



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: John C. Curran, Town Manager

CC: Susan Aker, Cathy O'Dea

SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report, September 23, 2019

DATE: September 20, 2019

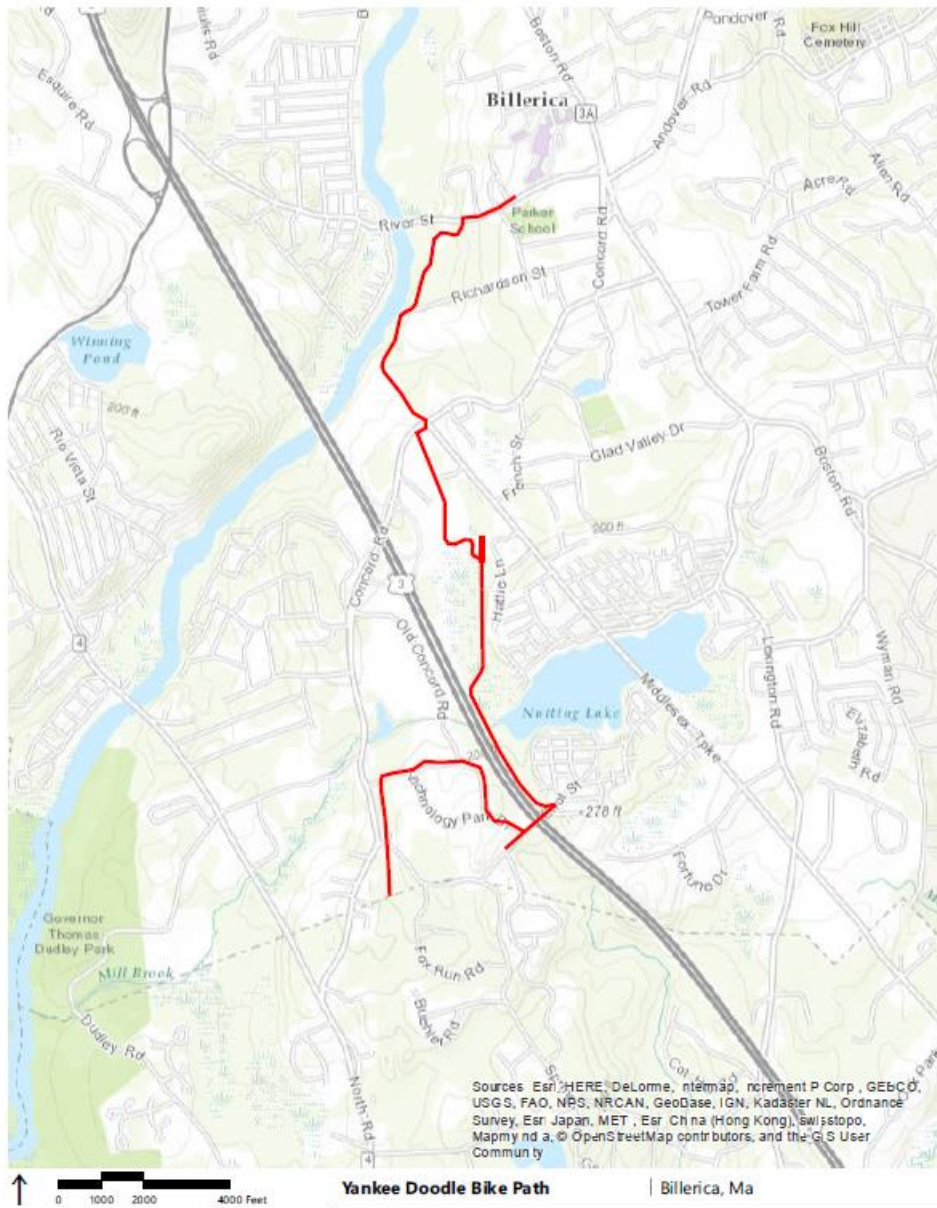
Yankee Doodle Bike Path Meeting

On Wednesday, October 2nd at 6:30PM Mass DOT will be holding a public hearing on the Yankee Doodle Bike Path. This is standard practice for a project like this. It will give the residents the opportunity to ask questions, provide comments, and become acquainted with the proposed design. The proposed route is attached. A few of the highlights from the Mass DOT handout are included below:

Project Schedule: The design plans displayed at this meeting are at the 25% design stage. Comments made at this hearing will be incorporated to the maximum extent feasible. The 75% design will commence following the hearing. The project is currently programmed for CMQ construction funding in FY2023.

