

**MINUTES
PUBLIC HEARING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND BURGESSES
JUNE 25, 2019**

1. Mayor N. Warren “Pete” Hess declared the public hearing open at **6:32 p.m.** with the following in attendance:

BURGESSES:

L. Taf Jackson	D. Hoff
M. Bronko	R. Neth
R. Burns, absent	R. Vitale
J. DeOliveira	D. Wisniewski
C. Herb	

PRESS:

E. Gugliotti

RESIDENTS:

Thirty

DEPARTMENT HEADS:

J. Stewart, Public Works Director

W. Zirolli, Borough Engineer

OTHERS:

S. Bronko, Board of Finance
K. Svetz, Naugatuck Valley COG
D. Sheridan, Board of Finance Chairman
E. Rachuba, Zoning Board of Appeals
M. Erickson, Zoning Citation Hearing Officer
R. Clark, Planning Commission

S. Bushee, CT DOT
R. Martin, Fire Commission
L. Slonus, Weston & Sampson
A. Nafis, Weston & Sampson
E. Bronko, Zoning Commission
T. Kiernan, Zoning Commission

2. Mayor N. Warren “Pete” Hess led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.
3. Mayor Hess announced the Public Hearing is for the consideration and discussion of the proposed construction of a roundabout at Cherry Street, Meadow Street and Rubber Avenue. Legal Notice of this hearing has been published in the Republican American Newspaper on June 16, 2019 and June 20, 2019.

Mayor Hess stated there will be a recording of the public hearing and everyone will be given an opportunity to speak after stating their name and address for the record.

4. Borough Engineer Wayne Zirolli welcomed everyone in attendance. He introduced Scott Bushee from the Connecticut Department of Transportation, Lisa Slonus and Alan Nafis from the engineering firm Weston & Sampson and Public Works Director James Stewart. The Rubber Avenue Project is LOTCIP funded and administered through Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG). Lisa Slonus and Scott Bushee will give presentations on the proposed modern roundabout at the intersection of Cherry Street and Meadow Street followed by questions and comments.

Lisa Slonus from Weston & Sampson said the Rubber Avenue Project covers two thirds of a mile on Rubber Avenue from Melbourne Street to Elm Street, including a portion of Aetna Street. The project was extended to include drainage on Aetna Street. The project will include sidewalk and pavement improvements plus streetscaping. The town pays for the design through LOTCIP, the State of Connecticut pays for the construction and

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NVCOG administers the project. The idea of a roundabout is being included before the project begins. A modern roundabout will create a safer environment for pedestrians. Pedestrians currently have a lot of surface to cross at the Route 63 intersection on Meadow Street and Cherry Street. The benefits of a roundabout are speeds are lower and it is safer. Left turns are eliminated and crashes are reduced. There is low to no maintenance and an opportunity for gateway and aesthetic treatments. Currently there are thirty-two opportunities for automobile crashes and twenty-four opportunities for pedestrian accidents at the intersection. The roundabout reduces those figures to eight conflict points for automobile crashes and pedestrian accidents.

Scott Bushee from Connecticut DOT said a roundabout is a one-way, circular intersection in which traffic flows counterclockwise around a center island. Roundabouts differ from rotaries and traffic circles because they operate at lower speeds making them safer and simpler to use. A modern roundabout has no left turns. There are fewer decisions for drivers to make. Roundabouts cause drivers to slow down, ideally to less than 20 mph, which reduces the risks to both pedestrians and drivers. In other municipalities, businesses opened in the area after the roundabout was completed.

5. Public Comment

Liselotte Muentenes– 125 Lincoln Street

How will the walking public be protected through the roundabout? She is worried about children, bicycle riders and people in wheelchairs crossing the roadway.

Lisa Slonus – Weston & Sampson

The crossings are fifteen feet with a waiting area in between. Traffic speeds are lower. Pedestrians will spend less time in the roundabout crosswalk than they currently do.

James Stewart – Public Works Director

There is a snow shelf where snow will be plowed onto instead of on sidewalks.

Barbara Rompre – 4 Salem Road, Prospect

She is a Prospect resident but shops at Stop & Shop on Rubber Avenue. Roundabouts are safer and more efficient.

James SanAngelo – 148 Linda Court

The roundabout is a good thing. He has found the traffic flow to be better. Asked if there will still be crossing guards for schoolchildren.

Edward Rachuba – 636 Andrew Mountain Road

Questioned whether there will be a problem when several high school events get out at the same time.

Shirley Newland – 591 Rubber Avenue

She asked what costs the town would incur. How long will the intersection be impacted while under construction?

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James Stewart – Public Works Director

The town will have to negotiate the fee for the design of the project. It is a five million, five hundred thousand (\$5,500,000) dollar grant.

Scott Bushee – Connecticut DOT

It will be a one-season project, for example, April to November. Possibly three months during construction will be difficult.

George Bacon – 34 Glendale Court

He is a retired State of Connecticut employee. He said roundabouts have caused broken snowplows. People ride over signs and drive on the center of the roundabout. He believes they do not work.

