



**MUNICIPAL SERVICES,
FACILITIES AND
INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

Council Chambers B
March 23, 2016
6:00 PM

City of Keene
New Hampshire

Janis O. Manwaring
Randy L. Filiault
Robert J. O'Connor
Stephen L. Hooper
Gary P. Lamoureux

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- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. MEMORANDUM | Parks, Recreation & Facilities Director – Skate Park Update |
| 2. COMMUNICATION | Phil Suter/Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce – Granite Curbing – West Side of Central Square |
| 3. MEMORANDUM | City Engineer – Granite Curbing – West Side of Central Square – Options for Removal |
| 4. MORE TIME REPORT | Dorrie O'Meara – Request to Remove Granite Curbing – West Side of Central Square |

MORE TIME ITEMS:

- A. Reconstruction of the City Roadways and the Addition of Sidewalk Construction to Reconstruction Projects - Council Policy

Possible Non-Public Session

City of Keene
New Hampshire

Date: March 21, 2016
To: Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee
Through: Med Kopczynski, City Manager
From: Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation & Facilities Director 
Subject: Skate Park Update

Recommendation:

Accept as Informational.

Background:

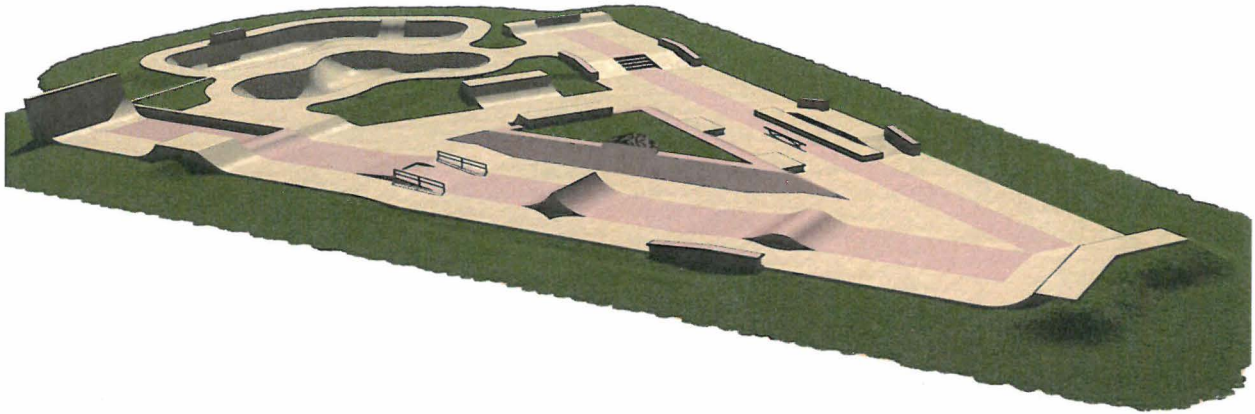
In 2010, a report was made to the City Council by the Ad Hoc Skate Park Relocation Committee. In that report, it became apparent that a new facility in Keene was needed. The current skate park on Gilbo Avenue was constructed in 1996 as a wood and steel structure, and these materials do not hold well against New Hampshire weather seasons.

In 2015, a local group of skaters and bikers came forward providing the city with donations of \$4000.00 to be used towards a design study for a new park. The City contributed \$3500.00 towards this initiative to start the process of finding a suitable consultant. The City hired Spohn Ranch Skateparks, Inc. to complete a custom concrete design for a location in Wheelock Park.

As a result of the initiative, and with input from public meetings, participants were able to design a park that met the needs of the City and the region. The understanding was that the park, as designed, would be funded through private donations and then gifted to the City. Now that the designs are in and an estimated project cost has been provided, the group is ready to start fundraising.

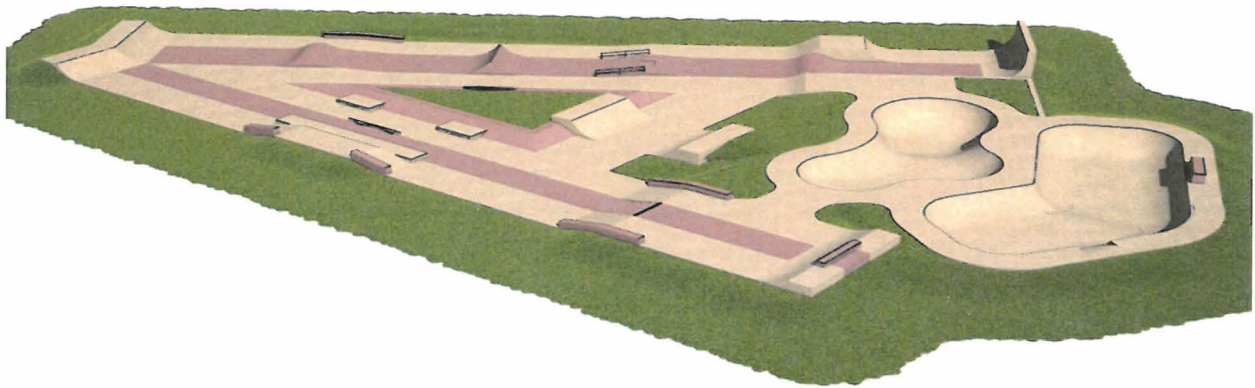
This group of dedicated volunteers has partnered with the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation for the purposes of serving as fiscal agent for their nonprofit status. The group is close to being ready to start their campaign.

