

Ask Bangor: Community Town Hall Meeting
October 22, 2015
Summary

1. Can we add a sidewalk to Finson Road from Ohio St. to Weebees or add additional street lighting to that section?
 - a. That section is classified as rural/country road and we don't typically put sidewalks in those areas. Instead we pave a five foot side section of the road for pedestrian use. Putting in a sidewalk would entail enclosed drainage which would be a big challenge and expensive. We have secured state funding

2. What about Bolling Drive?
 - a. We can look to see if we could find the funding for that project.

3. Please explain why small sections of roads are skipped when paving, for example Central Street.
 - a. For Central Street specifically, the bridges have concrete sections that cannot be paved. For budget reasons, we sometimes do smaller sections and wait a year or two to do the rest. It's a matter of finding the funding and spreading the resources throughout the city and trying to make everyone happy.

4. There is a lack of lighting in new Capehart and no sidewalks. There is no safe place to walk. Can the speed limit be changed to 15mph? Speedbumps?
 - a. The street light policy says there should be lights at intersections and every other utility pole. We will look at the spacing in that area to make sure it abides by the street light policy.

The state sets the speed limits and for a 15mph limit, it must be a school zone. The City has a traffic calming policy that we follow. We will take this as a request to look at that area including Bolling, Langely, etc. We will look into additional signs and see what the options are.

The Police will get out on Bolling and the surrounding roads over the next week or two.

5. The crosswalk on Griffin Rd from new Capehart to the Airport mall is scary. Nobody stops there. Is there a better way to mark the crosswalk? Can a flashing crosswalk beacon be put there?
 - a. We understand this concern. We are redoing Griffin Rd next summer and will move that crosswalk under a street light so it's easier to see people crossing. All unattended crosswalks (unattended meaning they are not at an intersection tied in with the lights) have four signs- two from each direction. We will make sure the crosswalk has been painted. The flashing crosswalk beacon is not budgeted right now but we can add it to the list for next year.

6. How much do the flashing beacons cost? Could we raise money to have them installed?

- a. They are \$6,000 for a set. EMMC and Penquis have both purchased them for areas near them and we installed them.
These flashing beacons are great, however, we do want the public to be aware that there is concern that people will stop paying attention to them just like the signs. The more of them that there are the quicker that will happy. So, we aren't saying no just that they don't belong everywhere.
7. Have there been serious discussions of putting armed guards in our schools?
 - a. We have a lot of schools and one liaison who is responsible to all the principals. Downeast School in particular is covered by Officer Brennan. The schools don't pay for this service and we did used to have two school liaisons but we had to some shifting in the budget and it was reduced to one.

Every school is covered before school starts. They are on our radar. It's not a perfect situation but we don't have the ability to cover it all. However, the schools are very important to us and PD. We will continue to be in schools as best we can. We use a school every April for training so officers have an idea of layout which will help if we ever run in to a problem.
8. What is being done about bullying at school and at bus stops?
 - a. That is a school and police issue. We can't speak to the school but we encourage you to reach out to them and speak with Chief Hathaway to address the problem. We will have the school resource officer/ liaison present if he is aware.
9. What will be done about sidewalks being cleared this winter? Last year kids had to wait on the road for school buses.
 - a. Last year was a very challenging year. We typically see 70 inches of snow and we got 140. We did our best. We like to equate clearing sidewalks with driving your lawnmower to Ellsworth. Simple things will break the machines down and when there is a storm on top of one another- it slows us down even further but rest assured our guys are out working hard to clear sidewalks. We plow 80 miles of sidewalks a winter- you can imagine how long that takes.
10. Can we specify where the bus stops are and make sure they are cleared?
 - a. We can certainly look into that. Once we have the locations, we can use a loader to push the banks back in those area.
11. A lot of people push their snow onto the sidewalks, particularly on Blue Hill West. Is there something that can be done about that? Can you send a letter to landscaping companies asking them not to?
 - a. It comes down to a matter of personnel to enforce it and we just don't have that. It is against state regulation. Vendors move around plowing different driveways, it's hard to pinpoint who is doing it. We can site the landowner. The letter is a good idea, unfortunately, it's unlikely we would reach everyone.

