

October 7, 2009

**Present**

Commissioners Michael Brady, Joanne Clark, Robert Snyder, Philip Dinkel, and Donna Hunt, Town Engineer Jerry Friedel, Town Manager Cheril Thomas, Capital Project Manager Jean Weisman, Public Works Director Jeff Richardson, Administrative Clerk Sabrenia Yohn, and Secretary Dorothy Olley.

**Call to Order**

President Brady called to order a special public working session at 4:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building, 300 Mill Street. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Discussion regarding Phase 4 (Cherry Street and Mulberry Street) of the Street Reconstruction Project**

President Brady provided a brief history of the 21-street reconstruction project and noted that funding for this project comes from a \$5.5 million dollar bond that the Town obtained in 2006. President Brady then called upon Town Engineer Jerry Friedel of Davis, Bowen and Friedel, who provided a detailed description of the scope of work for Phase 4 which includes Mulberry and Cherry Streets. Commissioner Clark asked Mr. Friedel to review the pavement and edge widths for Mulberry Street again for clarity.

In response to Commissioners' questions regarding the details and costs of the streets in Phase 5, Mr. Friedel recommended that the Commissioners bid both phases 4 and 5 at the same time and include alternates to offset any potential cost overruns. Mr. Friedel also noted that prices may go up as the economy improves so bidding both phases simultaneously could be a cost savings. Mrs. Thomas also explained that the Town was able to share some street repair costs by working in conjunction with the County on their sewer repairs. Commissioner Brady suggested that since the work remaining on Fremont was basically decorative in nature, perhaps it should be postponed to a Phase 6. Commissioners Hunt and Clark agreed. Commissioner Snyder inquired about sewer repairs on Mulberry Street. Mr. Friedel confirmed that Mulberry would require about 700 feet of replacement, as well as repairs to the sewer main and redirection of a water main at the end of Mulberry Street. President Brady noted that the Commissioners had received written comments from Frank Morgan of 305 Mulberry Street and Lawrence Pratt of 202 Mulberry Street, and that Phase 4 and 5 of the street repair project would be discussed again at the Commissioners' October 28, 2009 meeting. President Brady then asked for comments from the public, requesting that speakers limit their comments to three minutes.

James Bell of 200 Mulberry Street said that the historic architecture of St. Michaels is what draws people to the Town, and he urged the Commissioners to take care in the repair of the street not to disturb the facades and curb appeal of the houses on Mulberry and Cherry Streets.

John Kovars of 206 Mulberry Street said he did not want the street widened for traffic and safety reasons. Mr. Kovars also said that widening the street for fire apparatus was not necessary.

Fire Chief J.D. Patrick commented that the current fire truck requires 16 feet in order to fully extend the outriggers and any new truck purchased would require 18 feet. Chief Patrick said there had been two major fires in Town in the last year and on both occasions the ladder truck was needed adding that the ladder truck is necessary to reach house roofs. Commissioner Clark asked if it was necessary to set all four outriggers to which Chief Patrick responded that all four should be used to adequately balance the truck and to enable the full extension of the ladder.

Walda DuPriest-Brandt of Mulberry Street said other historic communities, such as Alexandria, VA, are able to protect houses on very narrow streets. Ms. DuPriest-Brandt said she did not favor a wider gravel edge in front of her property.

Commissioner Clark asked Mr. Friedel if the gravel edges were necessary. Mr. Friedel said they could be eliminated, which would save approximately \$30,000. Capital Projects Manager Jean Weisman asked how the paved road edge would be protected from eroding if the gravel edge was eliminated. Mr. Friedel indicated that there was a risk of erosion without this gravel edge.

Neal Golden of 204 Mulberry Street opposed the widening of the street to help slow the speed of cars going to and from the restaurants at the end of the street. He was in agreement with there being a 26 foot black top area and leaving the gravel out as proposed by Mr. Friedel.

Sandra McGowan of Water Street submitted written comments to the Commissioners and commented that in the interests of safety and to reduce vehicle speed, she felt that Mulberry Street should not be made wider than its current 26 feet.

Marie Martin of Cherry Street proposed removal of the concrete sidewalk on the north side of Cherry Street and favored the planting of much needed shade trees. Ms. Martin also urged the improvement and extension of the brick sidewalk on the south side of the street, the creation of a pocket park to transition from Honeymoon Bridge at the lower end of Cherry Street, as well as appropriate lighting and signage.