Attached is a series of 5 views of the final design created by Spohn Ranch Skateparks Inc. The base estimate cost for the 12,732 square foot park is \$588,727.68 (street course and amoeba bowl). The second bowl (phase 2) would add an additional 2,376 square feet for an additional \$125,928.00.



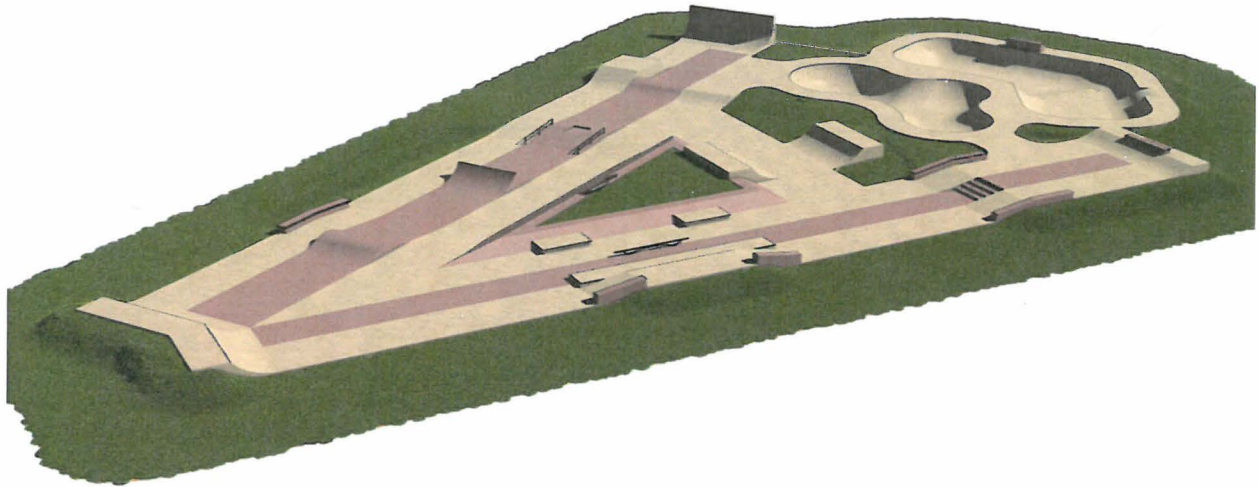
**SPOHN RANCH
SKATE PARKS**
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KEENE, NH SKATEPARK
KEENE, NH PARKS DEPARTMENT



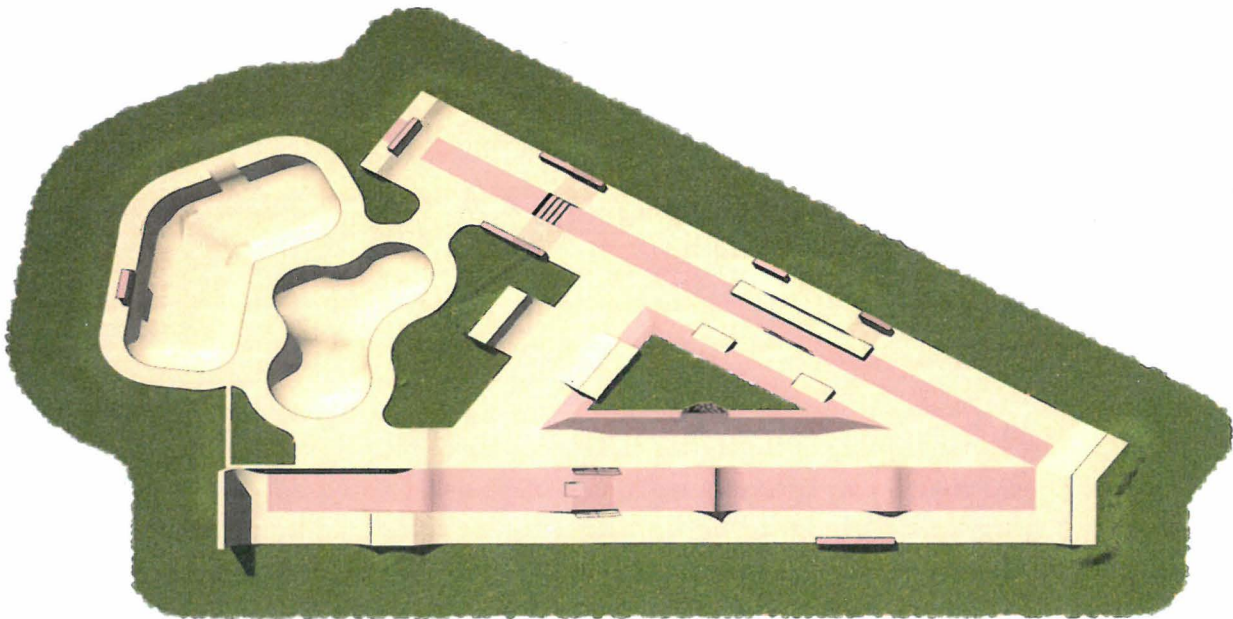
**SPOHN RANCH
SKATE PARKS**
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KEENE, NH SKATEPARK
KEENE, NH PARKS DEPARTMENT