12. There are kids doing drugs on Bolling Drive near bus stops and on Langley St. where they hide behind a garage- bus comes about 7:45. And it's not just kids- its parents. It's a big problem. We call the police but by the time they get there, they're gone.
 - a. We will work on solutions. That is a problem area. Plate numbers are helpful. Making them aware that people see them and try to be proactive are all good points. We have some officers that will interact and relate with the kids. It will be easier once we know who they are and we will work with the schools and PD will get out to the bus stops. We will get out there throughout the week and press it upon them to knock it off. We take bullying very seriously.

13. Do you know what the schools are doing about bullying and drug abuse?
 - a. We don't know what the school department is doing specifically because we cannot speak for them. They operate under their own guidelines even though we share a building. It wasn't because they didn't want to come but we thought there were enough City concerns to address without bringing in the School. However, the City Manager will speak with the Superintendent and pass along these concerns.

14. Some kids are unable to participate in Parks & Rec activities due to transportation issues. When practice gets out late- the buses no longer run. Now with the Hampden service discontinued- there's no transportation to the Parks & Rec building on Saturdays either. What is being done about this?
 - a. We can certainly look into helping with that. We can ask on forms if a child has trouble with transportation so we are aware and we'll see about facilitating carpool.

As we move forward into the next year, we will be looking at options in regards to the bus line. We know there is a desire there to provide service to the lower end of Main Street. The options will be presented to Council and they will make the ultimate decision.

15. How much would it cost for a shelter to be put in for not only the City bus but for kids waiting for school buses as well? Could we raise money for that too?
 - a. The cost ranges between \$3-5,000 depending on size, prep work, etc. We can certainly look into this and see if moving forward we can budget for some additional shelter. There are standards and they are in the City's right of way. We will look into other funding resources and see about packaging some of these things up. We would rather see the City attempt to address these concerns first.

16. Has there been any consideration to put in another park near Langely and Randolph? The only park around the Capehart neighborhoods is the school and it's not suitable for little kids.
 - a. City Staff will look into this. We understand the need and are looking into a spot that would be most convenient for most people. We are aware of the need for an additional park. We will have a conversation with Bangor Housing and do what we can.

17. Has there been any conversation of moving the Homeless Shelter on Main Street?
 - a. No. It's a property they own that they have put a lot of resources and money into. People don't like to look at it but it's a necessary service that is centrally located.

18. Both shelters have been full a couple nights in October. What happens in January when it's freezing outside? My church puts people up but aren't there other resources?
 - a. We have had conversations about that. We've been told by some people they are full but when we call they aren't. There are options with GA and other services. We won't leave people out in the cold. We suggest calling Rindy Fogler and talk and coordination with her for those types of services.

19. People are throwing their trash on other people lawns and debris signs get put on it. We can't prove other people are doing it. What do we do? Specifically, there's a house on Thomas Hill Road where it's an ongoing problem.
 - a. This is a challenge. The signs have been effective. If it's a big problem call us and we will do what we can. Ultimately, owners are responsible for keeping their property clean. Code is aware of the familiar with that issue. Hopefully the bank will be able to sell it. There is no easy answer.

20. Is airport mall up to code? The first thing people see coming from the airport is that mall.
 - a. This has been brought up before. We are trying to get in touch with the owners of that building. We are aware of the maintenance issues. However, Marshalls and Hannaford's looks nice so it's not all bad.

21. What is going on with Captain Nicks?
 - a. It will be demolished. RH Foster owns the building and they have plans to expand their parking lot.

22. I see Bangor Housing spending lots of money for entertainment, etc. but they haven't invested in bus shelters. I was hoping someone from Bangor Housing could address that.
 - a. We will share your concerns with them but we can't speak for them. We did not invite them to attend this meeting because we thought there were enough City issues for us to address in this meeting alone.

23. Do we have grant writers?
 - a. We do write grants but they only go so far. It sounds great to be able to do all the projects that we want but we have limited resources. The State has cut our funds that paid for amenities that we used to enjoy. The city was hit hard after the housing crisis and commercial values went down. Some people say we've done a bad job with the tax rate but it provides great services that we need. We try to strike a balance, we know a lot of taxpayers are on limited fixed incomes. We do the best we can. We can't do everything so we work hard to prioritize so the most critical needs are addressed first.

