## CITY COUNCIL E-MAILS September 22, 2020 Council Meeting

(09/14/20 Council meeting continued)

## ADDENDUM

The following e-mails were received:

September 14, 2020 (after9:00 a.m.) - September 22, 2020 (before 4:00 p.m.)

If you need further information, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 610-7208.

From:	Aubrey Gewehr via FormMail.com
То:	Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;
	CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk
Subject:	Covid 19 Mask Mandate
Date:	Monday, September 14, 2020 5:21:49 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Aubrey Gewehr (agewehr@gmail.com) on Monday, September 14, 2020 at 16:21:47

address: 255 Cass St, Portsmouth

comments: Dear Mayor Beckstead and City Councilors,

I am writing to share my strong support for enacting the mask mandate tonight. Wearing masks in indoor public spaces and outdoors where social distancing cannot be maintained is the best action all of us can take to slow the spread of the pandemic. This is absolutely required to allow our population to stay healthy and our businesses to start to recover and rebuild. It would be nice if all people would be selfless and adopt this safety measure of their own accord to protect their neighbors, however this is not the case. There are too many science deniers in our midst who take the selfish position that they don't believe the science. These people won't bother to shoulder a little temporary inconvenience to protect others and need a citywide mandate to direct them to comply. I urge you all to pass this final reading tonight.

I especially urge you, Mayor Beckstead, to reconsider your opposition, the life you save may well be one of your friends or family and will definitely be those of your constituents. We will not forget your opposition should a single additional person in this city fall prey to this deadly disease.

Thank you all for your service to our city,

Aubrey Gewehr

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 72.65.103.54

From:	Monte Bohanan via FormMail.com
То:	Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;
	<u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	Extend PopupNH to Oct 31
Date:	Tuesday, September 22, 2020 2:10:34 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Monte Bohanan (mbohanan@themusichall.org) on Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 13:10:32

address: 27 Old Mill Rd. South Berwick

comments: I'm writing today with both my Chamber Collaborative and Portsmouth Halloween Parade board member hats on. I implore the council to extend the use of the Bridge Street Lot through October 31.

The Parade, while unable to march this year, is hoping to conduct small events throughout September and October and we hope to do several events in conjunction with PopUpNH, if possible. It would go a long way to capturing some of the spirit of the Halloween season here in a town which, for that past 25 years has shown its creativity and spirit through the Halloween Parade.

I also urge you to allow those businesses who are affiliated with PopUpNH to operate outside for as long as possible to help ensure their continued sustainability and to provide residents and visitors relatively safe options for dining and entertainment.

Thank you.

Monte Bohanan Chair, Portsmouth Chamber Collaborative Chair, Portsmouth Halloween Parade

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 64.140.197.74

From:	Kevin Dwyer via FormMail.com
То:	<u>Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;</u> <u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	Extending Outdoor Dining
Date:	Monday, September 21, 2020 5:47:06 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Kevin Dwyer (dwyersportsmouth@gmail.com) on Monday, September 21, 2020 at 16:47:04

address: 96 Bridge Street

comments: Hello,

I am the owner of Dwyer's Pub on Bridge Street. We are a new business who has been saved singlehandedly from our temporary outdoor dining permit. Due to Covid, our indoor service is not enough to sustain business. Every additional day of outdoor sales is extremely helpful to help prepare for the hardship of the coming winter.

I am writing to ask City Council to please extend our outdoor permits.

Thank you! Kevin Dwyer

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 71.232.211.69

From:	Judy Ullman via FormMail.com
То:	<u>Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;</u> <u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	face masks
Date:	Monday, September 21, 2020 3:54:36 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Judy Ullman (judyullman@gmail.com) on Monday, September 21, 2020 at 14:54:34

address: 132 Elwyn Ave.

comments: Thanks to all of you who passed the face mask ordinance. It makes going downtown less frustrating!

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 73.69.119.142

From:	Ben Gamari via FormMail.com
То:	Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;
	<u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	In support of the Middle St. bike lane
Date:	Monday, September 14, 2020 8:30:36 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Ben Gamari (bgamari@gmail.com) on Monday, September 14, 2020 at 19:30:34

address: 117 Middle Rd.

comments: I am writing in opposition to changes to the Middle Street bike lane. Not only would changes require repayment of the grant money which funded the project but both common sense and the Portsmouth planning department's own analysis of the changes proposed by Councilor Huda suggest that these changes will only further endanger area cyclists. The claim that cyclists will somehow be less likely to be "doored" when riding on the driver's side of parked vehicles, despite the fact that the majority of vehicles are single-occupancy, frankly defies logic.