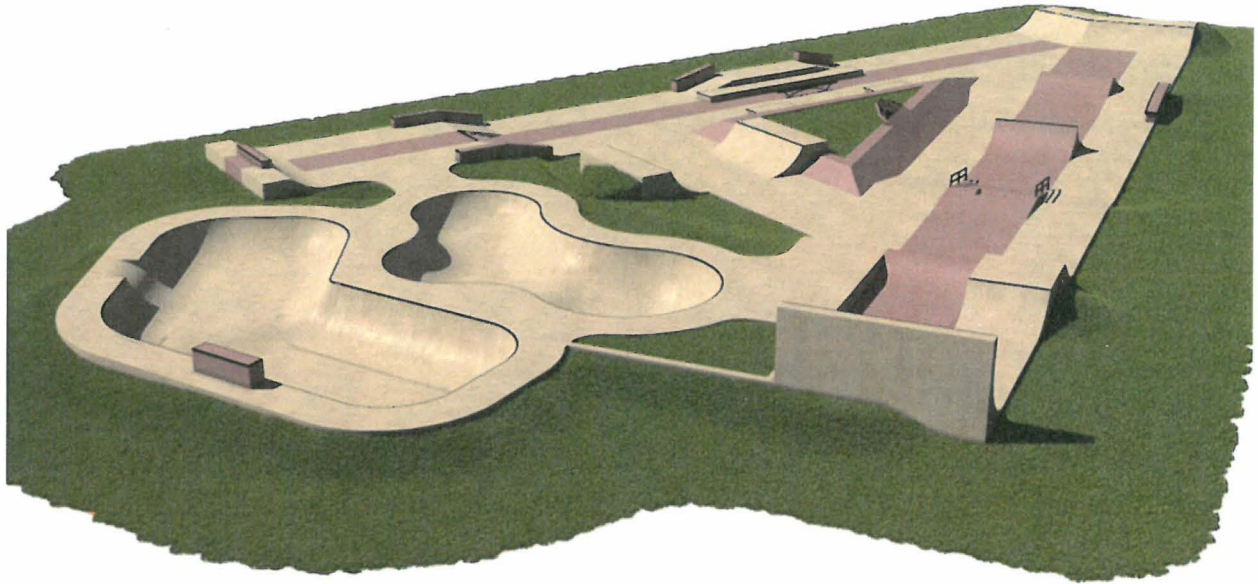
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February 22, 2016

City Council
City of Keene
3 Washington St.
Keene, NH 03431

In City Council March 3, 2016.

Referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee whom will meet Wednesday, March 9, 2016 at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, Keene City Hall. You are hereby notified of the meeting meeting and requested to be present.

City Clerk

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing in reference to the letter from Dorrie O'Meara (Moxie Realty LLC), which appeared in the February 18, 2016 Council Packet.

Specifically, Ms. O'Meara requests that the granite curbing "starting at Mon Amie Jewelry to Amidon Jewelry" be removed, because she has "had several issues with the patio setup as well as much need for expansion."

As the Council knows, the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce owns #48 Central Square, located between the two jewelry stores Ms. O'Meara refers to in her letter.

While I am not necessarily opposed to Ms. O'Meara's desire to expand sidewalk seating – it's an attractive feature of the downtown during the warmer months – I am opposed to restaurant seating in front of our office during normal business hours.

As you know, the Chamber serves as a visitor center for the City and, more broadly, for the entire Monadnock Region. Our highest foot traffic times are April-October – times that coincide with peak sidewalk dining season in the City. It can be difficult for some visitors to navigate the sidewalk during peak dining hours, especially if there are tables set up in front of our building.

In addition, the handicapped ramp access to our building also serves the Public Defender's office next door, so keeping access to the ramp as clear as possible is important.