Ann Borders of 105 Cherry Street commented on the local traffic using Cherry Street to avoid Talbot Street and wants signage to control traffic speeds.

Aida Khalil of 205 Cherry Street said she liked the sidewalk beside the Victorianna Inn but does not want to have to pay for an extension of the brick sidewalk on her side of Cherry Street and also did not want to be responsible for its maintenance.

Sherry Manning of 202 Cherry Street had concerns about whether the street reconstruction would improve the drainage at the end of Cherry Street, as high tide and storms currently flood her driveway. Jerry Friedel said that the drainage would be improved.

Rachel Brown of 412 Water Street suggested the use of pervious concrete for the road edge on Mulberry Street and asked if the road edge could be reduced to 1 foot from 2 feet as a compromise.

As there were no other public comments, President Brady noted that there would be another discussion of this issue at the Commissioners' October 28, 2009 meeting, and asked if there were any final comments from the Commissioners. There being none, President Brady closed the discussion of the reconstruction of Cherry and Mulberry Streets.

#### **Discussion of amendments to the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget**

Mrs. Thomas gave an overview of the Town's current budget shortfalls and presented staff recommendations on proposed cuts, including a four-day furlough for administrative staff, public works and the Chief of Police over the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. President Brady provided a handout to the Commissioners of his proposed cuts and a suggested a freeze on certain expenditures. Commissioner Dinkel proposed that the Commissioners forego their fourth quarter salaries in light of the Town employees taking furlough days. Commissioner Clark proposed reductions in the amount allotted to the Commissioners for participation in the annual Maryland Municipal League convention and in freezing all Commissioners reimbursements except mileage for personally owned vehicles used for Town

business. Commissioner Snyder suggested that the road work proposed on Fremont Street as part of Phase 5 be postponed indefinitely as the remaining work is only decorative. Also based on the bids submitted for the work on W. Chestnut Street sidewalks, there was a consensus agreement among the Commissioners to reduce the amount allotted for the sidewalks to \$31,000. There was also a consensus agreement not to reduce the amount budgeted for the Fire Department. Commissioner Snyder asked Town staff to obtain information from the Tourism Board regarding expenditures made to date before a determination would be made by the Commissioners on any potential cuts in funding to the Board. The Commissioners agreed to meet on October 14, 2009 to continue their discussion of the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget.

#### **Comments from the Public**

George Clark of Perry Cabin Drive asked if any of the funds from the street project bond can be applied to pay for the W. Chestnut Street sidewalks to which the Commissioners responded in the affirmative.

Ted Doyle of Perry Cabin Drive gave a history that originally 20 streets were identified with needed repairs and that is how the \$5.5 million dollar bond amount had been determined. He also agreed that sidewalks would come under the bond if necessary. Mr. Doyle also urged the Commissioners to be aggressive in reducing expenses because he believed that tax and other revenue would be less next year.

Barney Kastel of Mt. Pleasant Road proposed reduction in police officer hours over the winter months and urged the Commissioners to be conservative in their expenditures.

#### **Comments from the Commissioners**

The Commissioners agreed to meet in Executive Session at 3:30 p.m. on October 14, 2009 to discuss matters related to personnel matters. The Commissioners also agreed to meet in a public session at 4:00 p.m. on October 14, 2009 to continue budget discussions. Commissioner Clark said that Tom Byrne of Locust Street had to leave the meeting but that he and the Maritime Museum wanted to talk to the Town about putting in sidewalks in front of Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum buildings on Mill Street. Commissioner Clark expressed concern that Mr. Byrne's sidewalk could have an impact or interfere with the Town's street work on Mill Street.

#### **Announcement of Next Meetings**

President Brady announced that the next public meetings of the Commissioners would be Wednesday, October 14, 2009 beginning at 3:30 p.m. and Wednesday, October 28, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Office.

#### **Adjournment**

President Brady adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Dorothy C. Olley  
Assistant Town Clerk

#### **Attachments:**

- Comments of Sandra McGowan
- Petition from Mulberry Street residents
- Phase 4 and 5 Construction Costs
- FY 2010 Budget handout