24. What can we do as a community to help?

- a. It is great to hear that. We don't have all the answers but we would like to get the name and contact information of those interested in helping.
25. What do you do for people that are in the street, homeless? For drug addicted people with children who have had chances but can't break the cycle?
- a. We work hard with the shelters and other resources to get people to all the available services. We don't want anyone to be homeless and we do our best to connect them with what's available. We've held meetings to address this issue to help where we can but unfortunately, we can't reach everyone, it's just not possible but we do our best. You are right that this is a problem that we are struggling with.
26. Where are all the drug forums in Bangor? There have been others but not here. What about a family shelter?
- a. There are lots of people working on these issues, including dedicated teams/ meetings. We know these issues take time. We can hold more forums and City staff will take this information back to the groups and see about holding more public meetings. We know there is a need for a family shelter. Unfortunately, there is no easy answer. We are working on a campaign to reduce the stigma associated with these types of issues so people feel more comfortable asking for help. Better treatment options from doctors to prevent them from getting to the point of the family breaking up is an issue we are discussing.
27. There are kids that trespass and are on the Downeast School roof. We call PD but they always come after the fact and there have been times they haven't responded. Why?
- a. We do respond but calls are prioritized. There is an officer assigned to that area and they should be responding at night. We have a young motivated crew. Police Chief Hathaway said he would be disappointed to find out that a call wasn't responded to. No call goes unanswered. He will look into that and if it's true, someone will be in trouble. Now, usually the dispatcher will ask a caller if they want a call back and most people don't. We will do a better job with that. We encourage you to call us. If you don't want to give your names, that's fine but we will still respond. A delay during the day may occur due to priority.
28. When is leaf pickup?
- a. It begins November 2 and goes until the weather shuts us down. WE are looking into tracking our movements and making that available so everyone will know but not this year. Please be patient.

Electronic Submissions- Wrap Up

29. Would it be possible to bring in good draining soil to raise and level off a portion of Stillwater Park to create a nicer playing surface?
- a. Park & Rec will work with Public Works to determine what some possible remedies might be to address the drainage problem along the Howard Street side of Stillwater

Park. Ultimately, it could become a larger task that requires a request for funding during the next budget process.

30. Can you relate on the subject of a passenger rail here in Bangor to support movements of passengers and cargo?
- a. Mayor Durgin has represented Bangor on a State-wide task force for explore the expansion of passenger rail. At issue is the ownership status of tracks and rail lines; and the condition of the rail lines is not sufficient to accommodate higher speed passenger trains; and it is very costly to bring those tracks and lines up to passenger rail levels north of Brunswick. For those reasons it will take a statewide solution to improving the rail corridor and Implementation of passenger rail will likely continue to expand north incrementally. We will continue to work with the State to develop long range plans for the implementation of passenger rail in Bangor although it is a very long term plan.
31. How many full time employees does the City have and how many of them live in Bangor?
- a. The city currently has 449 fulltime employees (non-school). Of that total, 111 or 25% live in Bangor. State law prohibits municipalities from enacting ordinances mandating that employees live within the community. Municipalities may, however, enact reasonable response times to report to work or maximum mileage distances from work, when these are determined to be an important element of the job. The city does have these types of requirements in place for certain police, fire, and public works employees for whom response time to work is important.
32. What is the plan to correct the City's violation of the clean water act and what will it add to my wastewater/stormwater bill?
- a. The City of Bangor, like many other municipalities, has a combined sewer system that sometimes overflows through combined sewer overflows (CSOs). The City of Bangor has been working closely with the Department of Environmental Protection and the Environmental Protection Agency over the last few years to craft a legal agreement (the Consent Decree) to reduce and eliminate CSOs over the next twenty years that is both acceptable to DEP and EPA and affordable for the citizens and property owners of Bangor. The Consent Decree includes sewer improvement projects that the City will complete in the immediate future, as well as provisions for the City to develop a Long Term Control Plan to address CSOs.

The City of Bangor has been continuously working towards the reduction of sewer overflows and the current Consent Decree formalizes this process. Ongoing funding of CSO projects will be required to meet the conditions of the Consent Decree, but City Engineering Staff does not believe that the residents will see an immediate spike in sewer or stormwater rates directly related to the Consent Decree. Additionally, the terms of the Consent Decree include affordability language, stating that if financial conditions within Bangor significantly change, then the City has the opportunity to modify the Long Term Control Plan with EPA and DEP approval.