I am more than willing to work with the Council and Ms. O'Meara to make the west side of Central Square as commercially and visually appealing as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Philip N. Suter
President/CEO

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

Date: March 18, 2016

To: Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee

Through: Medard Kopczynski, City Manager
Kürt Blomquist, P.E., Public Works Director

From: Donald R. Lussier, P.E., City Engineer

Subject: Granite Curbing – West Side of Central Square
Options for Removal

Recommendation:

Informational

Background:

The City Council received a request from Dorrie O'Meara of Moxie Reality, LLC for the City to remove raised landscape beds along the West side of Central Square. The matter was referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure (MSFI) Committee and heard on February 24, 2016. The Committee requested that staff review the request, and provide the options and cost estimates for the requested work.

Staff has developed two options for the Committee's consideration. The first option includes removing only that portion of granite curbing directly in front of the three properties mentioned in Ms. O'Meara's letter (i.e., Pedraza's, The Pour House & Ingenuity Country Store). The second option expands the scope of the project to create a more comprehensive approach for this City block. The options are described in more detail below. The two options are shown in the attached sketches.

Option 1 – Reduce Curbing

Under this scenario, the raised landscape beds would be removed only between the southern edge of the Pedraza's frontage and the northern edge of the Ingenuity Country Store's frontage. Short lengths of raised beds would be left in place in front of the Chamber of Commerce building and the Mon Amie frontage. The remaining landscape beds would be terminated with curved granite to create two small oval-shaped islands.

The area of the removed granite curbing and landscape beds would be restored with concrete sidewalks. The existing light poles would be removed and reset flush with the sidewalk elevation. In addition, an existing electrical pedestal would be relocated.

Previously removed trees would be replaced with two new trees in flush mounted, cast iron planting grates. This type of grate complies with ADA requirements and will allow table legs/chairs to be placed in very close proximity to the trees.

Additional ancillary work is required to complete the project, including:

- Relocate parking meters closer to the curb line
- Install flush mount yard drains at low points in the sidewalk
- Remove, and reinstall irrigation piping

Option 2 – Complete Removal

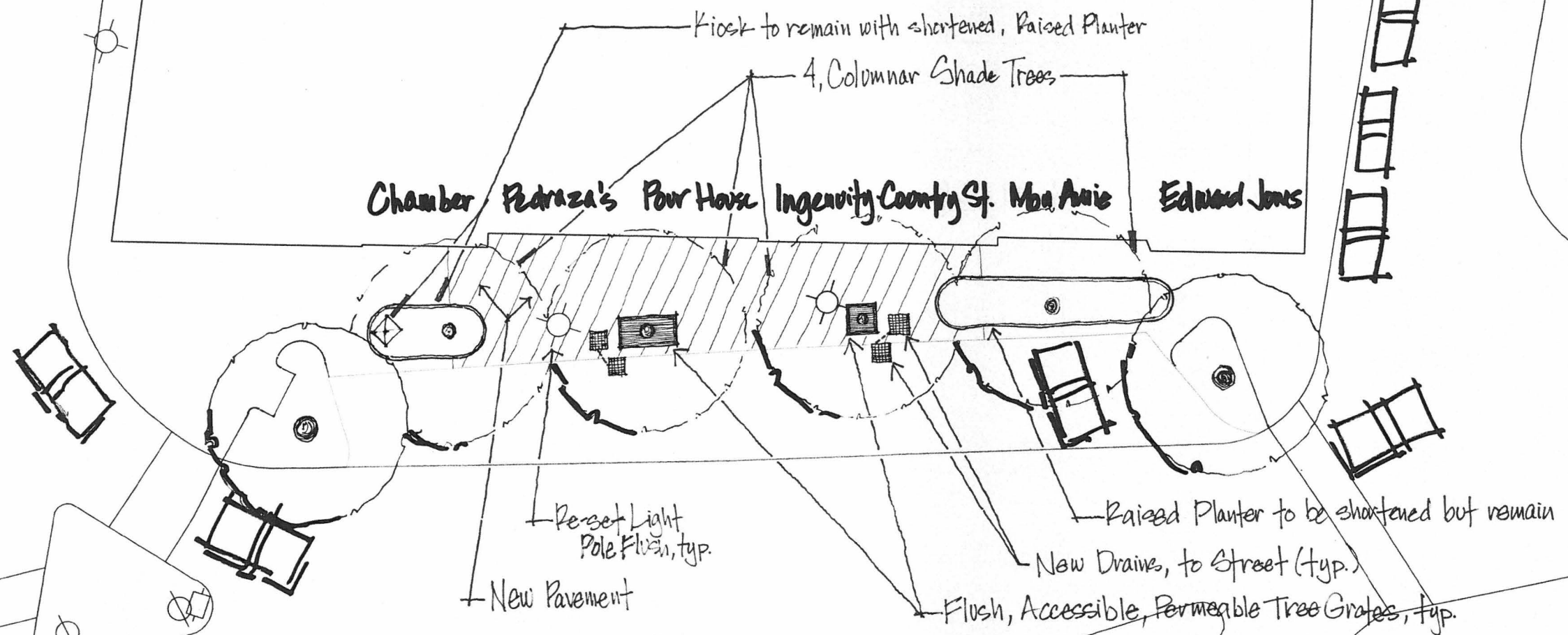
With this option, all of the raised landscaping will be removed from the block. The entire area would be restored with concrete. Light poles & electrical pedestals would be removed and reset as described above.

