

Portsmouth Citizen's Response Task Force

Bridge Street Subcommittee Meeting

October 21, 2020

Present:

Russ Grazier, subcommittee chair and task force member

Deb Anthony, task Force member

Ben Van Camp, Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth

Peter Rice, City of Portsmouth Director of Public Works

Joseph Almeida, City of Portsmouth Facilities Manager

Stephanie Seacord, City of Portsmouth Public Information Officer

Tristin Law, Pop Up NH

These notes are general in nature and are intended to document topics discussed and are not minutes.

Updates:

Russ opened the meeting and noted that this would likely be the 2nd to last meeting of the Bridge Street Subcommittee.

Tristan updated the work being done Bridge Street. He noted that all the sheds were in the upper parking lot allowing the lower part of lot to now be open. He thanked Public works for all the support they offered to reopen the lot.

Russ noted that the stage may need to be dismantled as moving it whole seems unlikely and would be more expensive to move whole than dismantle. He suggested that Pop Up NH might want to offer Makers Space an opportunity to take the wood.

Joe Almeida reminded the committee that the notice to the City of the date for removal would be needed to prepare the parking lot for removal. Setting up some barriers to allow enough room for the larger vehicles need to carry the sheds.

Andrew updated the committee on the plan to move all the sheds by Nov. 1 but cautioned that there is a permitting process needed for the equipment to move the sheds. He also noted there will be two large trucks and making three trips to bring all the sheds to the storage area.

Russ asked the group for some data points to close out this project.

Including:

of organizations who benefitted from the space

of performers who benefitted from the space

of employees who worked in the space

of volunteers who participated in the Bridge Street Lot project

Peter spoke to the point that the value of the Bridge Street Lot this year was ensuring that Portsmouth (A city known for theater and music) as able to do performances and offer safe access to theater and music and dining.

Stephanie offered to get some numbers from social media and interactions with the Portsmouth social media sites. She could add (Why do this? How many staff and volunteers participated) Trying to tell the story of Bridge Street and the many people who attended and participated.

Andrew added that the City needed a focal point with Prescott Park closed. The lot added a needed and welcomed value to the arts and activity of the City. He also spoke to challenges and lessons learned. It took a few weeks for Pop Up NH to hit its stride. Concerts that were popular were and well attended by people who wanted the space to be successful. While the challenges were many in the end the feedback was very positive.

Peter asked about any complaints from the community impacted by the Lot. Russ noted he received less than 5 emails. Only one about volume and some about the impact for businesses that rely on the Bridge Street parking lot. He noted the biggest concerns early on were scale of time and sound. One way this was addressed was to only operate on a limited schedule.