Furthermore, the city's own studies have shown that the bollards delineating the bicycle lanes have calmed traffic and reduced accident rates and severity.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 72.65.103.65

From:	Gerald Duffy via FormMail.com
To:	Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;
	<u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	McIntyre survey results
Date:	Wednesday, September 16, 2020 10:51:49 AM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Gerald Duffy (gduffy44@gmail.com) on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 09:51:48

address: 428 Pleasant St., Unit 3

comments: Dear Mr Mayor and Councilors and members of the McIntyre Subcommittee.

A question about the survey results. The City Manager has reported that 75% of the 3,500 +/- respondents (i.e. 2,600 residents) have indicated they agree to a "financial commitment" on the part of the City to pay for proposed changes to the existing project design.

Can you please explain to City residents how, in the absence any kind of financial context or actual cost estimates, this number is in any way meaningful? Would a financial commitment (including all related costs) be \$50,000 or \$3,000,000? If I know that returning the P.O. would cost say \$100,000 I might well roll with that, if that was it. But if you tell me the other costs, opportunity or otherwise, are likely to be in the range of say \$1.5 million to \$3.0 million, I might have very different feelings about the project. This is not a big ask. Please explain how the data is meaningful, ideally with reference to a survey professional's opinion of this. Members of the Economic Development Committee raised the same question.

One additional question about the Post Office. Chairman Whelan indicated that our Mayor has been in direct contact with USPS regarding the return of the Post Office. What kind of contact was this, what was said, negotiated, or promised, and how will you let the public know what was discussed in our name.

Many thanks and I'm confident you'll provide clear answers to both questions.

Regards, Gerald Duffy

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 71.233.87.81

From:	Kenneth L Ferrer via FormMail.com
То:	<u>Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;</u> <u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	Middle Street Bike Lane
Date:	Monday, September 14, 2020 4:09:35 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Kenneth L Ferrer (klf6527@gmail.com) on Monday, September 14, 2020 at 15:09:33

address: 915 WOODBURY AVE

comments: Councilor Huda's motion on the agenda to "move the parking of vehicles back to the curb in Middle Street Bike Lanes immediately for safety of all in lieu of the recent accident" Is reckless and a slap in the face of safety. As a urban designer and cyclist it spits in the face of good urbanism and planning literature.

We need to advance the design of Middle Street based on accurate data and expertise. Designing streets and safety based on feelings and a few inconvenience drivers is simply wrong. We can do better. Leave The bike lane for now, and let's work to improve it.

Please vote no on Councilor Huda's motion.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 24.61.219.22

From:	Hannah Giovannucci via FormMail.com
To:	Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;
	<u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	Middle Street Bike Lane
Date:	Monday, September 21, 2020 1:41:47 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Hannah Giovannucci (hannahgiov@gmail.com) on Monday, September 21, 2020 at 12:41:45

address: MIDDLE STREET

comments: Hello Mayor Becksted and City Councilor Memberos,

I noticed that the comments from the September "City Council e-mails 09-14-2020" did not include my 8/26/2020 letter regarding bike lanes. In the letter, I had requested that the letter be included for public comment. I am requesting that the letter or this e-mail please be included in the public record.

Original Letter dated August 25, 2020 to Parking Clark, Ms. Ruth Bowen and CC'd to Rick Becksted, Mayor / Ben Fletcher, Parking Director (via bmfletcher@cityofportsmouth.com) / Eric Eby, Parking and Transportation Engineer (via ebeby@cityofportsmouth.com) / Karen Conrad, Acting City Manager (via sseacord@cityofportsmouth.com) / Juliet Walker, Planning Director (via jthwalker@cityofportsmouth.com) / Peter Whelan, City Councilor/Chairman / Robert Merner, Police Chief (via rmerner@cityofportsmouth.com) / Todd Germain, Fire Chief (via fireprevention@cityofportsmouth.com):

On Friday, August 7, 2020 at 5:15 AM, Ticket #76490 was issued to me citing "Parked In No Parking Area" on Middle Street. This citation occurred in the wake a cyclist "getting doored" on July 26, 2020. My vehicle (NH plate #4094450), was parallel parked on Middle Street, between Cass Street and Madison Street, in the designated parking space, between the bike lane and vehicular travel way (see Figure 1). I am refuting this citation because although my vehicle was parked overlapping the buffer as others have also parked, I do so to protect my own safety due to the dangerous Middle Street bike lane design. I am sending this letter as an appeal to this citation and to offer public comment on the controversial Middle Street bike lane experiment.

I am a Portsmouth resident and also Professional Engineer with experience as a transportation and traffic engineer. I have contributed to Complete Streets projects in Boston and Greater Boston area. I was in attendance at the March 12th public hearing where I voiced my concern on the Middle Street Bike Lane. I also wrote the Planning Director for public comment. Originally, I spoke in favor of improvements for all modes of transportation: cyclists, drivers, pedestrians, and parked vehicles, as I utilize all modes.