Under this scenario we also propose replacing all four street trees (two previously removed and two existing trees that will need to be removed soon). All four would be set in tree grates as described above.

The ancillary work described under Option 1 also applies, though it will be somewhat more extensive under Option 2.

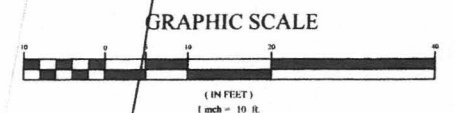
Cost Estimates

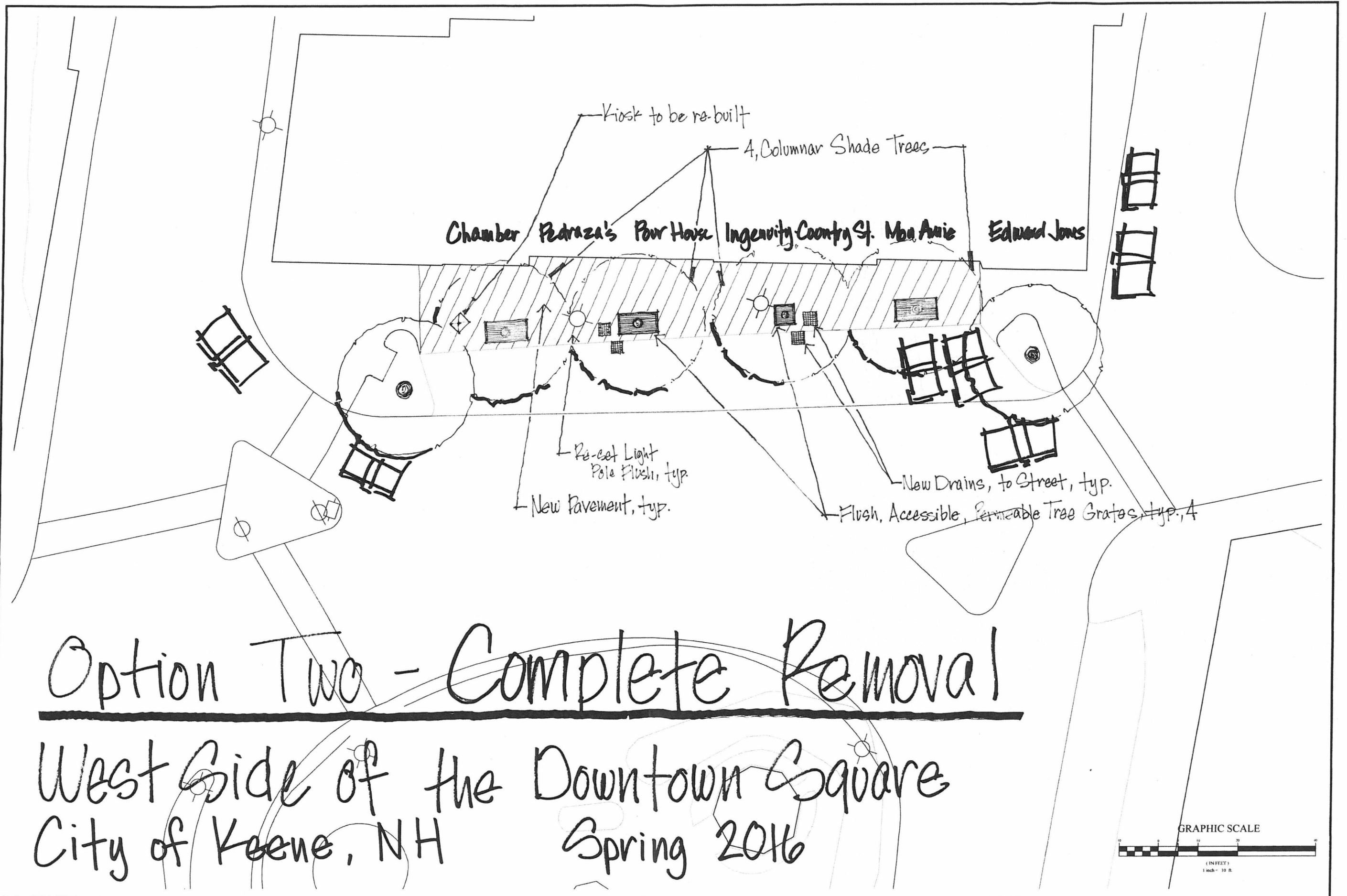
The Engineering Division prepared order of magnitude opinions of probable construction cost for both options. The estimates assume that the work will be performed by an independent construction contractor, and include a contingency appropriate for the level of detail known at this time. The estimated cost for Option 1 is approx. **\$36,000**. Option 2 is approx. **\$57,000**.