Traffic Management: It is the intent of the project that all streets remain open to traffic during construction. However, work performed at intersections may require some lane reductions or temporary lane closures to facilitate the construction process. Driveway access for abutting residences shall be maintained at all times during construction.

Project Construction Cost: The estimated cost of the project is \$9.7 million dollars. This project is funded under the Federal Aid Program whereby 80% of the construction cost will be funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and 20% of the construction cost will be funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



Yankee Doodle:

Yankee Doodle Festival will be taking place over the weekend. The Town has had all fields sprayed on Thursday for mosquitoes, but due to the cold weather in the mornings it may be less of an issue than previously thought. As always the parade will be taking off from the Billerica Mall at 10AM and concluding at the Marshall Middle School. After that most activities will be taking place near the new High School. Some of the highlights include Tour of the New HS from 11-4, The vendor booths, field games with the Rec. Dept. from 1-3PM on alumni field, and of course open houses at the Fire and Police Station. I look forward to seeing you all at the parade. I have attached a map for your convenience.

Customer Service Training

The Town will be holding a Customer Service Training on November 20th for all staff conducted by the Mediation Group. It will be a four hour training that will be held twice during the day. With the trainings broken into two segments it will allow Town services to run on a normal schedule. The training will cover customer service skills, organizational awareness, and best practices when using social media. I look forward to continuing to improve employee resident relations with this training.

Bond Issue Credit Rating/New Debt Issue

The Town borrowed \$16 million on Thursday at a rate of 2.03%. This is a great interest rate. The Town's Bond Rating was affirmed at AA+. S&P credited a very strong economy and good financial management as well as our debt ratio as the positive contributors to our rating. The OPEB liability is the only significant constraint on our rating. The rating is expected to be stable for the next two years. I have attached the credit report.

Town Meeting New HS

This office has been working diligently with Left Field, BATV, and High School staff to make this possible. The current plan is to only hold the first night of Town Meeting at the New High School. This will allow Town Meeting members the opportunity to see their investment first hand. We will be organizing tours for Town Meeting reps as well. I want to thank everybody who has been involved in this process and who will help make it happen on October 1st.

Aggregate Energy

The Town was informed early this week that National Grids winter pricing will be .139. This will include the months of November – April. The Town rate will continue to be .106 until January 2021. If you know somebody who would like to take advantage of the savings please have them call the direct Billerica Next Era line at (855) 639 -8096. Most bills that we see in this office are around 1,000 kwh. This would be about a 30 dollar savings per month if you are using 1,000 kwh.

Cable Contract

The Town is expecting a draft license from Comcast this coming week. I will update you further once a tentative agreement has been reached, but as of now we are expecting an increase in capital money over the last contract, an HD Channel, a no cost reconfiguration to the Howe, and some adjustments to the senior discount. The Town is also expecting a draft Verizon license soon. Our attorneys Bill August and Will Solomon have done a great job facilitating the process.

Marijuana Use

Community Care Collective will be submitting to the Planning Board for the October meeting. Their application is currently pending review by the Cannabis Control Commission.

Middlesex Turnpike A-Cal Construction Lay Down Area

The Town is continuing to make efforts to implore the Contractor, Barletta, to move this lay down area. Engineering is meeting with them on a Tuesday. The Town cannot stop work on this project for a number of reasons. The Building Commission will be opining on this issue before Monday's meeting. The Contractor has agreed to place a concrete barrier at the entrance to the laydown area at the end of each day to prevent late night operations.

Chapter 90 Funding

The Town's Chapter 90 funding has not changed in the last two years. The Town submitted all accepted roads to Mass DOT last fall but it appears that the Town is not being credited with the additions miles of roadway. We are currently inquiring as to how to get this changed. I have attached the last two years of Chapter 90 Funding to this report.