

City

17 July 2006

Manager's

update

Report

ASSESSMENT DEPARTMENT:

Automation - Every month this office sends out numerous sales questionnaires, exemption removal and STAR exemption forms to persons who buy property in the City. This task has become very time consuming due to the increased number of sales. In an effort to streamline this process, we have designed a process to automate the production of these letters. This process also makes it easier to change the wording and format of these letters when the need arises.

We have updated the process to place relievis or special assessments on the tax rolls. This new process cuts out a lot of chances for human error and allows for better reporting including reports to alert us of the possibility of the charges being put on the wrong property.

Each year at the conclusion of the annual tax certificate sale this office has to change settings on all the properties in the auction so that the tax bills are sent to the City Comptroller's office and not mailed. There is a very short period of time between when we have the final list of properties and when the City tax bills need to be completed (2 to 3 days). This year there were 193 properties that needed to be recoded. This task was always done manually in the past, it was very time consuming (most of a day) and always at a time when there were many other tasks needed to be done to get the tax roll and bills completed. Our new process takes about 5 minutes, from when the Comptroller's office tells us they have created the final report of properties to when they are on the roll and a report of the changes has been printed.

COMPTROLLERS:

Tax Sale Auction - On Friday, June 23rd the City Comptroller's Office held the annual tax sale auction. The auction included 142 parcels with outstanding taxes of \$191,719. The City received bids on 106 of the parcels totaling \$180,410 from individuals participating in the auction. The City, by default, was the bidder on 36 parcels for \$11,309. In comparison, last year's tax sale auction also included 142 parcels totaling \$258,458. The City received bids on 83 of the parcels totaling \$147,895 from individuals participating in the auction. The City, by default, was the bidder on 59 parcels for \$110,534.

Property Sales - The following properties were included in the City's last property auction held on January 11th and the bids were accepted by City Council on January 17th. However, these properties were not closed on by the high bidder and therefore the City still owns these lots. The bidders forfeit their 10% deposits.

<u>Property</u>	<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Bid price</u>
119 Marble St	Rock Hedz Inc.	\$ 3,000
120 Marble St	Rock Hedz Inc.	\$ 700
35 Stuart St	Thomas Rapholz	\$ 300
36 Stuart St	Thomas Rapholz	\$ 300
33BK11 Stuart St	Thomas Rapholz	\$ 300
M30 Charles St	Charles/Robin Harwood	\$ 100
M32 Charles St	Charles/Robin Harwood	\$ 500
200 Hazelhurst Ave	Linda Amell	\$ 300

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT:

Downtown Awareness Grant - Preliminary brand/look from consultant, has been received from Consultant and approved by the Dept. of State. Will work with consultant to prepare final documents and begin to implement brand/look. Mural Arts program held a public meeting on July 12th, to discuss work to date and enlist additional volunteer help. Due to preliminary work required and construction in Public Square, the first mural is now slated to be painted in 2007. Working with property owner to secure permission for site of first mural. Working with IT Dept. to define the scope of the web site redesign. Participated in several presentations for new software for the new web site. Will incorporate Downtown brand/look into the web site. Will send out RFP this summer for new web site. Working with Gary DeYoung to update City' tourism advertising. Will begin to incorporate Downtown brand/look when it is complete. Working with Clough, Harbour & Assoc. to complete a wayfinding signage plan, that will then be implemented.

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) - The Economic Condition and Market Analysis by Camoin Associates is completed and received. An electronic copy is on the City's web site and copies are available in the City Manager's Office. The Whitewater Suitability Study by Recreation Engineering & Planning is also complete. An electronic copy is on the City's web site and copies are available in the City Manager's Office. Received a preliminary rough draft of the LWRP from Behan Planning. Reviewed these documents and discussed with the Department of State. Comments were forwarded to Behan Planning. Will have a conference call with Behan Planning to discuss needed revisions, particularly in regards to the proposed zoning changes.