Option One - Minimal Changes

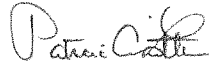
West Side of the Downtown Square
City of Keene, NH Spring 2016





In City Council March 3, 2016.
More time granted.

3D1


City Clerk

City of Keene
NEW HAMPSHIRE

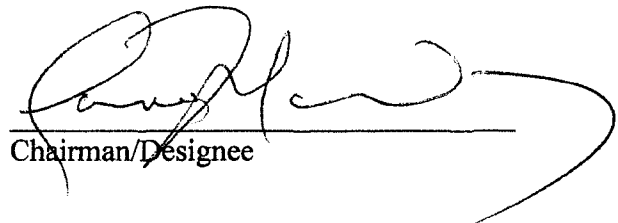
February 24, 2016

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee

SUBJECT: **COMMUNICATION** – Dorrie O’Meara – Granite Curbing – West Side of Central Square

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the communication from Dorrie O’Meara’s be placed request on more time to allow City staff up to two meeting cycles to bring back options to address the request to remove the granite curbing on the west side of Central Square.


Chairman/Designee

Background:

Dorrie O’Meara stated that she is requesting that the granite curbing on the west side of Central Square be removed. She continued this request comes in part from a potential tenant of the current Ingenuity Shop as well as Pedraza’s and the Pour House. She asks the MSFI Committee consider, first, the difficulty in the first step up from the street to the sidewalk. The sidewalk is narrow and does not allow room for the unpacking of wheelchairs, strollers, and walkers. This is because cars park against the curb and their bumpers extend onto the sidewalk. She continued that she gave each MSFI Committee member a packet with numbered photos. Often, there is not enough room for someone to walk by while carrying groceries or laundry baskets. Folks with strollers and walkers or carrying baskets need to walk behind the parked cars to get to an empty spot or walk to the handicap ramp on each side of the block. This can result in people walking all over the plants and bark mulch if they choose not to go into the street, which makes a mess of all of the plants. The plants were nice when they were first planted but now the area looks horrible now with feces, cigarette butts, and trash.

Ms. O'Meara continued that the expense of having to remove the granite is minimal, given that the City could reuse the granite, dirt, and plants. It would eliminate the need for plumbing for the sprinklers, which could be removed. The sprinklers have been a headache for City employees who work on them. The gutters can be removed; they always get clogged and the City employees have to frequently unclog them in the summer. The expense of the labor would be minimized because they would not have to maintain that share of the sidewalk or the grass or have the expense of the plants. The City would save money by not having to keep up the west side of Central Square.

Ms. O'Meara continued the potential new tenant would be a restaurant. Not everyone wants a new restaurant, but they cannot forget that a restaurant would employ at least 20 people whereas a retail store would only employ five or six. The storefront is bright and beautiful and putting in a patio would enhance the area. If a restaurant does not go there and it remains retail, the new owner could use the sidewalk for sidewalk sales or sandwich signs to promote their business instead of having to put the signs on their steps or in the middle of the bark mulch. It would also be safer for the customers entering because they would not need to walk to the handicap ramp if they have strollers.

Ms. O'Meara continued that for people who do not want to deviate from the intent of the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP), she wants to point out: Page 13's "Community Character" says that people like benches and outdoor dining and they want to see more of it. Page 15 says that the majority of people want to see more dining options, especially outdoor dining. As the owner of Pedraza's, Ms. O'Meara noted that takes the same stance and adds that if the removal of the granite is allowed, Pedraza's can move its patio back further. When it is busy, it is hard to pass by in that area. The Pour House could then have a patio. If the granite is taken out she would consider taking out the handicapped ramp that comes out of the front of the Pour House because there would be other handicapped access through Pedraza's since the two businesses are connected.

Ms. O'Meara continued that after the denial of Pumpkin Festival, the City started a new committee to create and organize other, smaller activities to take place in the city, like enhancing the Music Festival and art walks. Events bring people downtown and they want to sit outside and dine. On a beautiful day in the summer, the outdoor seating is full at Pedraza's, The Stage, and Luca's and the public obviously wants outdoor dining.

Councilor Filiault asked if Ms. O'Meara was looking for something similar to what is at the head of the square in front of The Stage and the candy store. Ms. O'Meara replied yes.