R. O'Donnell – 195 Lewis Street

Asked what the average diameter of the roundabout would be.

Scott Bushee – Connecticut DOT

Every site is different. The diameter of the roundabout could possibly be 108 feet by 135 feet or 120 feet by 135 feet.

Paul Miller – 75 Hickory Lane

He sees a problem with the people that live in town not the roundabout.

Mark Dandenneau – 70 Galpin Street

Asked if there was anything preventing people from crossing the island. Will people be able to turn into businesses near the roundabout? Will it be difficult for emergency vehicles to navigate the roundabout?

Lisa Slonus – Weston & Sampson

She said this is a modern roundabout not a rotary with higher speeds.

Rick Martin – 76 Bluebird Drive

Asked what would cause an accident if roundabouts are safer.

Scott Bushee – Connecticut DOT

Driver confusion could be a cause. There is a lower number of accidents due to slower speeds through the intersection. Accidents are usually bumps not inoperable vehicles. Six roundabouts have been constructed in the state and not one municipality has complained.

J. Cousins – 40 Inwood Drive

Asked how long the roundabout is designed to last.

Lisa Slonus – Weston & Sampson

Future growth was taken into consideration when designing the roundabout.

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Herbert Wright – 7 Ida Street

Asked why lights couldn't be coordinated instead of installing a roundabout. He sits in Dunkin Donuts daily between 2 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. and hasn't seen one accident in two and a half years.

Paul Miller – 35 Simsberry Street

He is a motorcyclist. He said wide paint strips are slippery when wet.

Eileen Bronko – 34 Fairfield Court

Will property abutting businesses be taken by imminent domain?

R. Moon – 26 Long View Terrace

What are the benefits of a roundabout to the Rubber Avenue Project?

Mark Dandenneau – 70 Galpin Street

Asked if a light could be put on or near Scott Street/Cherry Street with a left hand turn signal on the light.

Brian Farrell – 411 Mulberry Street

He has been through roundabouts in other countries and Cape Cod. They were low traffic areas. In Naugatuck, backups were high when both bridges were under construction. He was against the roundabout project because of pedestrians crossing. After tonight's presentation, he is not against it as much as he was before.

T. Stabler – 65 Cold Spring Circle

He drives a pickup with an attached camper. He asked how it would fit through the roundabout.

Lisa Slonus – Weston & Sampson

It has been designed for a city bus to go through the roundabout.

Herbert Wright – 7 Ida Street

The person to the right has the right of way?

Mayor "Pete" Hess

The borough has had great success with the LOTCIP Program. North Main Street, the Greenway, Rubber Avenue, Cross Street and Spring Street. It is a great program for Naugatuck. Rubber Avenue is a mess. We want a gateway to Rubber Avenue. We want to sell properties on Rubber Avenue. There will be a preliminary design and then the final design.

6. Burgess Comments

Burgess Rocky Vitale

There is a high volume of traffic during festivals and high school events. Will there be a need to have a police officer at the roundabout during those times? On the Dunkin Donuts

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side, will people yield for walkers in the crosswalk? When there is heavy pedestrian traffic, what handles that amount of backup? What is the material used for the truck apron? He is concerned with backups into the circle.

Lisa Slonus – Weston & Sampson

The truck apron is made of concrete and the curbing is granite. Statistics show backups are generally during construction.

Scott Bushee – Connecticut DOT

Before granite was installed, it was chipped by snowplows and truck traffic.

Burgess Dorothy Hoff

Thank you for the presentation. It's great having a discussion now and taking comments from our residents when there is fluidity in the design.

Burgess Robert Neth

He was very skeptical when the idea of a roundabout was first brought up. He has been through the one in Monroe. He thought we did not have enough space for a roundabout. He is now leaning toward accepting the idea.

Burgess Jack DeOliveira

Asked the difference in maintenance costs between the traffic signal and the roundabout.

Scott Bushee – Connecticut DOT

The traffic signal is a significant expense to replace. The pavement in the roundabout is designed to last twelve years.

Burgess Jack DeOliveira

What are the costs to reconfigure the water or gas lines?

James Stewart – Public Works Director

The town does not pay toward any reconfiguration.

Scott Bushee – Connecticut DOT

The state passes the expense of landscaping the center of the roundabout to the municipality.

Burgess Robert Neth

How do winter chemicals effect the apron?

Scott Bushee – Connecticut DOT

The apron has a sealer on it. He recommends integral color so when it does chip, it will still be the same color.

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Burgess Carl Herb

If the roundabout is not accepted, will it affect the rest of the Rubber Avenue Project?

Lisa Slonus – Weston & Sampson

No, it will not change the Rubber Avenue Project.

James Stewart – Public Works Director

There will be cameras at the intersection.

Burgess Carl Herb

He thinks it should be put as a question on the November ballot.

Mayor “Pete” Hess

It will not go on the November ballot. The borough board will decide on the roundabout.

7. Mayor Hess declared the public hearing closed at 8:39 p.m.

A digital recording of this meeting is available in the office of the Borough Clerk for further review.

Attest:

Nancy K. DiMeo
Borough Clerk