



Town Administrator's Office

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Memorandum

Date: July 1, 2016
To: Stone Bridge Abutment Ad Hoc Subcommittee
From: Matt Wojcik
RE: Approved minutes for June 30, 2016 meeting – Approved July 7, 2016

The Subcommittee was called to order at 7:12 PM on Thursday, June 30 in Town Council chambers, Town Hall 343 Highland Road. Members present: Councilor Brett Pelletier (presiding), Councilor Peter Mello, David Vannier, Matt Wojcik. Councilor Pelletier noted David Saurette had gone to the wrong location and was on his way. Also present – Town consulting engineer Deirdre Paiva.

Councilor Pelletier circulated the CRMC assent associated with the 2011 abutment repairs.

Councilor Pelletier noted he had reached out to CRMC staff. Peter Healy no longer works for RIDOT. CRMC engineer Peter Lucia is out of the office on vacation through July 11. Councilor Pelletier spoke to Janet Freeman of CRMC on June 29 at some length. Her area of expertise is wave attenuation, erosion controls. She suggested that the Subcommittee ask RIDOT for all hydrology data associated with removal of old turnstile from the Sakonnet River. Dave Vannier commented that the Harbor Commission had asked for that data several times and never received it; doubts that the data was ever collected.

Councilor Pelletier asked if VHB submitted any hydrology data to CRMC. Matt Wojcik replied that in his conversation with David Reis of CRMC, it was disclosed that VHB had not submitted any hydrology data.

Councilor Pelletier noted that Ms. Freeman said a preliminary determination had been made on Design Option #5 based on VHB's representations to the CRMC as of their last meeting. A 3.5 foot extension into the tidal waters is substantially better than a 6 foot extension, in the eyes of the CRMC.

David Vannier asked if the project occupied the necessary space to be considered new construction versus a repair. Several noted that this project will be considered "new construction" no matter what, since all options extend beyond the 1 foot extension that triggers that treatment.

The Subcommittee turned to its organizational issues. Matt Wojcik volunteered to take minutes. Councilor Mello nominated Councilor Pelletier to serve as Chair, seconded by David Vannier; no other nominations, voted 4-0 that Councilor Pelletier will serve as Chair.

Chairman Pelletier noted that a full set of VHB's 90% plans was on the witness table for viewing by all present. He noted other documents that have been circulated, including a 90% "mini set" of plans, a 2005 geotechnical report by GZA, storm water management plans and the VHB contract as amended.

David Saurette joined the meeting at 7:20 PM.

Chairman Pelletier noted he put together a project timeline going forward with key milestones identified.

The subcommittee and members of the public gathered at the witness table to look over the 90% plan set as proposed by VHB. There was general discussion of plan elements including the high tide mark, construction materials, use of sheet piles versus rip rap.

A concern was noted that people will jump the rails in order to fish from lower points on the structure. General discussion followed: noting that it is nearly impossible to prevent people from doing things like that; area security and access management.

There followed considerable discussion from various parties regarding management of storm water. VHB plans call for a treatment system (sand) before returning water to the River. Several parties noted that scuppers are really all that should be required. Ms. Paiva noted there is no reason to treat the water.

Matt Wojcik noted there are two sets of geotechnical data, one from 2005 and another set of borings done in 2012.

David Saurette and David Vannier noted that the plans do not address the end of the abutment (western end of the structure), including the steel in place there now. Ms. Paiva noted the importance of the issue and the notion that those kinds of issues are why a peer review may be needed. She noted further that she was aware that hydrologic data had been gathered as part of the replacement of the Sakonnet River Bridge and she would try to obtain it.

David Vannier started a general conversation regarding the size of the hole opening up on the river floor north of the abutment. He said the current depth findings there were nearly 70 feet; old charts show the depth there to be closer to 30 feet. This information has not been part of VHB's discussion of the project, including how deep the pilings need to be driven.

David Saurette questioned the presence of stand pipes on the abutment, in his opinion they are not needed. Matt Wojcik asked how much they cost; Chairman Pelletier referred to plan documents indicating the stand pipes are a \$35,000 item. He noted that the Town had asked for water and electricity. David Vannier noted that if the Town ever wanted to have substantial dock facility off the abutment, it would require about 400 amps of service for 10 boats.

There followed a general discussion of lighting issues. Safety issues require the abutment to be lit. There were several comments regarding the correct approach to lighting this structure in an active waterway in an area that already has a fair amount of shore lighting.

There was a general discussion about railings. David Saurette feels that the railings could/should be affixed to the capstone rather than set back, and be made of anodized aluminum. Ms. Paiva agreed regarding materials.

There was a general consensus that, outside of the issues identified, the Option 5 design calling for a 3.5 foot extension should “fly” and would be the starting point for the subcommittee’s interactions with various parties going forward. There was consensus that the steel sheet piles would likely last far longer than the 20 years estimated by the VHB representative at the ;last Council meeting.

There was discussion regarding the next meeting of the subcommittee, general idea was that next meeting will be during the week of July 4. The notion was that VHB should be at next meeting to discuss various issues; Chairman Pelletier offered he would invite them to next session. Ms. Paiva noted that they should bring their structural engineer assigned to this project to that meeting. There was a formal motion by David Vannier, seconded by Councilor Mello that Chairman Pelletier be authorized to request VHB attend the next meeting; unanimous agreement in favor.

There was a general discussion regarding advertising for the construction project; members noted that there is no need to wait / delay, that advertising could occur at the end of the permitting process.

David Saurette noted that one key issue to determine from CRMC is whether they have any restrictions on what time of year a project of this nature may be done. Time of year restrictions exist for various activities in tidal waters. If there are restrictions, the project calendar needs to reflect them. There was consensus this issue should be broached with CRMC asap.

There followed a lengthy discussion from all members regarding the status of the VHB plans and the approval process. The current 90% plans differ significantly from the 30% plans that were approved by the Tiverton Town Council sitting at that time (late 2013 / early 2014). Ms. Paiva noted that the types of changes that have occurred would not be unusual, and there would be no need to reset the project timeline to an earlier milestone.

Discussion turned to the project budget and the expiration date of the funding. Currently, the subcommittee is operating under two contradictory notions, first, that the CRMC permitting process even if started now will take months, thus delaying fund obligation. However, it was also noted that RIDOT wants to obligate the funds no later than September 2016. The Chair and the Town Administrator will work to clarify this issue and report back to the subcommittee at its next meeting.

There was a discussion and general consensus that the project budget is the entire \$2.33 million identified by RIDOT as still available for drawdown. Matt Wojcik noted that VHB should be delivering plans ready for construction / bid process and that further billings by VHB – which are budgeted for by RIDOT – simply should not be needed.

The conversation turned to the need or lack thereof for a peer review. A copy of Steere Engineering’s cost estimate for a peer review was circulated. Matt Wojcik argued that a peer review is needed given the lack of confidence to date in VHB’s product and pace of work. David

Saurette noted that not all the items on Steere's estimate are absolutely necessary; there was general agreement that Steere would be asked to refine the proposal, especially as regards oversight or review of the permitting process. David Saurette made a formal motion to direct Steere to proceed with the peer review based on the quote provided, however, the amount to be spent is not to exceed the amount quoted. Motion seconded by David Vannier; voted 5-0 in favor.

The next meeting was set for Thursday, July 7 at Town Hall, 7:00 PM start, with VBHB to be invited along with Brad Nichols, a structural engineer, from Steere.

Motion to adjourn made by Matt Wojcik and seconded by several; meeting adjourned on a 5-0 vote at 8:55 PM.