River Committee Meetings - The River Committee, a sub-committee of Advantage Watertown, held a river clean-up event on July 8th. This volunteer event focused attention on the need to clean-up the shores of the Black River and to continue to help

keep it clean. It is hoped that this will become an annual event. The River Committee is also involved in the oversight of the LWRP and events happening on or near the Black River.

Advantage Watertown - Updated the committee on the completion of two parts of the LWRP, and the status of the third part. Also updated committee on projects in the Downtown area.

Black River Blueway Trail Meetings - Attended the Black River Blueway Trail scooping session and the first public meeting. Will continue to coordinate the City's efforts with regards to waterfront revitalization with this initiative being spearheaded by the Tug Hill Commission.

Kayak Event - Working with Blackwater Development to coordinate City assistance with the annual kayak event. Have had preliminary meetings, and will continue to work on this project as it moves forward.

North Shore Access - Working with Recreation Engineering & Planning on the preliminary design for the North Shore Access. Participated in a walk through with Mike Harvey to identify the topographical challenges to the access. Mr. Harvey will submit preliminary plans to the Dept. of State for approval, and then final design can proceed. It is expected that construction will take place in 2007. Bill Plante, from GYMO, which is a sub-contractor for Mr. Harvey, has located a bridge that could be used for our new pedestrian access for the North Shore. This bridge will be used to cross the intake canal for the City's power plant, and will replace the remnants of the old Route 3 bridge which is in a state of disrepair. City Engineer, Kurt Hauk and myself will go investigate the feasibility of relocating this currently unused bridge.

Downtown Business Association - Working with the DBA to coordinate a large number of events in the Downtown area. The newest of these is the Box Lunch Revue, which is a musical revue taking place every Friday from 11 am to 1 pm, in front of the Jefferson County Historical Society. Also utilizing the DBA's newsletter to keep Downtown businesses informed of upcoming events and progress with the Public Square Streetscape Project. Attending all DBA Board meetings and DBA General Membership meetings.

Public Square Streetscape Project - Working with businesses in the Downtown area to keep them informed of the progress on the Public Square Streetscape Project. Handling complaint and question phone calls from businesses and residents. Working with Mike Lumbis to identify solutions to the complaints.

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT:

State Street Reconstruction Project - Bids were opened on May 25, 2005 and construction began on this project on 7/5/05. The water main and water service work from Eastern Blvd. to Public Square was completed in November 2005, with the

exception of the replacement of a 16" water main crossing at Monroe Avenue and Fairmont Avenue, which was completed in April 06.

National Grid (NIMO) and Verizon crews are relocating their utilities ahead of the contractor. Progression of the project is dependent on the ability these National Grid and Verizon crews to relocate utilities in advance of the construction work. The current critical path for this is two Verizon duct banks. The first is located at Michigan Avenue and is projected to be cleared by 30 June 2006. The second is located on N. Hamilton and is projected by Verizon to be cleared by 1 October 2006.

Sanitary sewer work - mainline complete east of N. Rutland, starting lateral work.
Storm sewer mainline work - progressing to Michigan.

Road Reconstruction work is currently scheduled for completion from Eastern to California prior to the suspension of work for the winter of 2006.
Substantial completion of this project is scheduled for the summer of 2007.

Streetscape/Public Square Reconstruction Project - Bids were opened on March 8, 2006 and Villager construction was awarded the contract. A preconstruction meeting was held on April 6, 2006. Construction started in May 2006. Areas designated for 2-hour parking and expanded Handicap Parking in the J.B. Wise Lot were added to assist businesses during the course of construction. Waterline work is underway along the east, west and south side of the Square.

Sidewalk Program - The 2006-2007 special assessment district has been inspected and notification letters sent out to the property owners. The district is comprised of 160 properties. The public hearing was conducted on June 5, 2006. There are currently 10 properties from the previous assessment district that require "warranty" work. Letters to these property owners were sent out. DPW has initiated the hiring of the sidewalk crew. Work is projected to start on July 17, 2006.

