

Town/Village of Canton
October 27, 2021
Joint Board Meeting 6:30pm
Minutes

Present

Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley, Council Members Bob Washo, Dave Nelson, James Smith, and Martha Foley Smith

Mayor Michael Dalton, Trustees Anna Sorensen, Klaus Proemm, Beth Larrabee, and Carol Pynchon

Also in Attendance

Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Jeni Reed, Confidential Secretary/Bookkeeper Dylan Barringer

Village Clerk Sally Noble, Village Historian Linda Casserly, Village Attorney Gerald Ducharme, Village Code Enforcement Officer Tim Nolan, Village Director of Economic Development Leigh Rodriguez,

Members of the Public: Gary Valik, Tom Graser, Kathleen Stein, Lyne Soulia, Dan Soulia, Heidi Smith, Paul, Toby Irven, Tom Thomas, L. Morgan, Kathryn Liscum, Liam Hunt, M. Morgan

A. Call to Order

- Mary Ann Ashley opened the joint Town/Village meeting at 6:31pm

B. CSX Project

- Mayor Dalton and Supervisor Ashley have been notified by CSX that they have a project coming up in November.
 - Anticipated to be in Canton beginning November 14 for 3-4 days.
- CSX has asked the elected officials what detour from the Main Street crossing would be the best route to use.
 - Project will require closing Main Street around the railroad crossing, which will have a major impact on traffic flow in the Village.
- Discussions have included Mayor Dalton, Supervisor Ashley, Marty Miller (Village Superintendent), James Santimaw (Village Police Chief), and Calvin Rose (Town Highway Superintendent).
- Proposed detours:
 - Main Street to Riverside Drive, then State Street down to Route 310.
 - Concerned this would have too much impact on the school.
 - Main Street to Park Street, to Pike Road (which is a County Road), back to County Route 68, and back to the intersection of Main Street and 310.
 - Concerned about traffic on Park Street.
 - Main Street to State Route 68, to County Route 14 through Woodbridge Corners, back to County Route 34, and then back to Route 310, and Main Street.
 - This is a long route, but is the preferred route and has been permitted by the County. This will also effectively detour truck traffic off the side roads in the Village.
- Primary concern is for the truck traffic – locals will find their way around the construction, but truck traffic needs to be diverted appropriately.
- Discussion was turned over to the combined Boards to gather information on a preferred route to share with Safety Services and the company creating the detour.

- Members of the combined Boards indicated concern regarding the particularly long detour being recommended by the County.
- Councilmember Jim Smith recommended moving the detour down Riverside Drive to Morley rather than taking the turn out to Woodbridge Corners; then following the remainder of the proposed detour from there. He felt this would cut at least five miles from the detour which would be more palatable.
- Councilmember Bob Washo indicated that many would simply use their GPS to find a shorter route around anyway.
- Trustee Beth Larrabee supported Councilmember Jim Smith's recommendation to shorten the detour.
- Trustee Anna Sorensen also supported the proposed recommendation of the shorter detour, and mentioned discussions regarding blocking off turning lanes on Main Street to assist moving trucks and traffic along.
- Supervisor Ashley indicated appreciation for everyone's patience and the support of the media in getting the information out to the public in a timely manner to keep the whole process running smoothly.
- Several members shared hopes for quick work on the part of CSX.
- As a side note to this discussion, Mayor Dalton shared that he has been in contact with US Senator Gillibrand's office regarding the issue of the crossing at Harrison still being closed. Although he has not received comment yet, he is still hopeful; and anticipating that this crossing will be addressed while CSX is in town working on Main Street.

C. St. Lawrence Plaindealer

- Tom Graser from the Watertown Times, Gary Valik from the former Plaindealer as Corporate Director of Audience Development and Special Projects, and Bill Coakley member of the public have been in discussions regarding the loss of the St. Lawrence Plaindealer. Both Mr. Graser and Mr. Valik were at the meeting.
- Mr. Valik shared information regarding the potential return of the St. Lawrence Plaindealer to the Canton area.
 - He discussed the experience of opening the Ogdensburg Journal and the local support the paper had received to date.
 - He also shared the support of the community he had received in discussing the potential of a local newspaper that focused on the Canton community.
 - A major emphasis was placed on making such a paper affordable for sponsors, advertisers, and community members.
 - The current proposed timeline would be to start the paper up in about the 2nd quarter of 2022, utilizing the model they used in Ogdensburg.
 - The focus is on community news, athletics, and calendars, with the intent of providing Canton News for the Canton Community that you wouldn't find anywhere else.
 - Mr. Valik shared that there has been tremendous support so far, and that the Town Supervisor and Village Mayor have also indicated support for such a venture.
- Canton Historian Linda Casserly (the Plaindealer's "biggest cheerleader") also shared her support for the potential return of the Plaindealer in the Canton area.
 - She supported the concept of columns for each village and hamlet in the area as well; just as the Plaindealer used to have in issues past.
 - She's also excited at the prospect of writing articles for a local paper again.
- Councilmember Bob Washo also indicated his support of the local paper, as it was something that draws people to a community.

