

Portsmouth Citizen's Response Task Force

Bridge Street Subcommittee Meeting

November 10, 2020

Present:

Russ Grazier, subcommittee chair and task force member

Deb Anthony, task Force member

Peter Rice, City of Portsmouth Director of Public Works

Joseph Almeida, City of Portsmouth Facilities Manager

Stephanie Seacord, City of Portsmouth Public Information Officer

Andrew Bagley, Secretary of Pop Up Portsmouth

North Sturtevant, JSA, Pop Up Portsmouth Board member

Tristin Law, Pop Up NH

Patrick Howe, City of Portsmouth

Kim McNamara, Health Officer, City of Portsmouth Health Department

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

**Updates of current:**

**Sheds to be Moved:** Sheds will be moved on Thursday morning 11/12/20! Andrew confirmed that the permits had been completed for the moving of the sheds.

Questions about closing half the lot or the whole lot for removal were discussed. Andrew noted that if the equipment needed to remove the sheds was not able to maneuver the next date of removal would be several weeks.

Peter Rice recommended closing the whole lot for a brief time in the early morning (scheduled time to remove sheds) to ensure it can be completed.

Stephanie noted that the residents of Bridge Street should be notified. Joe Almeida asked about fliers. Peter Rice noted that it should not be an issue and not necessary to do a press release. He noted that Mike will post information on the lot.

North noted that he believed the sheds should be completely gone by noon time.

**Questions about other debris in the lot e.g. Plywood:** Joe Almeida questioned what to do with the plywood that is left on site. Andrew noted it is scrap and could be thrown away.

**Lean to Shed:** Joe A. confirmed that the City will crush the remaining lean to shed and remove the remnants.

**Retail at Bridge Street:** Kim questioned what the plans were for retail now and in the future. Tristan noted that there simply was not enough foot traffic to make it work. It appears that most of the retailers are back to their brick and mortar.

Russ suggested that perhaps next year, if this lot is still needed, with an earlier start for retailers could increase awareness of their presence. Noting that he was hopeful that the lessons of this year with retail would benefit next year. Kim requested that next year Bridge Street continues to keep the low numbers of people on site (70 on each side). Russ noted perhaps the site could be used for different times, e.g. retail during the day and theater/food in evenings. Basically, looking to get creative and use lessons learned to make the best of the space.

Joe mentioned that the plumbing manifold should be saved by Pop Up NH for possible use next Spring.

**COVID-19 and the Bridge Street Lot:** Russ asked if there were any known cases of COVID-19 at the Lot. Kim M reported that there we no reported cases or cases traced back to the lot. She noted that it was a beautifully

**Report for Monday 11/16/20:** Russ suggested that he needed some information for his report to the City Monday. He asked for something like a 990 report to show expenses against income. Specifically, things like construction, admin, operations, and fundraising expenses. He stressed it would be very important to be able to show the whole economic impact of the Bridge Street project.

North noted that it was very important that the city and residents show how the money authorized was used and the benefit to the whole of the community. Given the amount of money used for the effort it is critical to inform the public about the value it provided.

Russ reiterated he need “Big Picture” information. North noted that it is important to inform the elected officials of the success and impact if there is a future situation requiring such measures.

**Future Planning** Kim asked that in the future if something like Bridge Street is needed the Health Department be in the early planning phased. Looking at ecofriendly ways and healthy ways to operate. Andrew noted that in the future all compostable materials would be used. Kim agreed that keeping the impact on the environment should be minimal. Russ asked the committee members if you cannot have information, I need for Monday night’s report please let me know ASAP.

**Next Year:** Russ told the committee that he would not be able to continue the Task Force after Dec. 31, 2020. Noting “my staff want me back however I will be an accessible resource.” Joe A noted that Russ has been an efficient and professional leader!