Stream Parking Lot Entrance Reconfiguration - Sherman Street/ Arsenal Street Intersection: This project provided a new entrance to the North Country Children's Clinic in the former Kriff's Furniture building, while making it easier to limit access to the Court/Arsenal parking lot to Stream employees. The design also allowed for parking spaces for use by the general public on the west side of the existing parking lot. Work on this project was substantially complete by October 27, 2005. The roadway and traffic signal system has been re-designed to allow for a left turn onto Sherman Street when traveling westbound on Arsenal Street. Final pavement work, installation of signal loops, and ADA compliant corner ramps will be completed once overhead utilities are relocated by National Grid.

Connector Road From Public Square To J.B. Wise Parking Lot - The Engineering Department made a preliminary survey and completed initial design work on the proposed connector road from Public Square to the J.B. Wise parking lot.

This work was coordinated with the Downtown Development Coordinator and the Planning Department to include potential J.B. Wise Parking Lot improvements, Downtown Streetscape interface, and LWRP initiatives. Various design alternatives were presented to the City Council in February. Received SHPO approval for Anthony St. curb work. Currently developing the scope with the following options: Full reconstruction with a change order to Villager Construction through the Public Square contract. Villager performs the curb work within the current project limits, DPW constructs to gravel grade, complete the work as part of the scope of the J.B. Wise project. Include design and construction as part of the scope of the J.B. Wise project.

Connector Road From Arsenal Street To Coffeen Street - Topographic and boundary survey work has been completed for use in developing a preliminary street design and order of magnitude estimates for construction of a connector road between Arsenal and Coffeen Streets in the vicinity of the Stateway Plaza. The proposed connector road will compliment the work that the NYSDOT is performing on Arsenal Street. Six meetings have taken place with the NYSDOT since March 06 to facilitate both the Arsenal Street and Connector Road projects. The preliminary design will continue to be progressed when staffing hours are available by the Engineering Department until design funding can be secured. After funding is secured, the detailed design work will be performed through a consultant.

Capital Project Design -

WWTP Roof Replacement - Bid recommended award to RSI roofing with a bid of \$114,000. The apparent low bidder at opening did not have the required 10 years of experience per the specifications.

State Place - Final Plans are complete. A preconstruction meeting was held with DPW and Planning on 3 May 06. Start of construction is awaiting utility pole removal by Verizon.

Sterling Street - Final Plans are complete. Received DOH plan approval 19 June 06.

Municipal Parking Lot - Developing preliminary design and initial site plan for review by stakeholders prior to starting detailed design. Meeting with property owner anticipated in mid July 2006.

N. Michigan - Project survey is complete. Preliminary design is scheduled to start in Aug 06.

Ten Eyck Ph-I & II - Project survey is complete. Preliminary design was started in May 06.

Survey Equipment & Software Upgrades - The Department has installed a new GIS data collector with help from the IT Department. Final calibration is accomplished. This instrument allows the department to get survey grade GIS information. The Department has received a new Leica TCR803 Total Station survey instrument. This instrument will further enhance the survey capability of the department. Completed Autocad and Civil 3D design software training. The IT Department has installed the software onto our computers. Currently awaiting a RAM upgrade for each CAD station as required to operate the 2007 version of the software. The RAM was purchased with end of year funds.

Hydro Plant - Performed work through a contractor to clear debris collected on the canal intake racks from the fall/spring runoff. Work was completed 3-9 May 2006. This work greatly reduces restrictions at the intake to maximize generation.

NYSDOT Arsenal Street Project Support - Six meetings were held with the NYSDOT from March 2006 to the present to assist the project progression. The drainage easement across City property on Haney St. has been completed. Provided assistance to the NYSDOT Real Estate Division in conjunction with Slye & Burrows to develop the acquisition map and property transfer regarding the Vision Development private sewer across the project area.

