayor Caggiano stated that we are in negotiation to have solar panel installed on the hill there and that this machine would still be compliant for use with the panels.

c. Curb Replacement

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, reviewed the memo enclosed in the packet. Typically, we don't replace curbs as part of the major road's maintenance. This will be a pilot program during the paving process.

MOTION: to authorize the Department of Public Works to implement a pilot program to replace roadway curbing as part of the Department's annual major roadway maintenance program as presented in this memorandum made by Commissioner Stawski and seconded by Commissioner Dumas. Motion passed.

d. DPW Spreader

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated this is removed from the agenda.

e. Saint Paul Top Soil Request

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated that a request form St. Paul's High School was received asking for 80 cubic yards of top soil. They will use it to smooth out and fill depressions areas on the practice football field. The department does have enough soil to provide, but the area is 100 feet of wetlands so if the board approves, they would need a permit.

Council Member Thibeault, stated that in the past the board of finance has a donation committee that talks about these things. I recommend to check with the board of finance and see if this is still working and forward to them.

MOTION: to authorize the Department of Public Works with the approval from the Board of Finance to provide Saint Paul with 80 CY of topsoil currently stockpiled at the Departments Peacedale Street site. Said authorization shall be subject to Saint Paul Football obtaining a required Inland Wetland Permit for the placement of fill within the 100 ft. buffer area regulated by the City Inland Wetland Commission made by Commissioner Hartley and seconded by Council member Thibeault. Motion passed

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated there is a Board of Finance request to transfer \$7500.00 to purchase a state surplus SUV for engineering.

MOTION: to transfer fund for the purchase of the surplus state vehicle to be used by department of public works engineering division for \$7500.00 by Council member Thibeault and seconded by Commissioner Stawski. Motion passed.

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated there is a proposed change order for engineering services for Wolcott St to AI engineers. This is an approval to execute a zero dollar change order to include the design contract in the amount of \$12,500.00 to replace the new slab on the existing culvert on Wolcott St.

MOTION: to execute a zero-dollar contract amendment to AI engineers for the purpose of designing and incorporating into the project a concrete slab over the existing culvert on Wolcott Street made by Commissioner Stawski and seconded by Commissioner Dumas. Motion passed

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works explained the East Road bridge, city council approved a construction contract for a pal agreement, which means the state will reimburse us 100% and we are looking for approval for the mayor to sign the agreement.

MOTION: to authorize the mayor to sign a pal agreement for the East Road bridge project in the amount of \$3,255,673,000.00 made by Council Member Thibeault and seconded by commissioner Dumas. Motion passed.

10. Old Business

Raymond Rogozinski, Director of Public Works, stated that solar lease agreement, City Council negotiated the lease for \$50,000.00 over the next 20 years.

11. Any other matter to come before said meeting

NONE

12. Adjournment

MOTION: made by Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Council Member Rosengren to adjourn at 8:37 p.m. Motion passed.

Signature,

Raymond A. Rogozinski, P.E.
Director of Public Works