

Agenda
Quality of Life Sub-Committee Meeting
September 4, 2018
Board of Education Conference Room
5:30 PM

- A. Call to Order.
- B. New Business.
 - 1) Update from the Staff.
Correspondence from Kathy Eagen- Route 4 Landscaping Issues
(Attachment 1)
 - 2) To discuss the charge of the committee and the next steps.
- C. Public Comment.
- D. Adjournment.

NOTE: Beverages and a light meal will be provided.

cc: Committee Members
Paula Ray, Town Clerk

INCORPORATED 1645



August 22, 2018

John S. Dunham, P.E.
District IV Engineer
ConnDOT District IV
359 South Main Street
Thomaston, CT 06787

RE: State Project #51-260
Landscaping Issues

Dear Mr. Dunham,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with Town of Farmington representatives on August 14, 2018 to walk the project area and discuss various landscape concerns related to State Project #51-260.

As discussed, the Town of Farmington has been inundated with general complaints about the quality of the landscaping and the prevalence of weeds. Not to mention, jimson weed plants were abundantly growing through-out the project area. On August 7, 2018, we sent an email to Jennifer Mortensen, Resident Engineer, expressing our displeasure about the deplorable conditions of landscaping through-out the project area.

On August 8, 2018 the contractor had a large crew dispatched to the area for general maintenance and to remove the weeds that have grown over the past few months. While this is an improvement, the quality of the landscaping through-out the project remains unacceptable to the Town of Farmington.

I am extremely concerned about condition of the soil, the toxicity of the invasive jimson weed, and the future challenges the Town will face with the soil if these weeds continue to grow and spread. Attached is a picture of the pervasive nature of these dangerous weeds around Parson's corner.

I've outlined a summary of our meeting/walk thru below, which includes the Town of Farmington's expectations moving forward.

Meeting Summary

At the meeting, I expressed that I should not have to function as the project manager on this project. Route 4 is the Gateway to our community and is lined with small businesses that have been more than tolerant during this difficult, multi-year road project. This is a highly visible road project that is constantly critiqued by the +/-30,000 cars that travel on it every day. Neglecting the landscaping to allow 5 foot toxic jimson weed to grow throughout is especially foolish and completely unacceptable.





Due to the overabundance of weeds, I believe that the soil is of low quality. For that reason, the soil needs to be tested and treated appropriately. The Town, the businesses, and residents will eventually be maintaining the landscaping and it is crucial that the soil be of high quality so these issues do not continue to occur. We also discussed that the State will remove all of the weeds that are growing instead of grass. You stated that the contractor will reseed those areas, including the entire Parson's property in the fall, to enable grass to grow. I believe that the businesses/residents would greatly appreciate it if someone reached out to inform them that the contractor would be back in the fall to replant the grass areas.

The Town also requested that all wood chips, including those around the new trees, be replaced with high quality mulch.

In summary the landscaping issues are as follows:

- 1) All areas need to be replaced with high quality soil.
- 2) All existing wood chips including around new trees will be replaced with high quality mulch.
- 3) All dead plants and trees will be removed.
- 4) All grass areas will be reseeded after the weeds are removed.
- 5) New trees will be properly landscaped.
- 6) The entire area will be maintained by the State or contractor until the project is complete.

Traffic Westbound

We also discussed that traffic on Route 4 Westbound is a significant problem. I acknowledge that this congestion will not be resolved completely due to the design of the project, but it is my opinion that changing the timing of the lights during peak periods may help with some of that congestion. A meeting has been scheduled on August 24, 2018 to review my request. I ask that the personnel in attendance have the authority to change the timing on the traffic lights. I also ask that all the traffic intersection(s) ratings be available to review. It is anticipated that traffic volumes will increase in September and changes to the light timing needs to occur immediately.



**Signs**

At the August 24, 2018 meeting I would also like to discuss the various signs that are located on the new sidewalks through- out the project. As we discussed, there are signs that have been placed incorrectly, some are not handicap accessible, and others should be removed completely.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to our meeting on August 24, 2018.

Sincerely,

Kathleen A. Eagen
Town Manager

/Attachment

Cc: Town Council members
Russell M. Arnold, Jr., P.E., Director/Town Engineer
Paul Melanson, Chief of Police
Rose Ponte, Economic Development Director
Mark Rolfe, P.E. Bureau Chief, Bureau of Engineering & Construction
Ravi Chandran, P.E., Transportation Construction Administrator
Scott Hill, P.E., Transportation Engineering Administrator
Michael N. Calabrese, Transportation Supervising Engineer
Craig Albert, Transportation Engineer
Jennifer Mortensen, Milone & MacBroom, Inc., Resident Engineer
File



MOTION

Agenda Item B-2

To discuss the charge of the Sub-Committee and review the next steps.

NOTE: As you know, one of the charges of the Farmington Village Center Committee is to recommend quality of life enhancements (sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, street furniture, historic markers, wayfinding signage, and universal design improvements) for the Farmington Village Center area.

It is my opinion that at this meeting the committee should begin to brainstorm and begin the process of creating a matrix which would include the short- and long-term goals, timelines, budget, difficulty of implementation, and priorities.

As discussed previously, I believe the Committee should immediately consider focusing on the landscaping associated with Route 4 road project. I would recommend that the Committee discuss the creation of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a landscape architect to assist in a landscaping plan for the area.

I look forward to our discussion and brainstorming at the meeting.