Knickerbocker Drive - A public meeting was held with property owners and school board members to get feedback on possible alternatives. A presentation of the alternatives was presented to the Council on 10 Apr 06. Initial traffic counts were taken 7-14 Apr 06. The second round of traffic counts were taken from 24 Apr to 1 May 06. Speed counts were taken 16-23 May 2006. Draft findings and recommendations have been forwarded to the City Manager's Office and a meeting to discuss our findings was held with the school district.

Iroquois Avenue - Initial traffic counts were taken in October 2005. The Police Department conducted speed checks with radar in Sep & Oct 2005. An update was presented to the Council on 10 April 06. Additional traffic counts were taken in May 2006 on streets adjacent to Iroquios Ave. Speed counts are currently being taken along Sherman Street

CSO Long Term Control Plan - Had a meeting with the DEC on 18 May 2006 to restart the CSO LTCP process. Anticipate DEC approval of the plan in late summer/early fall 2006. Developing an RFP for engineering services to perform the characterization and modeling of the initial drainage basins.

DEC Sewer Extension Requirements - 6 NYCRR Subpart 750-2 requires DEC approval of sewer extensions with flows greater than 2500 gal/day or more than one connected lateral. Part of this approval is assurance from the City that adequate sewer capacity exists in the system. Developments with assurance letters submitted to the DEC: City Center Plaza, Towne Center, and Pine Woods. Development with capacity under review: Liberty, Black River Dev., Maple Park, Starwood, Hampton Inn.

DPW Project Support (calendar year to date) -

Alteri Spray Ground - Engineering personnel conducted a site visit with DPW reps to develop stamped plans for construction. The DPW Cad Tech prepared plans based on review comments by Engineering. Plans are currently stamped, and received DOH approval.

Multi purpose Field Survey & Layout - Engineering staff assisted in the project survey and construction layout to enable construction by DPW crews.

Jefferson Street Playground Survey - Engineering staff assisted in the project survey.

Assisted with site survey of the DPW facility parking lot and also ordered geotechnical services for the site to assist in the design.

Provided survey and design support for storm drainage improvements along Huntington St. prior to paving work.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS:



Multi-Purpose Field #1 Parking Lot - Construction of this lot has been completed and now provides 42 new parking spaces that service the Multi-Purpose Field #1 as well as two softball fields located in the northeast quadrant of the Fairgrounds Complex.

Alex T. Duffy Fairgrounds Field Lighting

- This project was designed to bring the existing field lighting levels up to current standards in order to accommodate the various collegiate, semi-pro, and high school activities which utilize the field.





Court Street Parking Lot Overlay - Phase II, the final phase, of this project was completed this May and should extend the useful life expectancy of the 144,000 square foot/267-car parking lot located north of Court Street another 20 years. Phase II included the filling of all surface cracks, adjustment of all sewer structures, followed with a 1-1/2 wear course. The lot was then stripped and signed in accordance to the current standards.

Street Paving - This year's aggressive street paving schedule has begun with road crews having completed the shim and overlay of East Lynde Street. Crews are currently prepping both Tilden Street and Ives Street for curbing along with shim and overlay.



Surfacing Milling and Paving - The milling and paving portion of the paving schedule are underway. Both Franklin Street and North Indiana Avenue have been milled and sealed with crews currently setting the structures in preparation for paving.

Crack Sealing - A crack sealing crew was dispatched with the new Crack Sealer to seal the seams and cracks on Paddock, TenEyck, and Mullin Street. The Crack Sealer was also used to seal the seams on Court Street Parking Lot and Multi-Purpose Field #1 Parking Lot. We intend to initiate a major crack sealing maintenance schedule in the fall.



Pavement Management - Contract for the photometric survey and road surface distress/condition evaluation for all 100+ miles of the City's street was approved. When completed, this study will provide detailed assessment data on Linear Infrastructure, Intersection Infrastructure, and Pavement Distress Inventory which when integrated with the Department's CarteGraph Management System will allow the Department to immediately begin to analyze existing pavement conditions according to Federal Highway standards.