Councilor Lamoureux stated he heard her say that if the granite curbing is removed she could move the tables closer so there is more of a walkway. Ms. O'Meara replied that she could move them only about six inches, but it would still make a huge difference. Councilor Lamoureux asked if she would add more tables. Ms. O'Meara replied no, Pedraza's is at its maximum. The Pour House does not have any outdoor seating. Councilor Lamoureux stated a problem that The Stage has is that even though they do not have any islands, they are so close up to the roadway that they have the same issue as everyone else – there is no walkway between the cars and the

tables. Ms. O'Meara replied that they would take that into consideration if the Pour House had a patio. They would separate the two because they are under separate liquor licenses.

Chair Manwaring asked if other committee members had questions. Hearing none, she asked to hear from staff.

Duncan Watson, Assistant Director of Public Works, stated he hears the concerns. He continued the Public Works Department has a CIP project that would look at the downtown as a whole. The impetus for the CIP project was drainage issues in the downtown that the Department was concerned about, but they are taking the opportunity to blend that into a larger project about what the downtown aesthetics should be. They recognize that the downtown has expanded and there needs to be a community conversation of what the downtown should look like. He understands that this is an immediate request. They had lengthy discussion about this in at a PLD Committee meeting in June, but it is a little different now because there is a new prospective tenant. Last time, staff's response to Ms. O'Meara's request was: they recognize that there are issues and that there is a need for a community conversation. That is being done through a proposal in the CIP, titled "Downtown Revitalization."

Mr. Watson continued that regarding this immediate concern, as they said last time, their plan was, given the limited resources that the department has, to remove a couple dying trees in that area. That was done. There are still two trees that need to be removed at some point. The idea was to plant new trees, because downtown trees are important. Mr. Watson agreed there is an issue with car bumpers going over the curb and narrowing the walkway, but that does not impede handicapped access because there are ramps on either side. So there is accessibility, but whether the available accessibility is sufficient needs to be part of a bigger conversation. They created crossovers because they were recognizing that people were crossing wherever they wanted. Roots were up at the surface and grass was being killed. They experimented the prior year at the EF Lane area by taking out the grass belt, installing some perennial gardens and bark mulch, and the area looks much nicer. They provided a couple crossovers, and additional benches to increase aesthetics, but it was always seen as a short term plan until they had the community conversation. If the City Council sees something else to be done staff will act in that direction; however, if the granite curbing is removed here, what about other locations downtown that might want it? All of a sudden one curb removal results in another. If that is what the community wants then they will do it, but this issue should be the topic of a larger community conversation.

Chair Manwaring asked if the Public Works Department planted a landscape in this area this past summer. Mr. Watson replied yes, this summer they took down two of the trees, and planned to plant additional trees, but did not. He continued that they created about three crossovers, and there is a set of benches for people to use to enjoy the shade that is still there. That was a short term measure. They were trying to transition from an area that had been problematic – they had wanted to have grass belts with the trees, but the shade and exposed tree roots did not allow any grass to be established, so they raised up the beds a little more and planted perennials. They started in the EF Lane area with this treatment and then moved towards Pedraza's.

Councilor O'Connor asked if the tree that was attached to the building was removed. Mr. Duncan replied yes. Councilor O'Connor asked if the gas lines downtown are in the street or

sidewalk. Mr. Duncan replied that he believes the lines are in the street. He continued that he does not know exactly what is under the landscaped beds, but there is irrigation piping going through the raised beds and some electrical because there is at least one pedestal in the area.

Councilor Hooper asked if Mr. Watson is saying that it is a good idea to revitalize the Central Square area, but that it would be better to do a big project instead of doing it piecemeal. Mr. Watson replied that they identified infrastructure issues that will require attention at some point - there are some undersized drainage pipes that come through the square. It is premature to say exactly what that replacement project would be, but it makes sense that they would look at a larger whole and see what else they would be able to do while they are digging in the street and sidewalk. The drainage is linked with Roxbury Street in some way. This would be a big project. It would probably make sense to make it a bigger upgrade, but that will be based on community conversation. He continued that the Public Works Department is not telling the Committee what they should do, but they are saying, "We will probably have to do infrastructure work, so what else should we do while we're doing that, since downtown was last upgraded in the late 1980s?"

Councilor Filiault stated that he appreciates staff's comments about the need for a community discussion and other projects coming in. He continued that he is looking at tonight's particular request. There was a good article in the newspaper the other day about improving businesses and retaining jobs. This proposal would have an immediate impact and add employment. He is frustrated in that whenever there is a small proposal staff's answer is always that they "have to look at the bigger picture" and it will be a couple years down the road. That can feel like an eternity. He does not think this request is unreasonable. If a couple years down the road they need to do alterations and amendments that will be okay. This particular project is something he considers minor. There would be plumbing and electrical work, but that is true when they do any infrastructure work. This project does not prevent anything from happening when the community comes to them down the road or they look at the bigger picture of downtown; it would just be coordinated in. This proposal is time sensitive and does not have two years to wait. They could look at it and see what the cost would be. It would involve rescheduling of personnel, but it would not require extra money being put in the budget. Everyone knows how construction projects work - things get canceled or moved around. This project is not taking away, it is adding to downtown and to more business.