- He asked about the potential flexibility in publish dates due to municipal meetings, etc. Mr. Valik said he supported the idea of a late week (Thursday or Friday) run.
- Trustee Beth Larrabee stated that the celebration of youth sports in a local paper is also something particularly unique and special.
- Regarding annual subscription costs:
 - Mr. Valik indicated that their costs in Ogdensburg ran \$21 for 2021 – he is in favor of keeping the marketing going by selling subscriptions for \$22 in 2022; this would be in anticipation of being in several thousand homes.
 - Sponsorships for local business owners can run \$3,000 or \$5,000 per year.

D. Plastics

- Background:
 - The League of Women Voters approached the Boards about the possibility of a law to ban plastic stirrers and straws.
 - The Boards recommended they approach the Sustainability committee regarding the proposed ordinance.
 - The ordinance came back to the Boards with the support of the Sustainability committee and was discussed separately in each Board's meetings.
 - Upon discussion regarding the enforceability of such an ordinance, the request was rewritten as a resolution to support an effort to not utilize plastic stirrers and only provide plastic straws upon request at local restaurants, convenience stores, etc.
 - This resolution is now being brought before the joint Boards.
- Kathleen Stein of the League of Women Voters spoke briefly regarding the resolution, as well as their plans to support an educational effort in the local schools and colleges. She also hoped this would show grassroots level support toward State efforts in the same area.
- Deputy Town Clerk Jeni Reed read the proposed resolution for the record.
- The discussion was opened to the Boards.
 - Councilmember Bob Washo shared his support of the measure and of moving on the item during the meeting.
 - Councilmember Martha Foley Smith and Trustee Klaus Proemm agreed.
 - Trustee Carol Pynchon shared that it was important to clarify this is not a full ban on all plastics. It is intended to support a small step forward.
 - Trustee Anna Sorensen also voiced her support and especially encouraged the use of an educational campaign.
 - Councilmember Bob Washo indicated there are several local businesses already doing this as normal practice and it will be important for local businesses to work together and share information regarding ways to implement.
 - Councilmember Dave Nelson also voiced his support and thanked the League of Women Voters and the Sustainability Committee for working on this diligently.
 - Trustee Beth Larrabee encouraged that the Village move forward with a vote.
- Mayor Mike Dalton shared the information that this was a process developed over several months and that much research and thought has gone into where we are tonight. This does not represent a ban on plastics, but instead a step in the right direction and getting ahead of any state mandates that may eventually come down.
- Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley indicated her support for a vote during tonight's meeting from both boards.

A motion was made by Town Councilmember Bob Washo to pass the joint resolution as written, 2nd by Martha Foley Smith. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Village Trustee Carol Pynchon to pass the joint resolution as written, 2nd by Klaus Proemm. All in favor. Motion carried.

E. 64 Main Street

- As most are aware, the Town and Village have put in a joint purchase offer on 64 Main Street, the location of the old McDonald's building.
- Mayor Mike Dalton indicated that the process is still moving forward – there is a date in Late November where things will become final, with closing happening likely in Late December or possibly early next year. He also offered thank yous particularly to attorneys Gerald Ducharme and Eric Gustafson for all their work on the project and for continuing to look out for the Town and Village of Canton.
- The Mayor also indicated that this purchase would help with handicap access to the Municipal Offices almost immediately.
- The purpose of this update was simply to make sure the public knew that the process was still moving forward.

F. Other

- Mayor Mike Dalton drew attention to an issue that developed today regarding the accounting service for Village Water and Sewer bills; specifically robo-calls that warned of disconnection due to non-payment. Mayor Dalton wanted to make it clear that the Village does not disconnect any water or sewer service due to non-payment – and that this was an appropriate platform to clarify the situation.

G. Executive Session

None

Town motion to adjourn at 7:20 pm made by Councilmember Dave Nelson, 2nd by Martha Foley Smith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Village motion to adjourn at 7:20 pm made by Trustee Beth Larrabee, 2nd by Anna Sorenson. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeni Reed
Deputy Town Clerk