Western Outfall Trunk Sewer - Cleared and grubbed right-of-way to provide better access for maintenance activities.



Kelsey Creek - In an effort to maintain the flow and prevent flooding of the City's waterways, a large tree was removed from the creek and several trees in danger of coming down were removed from the banks of the creek.

Thompson Park Conservancy Emergency Generator Transfer Switch - This project was scheduled at the request of the Conservancy and consisted of replacing the failed transfer switch with a new 400-amp/3-phase emergency transfer switch. The switch will automatically activate the emergency generator in the instance of power failure.



DPW Stand-by Generator - The existing 60-kw/3-phase diesel generator was replaced with 230-kw/3-phase diesel generator. Replacement of the generator included the installation of new power feeder, an 800-amp disconnect, a

modified exhaust system, and a 250-gallon self contained fuel cell.



Spray Pool - Upon receiving design approval from the NYS Department of Health, construction and installation phases of the project commenced. The project was completed and inspected by NYS Department of Health and is now open to the public.

Spring Drop-Off - This bi-annual event provided city residents with the opportunity to dispose of their bulk items. The event took place at the Fairgrounds Arena Parking Lot on Saturday, June 3rd. A total of 198 customers attended the event disposing of 43.61 tons of residential waste and 11.49 tons of scrap metal.



Fire Pre-Emption Equipment - Work on the fire pre-empt system was started in early February. Currently, 40 percent of the total network of City signals are now in operation.

State Place Reconstruction - Work on this reconstruction project has commenced with crews having removed a large tree on-site and constructed the approx. 40 ft long retaining wall. Upon the relocation of all utilities, crews will begin the installation of both the sanitary and the storm drainage.





Jefferson Street Playground - Construction of this neighborhood playground has begun. Site work is nearing completion and the first shipment of playground equipment has arrived. Once complete this playground will provide the kids of the neighborhood with a safe place to play.

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT:

Auction - The City of Watertown participated in the Tri-County Equipment Auction, sponsored by the Jefferson County Highway Superintendent's Association, on Saturday, June 24, 2006 at the City's Municipal Fairgrounds. A total of 34 Items were sold for a total amount of \$9,010 less commission leaving a net balance of \$8,109.00 being remitted to the City.

WATER DEPARTMENT:

Thompson Park Pump Station - A new pump station is being constructed to supply water to Thompson Park and the upper Gotham Street area. This pump station is being constructed within the reservoir complex and will replace the existing pump house located near the Academy Street entrance to the park. Construction is underway with the foundation having been placed and the concrete walls of the below grade portion of the structure poured. This project is currently scheduled to be completed in September 2006.

Annual Hydrant Flushing Program - Water Department Personnel have scheduled the annual hydrant flushing program to begin the week of July 9, 2006. Each year, the entire water distribution system is flushed to eliminate sediment and rust particles from the lines. Residents and businesses in the immediate areas where the system is being flushed may experience temporary occurrences of discolored water. The department will provide the local newspaper with a weekly schedule of areas to be flushed, and residents are advised to refrain from washing clothes or drawing excessive amounts of water when crews are flushing on their streets, to minimize the risk of drawing discolored water into their homes. Flushing occurs between the hours of 6:00 pm and 2:00 am to minimize the inconvenience to the public. The flushing procedures normally take from 10 to 12 weeks to complete.

Additional Projects - Water Department personnel have been heavily involved with oversight and assistance in the construction of water mains on State Street and Public

Square. They have also assisted contractors working on private developments such as, Vision Development near Stateway Plaza, Starwood Apartments at the old Cloverdale site, the Walgreen's drug stores, and others.

Water Department staff members have also been working closely with the NYSDOT on finalizing plans for the Arsenal Street/I-81 pro