Councilor Filiault continued that several years ago in the area where the Cobblestone Ale and Piazza are located, the City received a request for outdoor seating. There were the same arguments about the need to look and see what was down the road, but they are now thriving businesses there because the City bucked the trend and said okay. It was successful. This is the same thing. The Stage, the candy store, and other establishments with outdoor seating are all successful. It is unreasonable to say no to this and wait two years.

Councilor Lamoureux stated that he is sure there are no monetary figures for this yet. He continued that if they removed the curb they would have to remove stumps, which might entail some issues with other parts of the concrete. Gas lines would have to be checked. Maybe staff could look at this and put numbers to it, for the committee to consider. It is hard for him to say "go ahead" without having the numbers.

Councilor Hooper stated that he agrees with Councilor Filiault. He continued that it is important to bring business to the downtown area and this is on everyone's radar. They need to be responsible about what the infrastructure is and what the costs are, so he agrees with Councilor Lamoureux that they need more time to find out what is there and what this project would entail, knowing that this is a good suggestion of Ms. O'Meara's.

Councilor O'Connor stated that he agrees that downtown business is important. He continued that he is worried about construction. Construction projects always seem simple and turn out to be bigger than people thought they would be. He, too, wants figures before the committee makes a decision.

Councilor Filiault stated that this proposal has come to the City previously. He asked if staff took any time then to get a cost estimate. Mr. Duncan replied that the proposal in June was to provide crossovers at ground level, not a patio space for outdoor dining, so no, they have not done estimates. He continued that he concedes that this is a do-able project, but he hesitates to say it is "minor." These things tend to have domino effects. He is not prepared to say tonight what the cost, level of effort, or construction sequence would be.

Councilor Filiault stated that he was a business owner downtown and knows that time is of the essence. He continued that this request is time sensitive. A potential tenant wants to know if this can be done. He asked if two weeks is enough time to get an estimate?

Mr. Watson replied that he would ask the City Engineer. He continued that they could come back with information in one cycle (two weeks) or two cycles (four weeks), but the question for the MSFI Committee to discuss is whether they want just one solution or a couple of different options. More than one option would show levels of efforts.

City Engineer Don Lussier stated that they can have a cost estimate for the proposal at hand in two weeks. He continued that he likes Mr. Watson's idea of doing more research and coming back with a couple of options of ways to address the applicant's desires while keeping in mind the downtown treatment. That would take four weeks.

Councilor Lamoureux stated that the newspaper says the current leaseholder is staying until September. Ms. O'Meara replied until the end of August. Councilor Lamoureux replied that if a new tenant goes in, there would have to be a changeover to the operation. He asked if they would need seating this year. Ms. O'Meara replied no, but she knows how this process sometimes works. The Pour House still has no outdoor seating. She is here as the owner of Pedraza's and the Pour House and for the potential new restaurant.

Councilor Lamoureux stated that he thinks having four weeks to research the options would be best, if that is okay with her. Ms. O'Meara replied that she understands and that is okay with her if that is the way it has to be but she would prefer to get this done. She was here before the committee last year and is here again. She would not want to lose a fantastic tenant.

Chair Manwaring asked if members of the public had questions or comments. Hearing none, she asked how far up the street this goes. Mr. Watson replied from the Edward Jones office, then

towards the jewelry store there is a break that allows for a crosswalk, then there is a small section with shrubs and vegetation (not a raised bed). The area is about from the Chamber of Commerce walkway to the Edward Jones office.

Carl Jacobs, Ward 2 City Councilor, stated that he is in support of taking time for further discussion and he knows that the Chamber of Commerce has thoughts on this idea. He continued that the Chamber has concerns about access to their building. He is sure it can be worked out, but it is not just Ms. O'Meara's situation that would be affected. There should be time to consider other people who want their businesses to benefit from this as well. He is in favor of four weeks so everyone has the opportunity to give input.

Ms. O'Meara replied that to her knowledge, the Chamber of Commerce, the Ingenuity Shop, and the jewelry store all received the same notice that she did about coming to this meeting. She continued that she does not know why they are not here if they have concerns. She talked with them and they are all for it. They all have to clean up the cigarette butts.

Councilor Filiault stated that he agrees with having other businesses give input, but like Ms. O'Meara said, they did not come tonight. He continued that for the record, if people want to give input, the committee is here.

Councilor Lamoureux made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Filiault.

On a vote of 5-0, the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee recommends the communication from Dorrie O'Meara's be placed request on more time to allow City staff up to two meeting cycles to bring back options to address the request to remove the granite curbing on the west side of Central Square.