I am disappointed that the Spring/Summer 2020 "improvements" in response to the March public hearing, discounts many concerns from residents and business owners of Middle Street. I am appalled that the City continues to push forward this poorly performing corridor, resulting in the cyclist's horrific accident.

Enforcing vehicles to park within the narrow 8'-wide parallel parking lane will continue to pose an issue to cyclists. The 3'-wide bike buffer zone is insufficient to prevent doors overlapping the bike lane. Additionally, passengers are less trained or concerned to look for oncoming cyclists. Passenger-side mirrors are adjusted for drivers and not passengers to view a bike lane. Also, while the bollards (I assume) are meant to channelize vehicles and protect the bike lane, particularly at Cass Street, in practice bollards create distraction for vehicles looking for oncoming cyclists.

Beyond the threat to cyclists, I predict that maintaining this design and enforcing drivers to park in these narrow parallel parking spots will result in a high speed and perhaps fatal, vehicular collision. Drivers exiting their vehicles just feet from the narrow, 11'-wide, vehicular, travel lane is a recipe for disaster.

Ever since the introduction of the bike lanes in 2019, I have parked my vehicle by overlapping a portion of the bike

buffer. Other nearby residents and I must do this to avoid opening our doors into traffic and to provide ourselves minimum refuge from oncoming traffic. Even parked as I have, I often must wait 30 seconds, trapped between my vehicle and within 3' of travelling vehicles, to cross the road to my residence. Parking completely within the designated parking space (even with a narrow car) reduces the refuge area to a 2' width. It has proven unsafe for even the vehicles themselves as depicted in the photos in Figure 2 that were side-swiped and missing-mirrors.

Vehicles parked on Middle Street should not be perceived as objects. Those vehicles are owned by people: Portsmouth residents, business owners, patrons, etc. People with these vehicles need to get to work and live their life. Those same people transport their friends, family, and pets in these vehicles. They may haul laundry, groceries, and supplies to and from their homes by crossing the street to their vehicle. These same people work hard to earn the means to own or lease a vehicle for these liberties and freedoms. These people who do not have parking available on their property deserve sufficient street parking. We all deserve the safety and protection of an adequately designed roadway.

I am happy to make accommodations for cyclists, such as sacrificing parking on both sides of the street and walking across the street to and from my vehicle. I am not willing to be put at risk by the City of Portsmouth nor be further restricted from 8 always-occupied spaces to the now 4 spaces between Cass and Madison, where over 20 spaces once existed on both sides of the street. Parking on Middle Street is now a burden to lug laundry and groceries to and from. Parking on side streets are even more distant, competitive, narrow, and dangerous such as Cass Street.

I applaud the Town for looking for ways to improve the safety of all users, however, I still see no evidence that this project is effective at addressing safe route to school, safety for the community, nor solutions for Middle Street businesses and residents. Global bike lane guidelines cannot be painted with a broad brush. One size does not fit all, despite what the Complete Streets playbook says. Every single bike lane application is an experiment. If you listen closely to the community, the concerns are not about fear of change or accommodating bikes. The concern is primarily safety.

I have not spoken to a business owner nor resident who speaks positively of this project within my block. Some hope for as drastic measures as having Portsmouth repay the federal funding. A business owner, currently prevented from fully opening due COVID, has been pirated from patron parking altogether. Another resident, a competitive cyclist, expressed his dissatisfaction of the practicality of the design, favoring parking restored along the curb. The cyclist explained the drivers are used to checking their mirrors for oncoming traffic including cyclists, while passengers are not. Within my residential building, there is conversation about the Cass Street intersection regarding constant horns sounding and unreported vehicular collisions witnessed such as one that occurred August 14th around noon.

Middle Street is a principal arterial roadway. This means that it is intended to serve high traffic volumes, carry a high proportion of urban travel, and serve demand for intra-area travel, among other characteristics. A 30 mph speed limit, based on the 85th percentile speed, is not unreasonable, especially to move traffic efficiently on a principal arterial.

With this in mind, the bike lane project was primarily for "Safe Routes to School" for children. Bike lanes as designed on Middle Street are a false sense of security. It takes a second for a child to be hit by a driver. Adults are far more aware, however, adults too are not immune to the false sense of security.

I cross Middle Street every weekday, a minimum of four times a day. I see some adults using the bike lane and some even forgoing it altogether for the vehicular travel lane. I still have not seen many if any children use the bike lane. I have instead seen children ride on the sidewalk. Otherwise, I spot children riding bikes on my walks or bike rides near Lincoln Street. While we should do our best to accommodate transportation for all, the needs of many users outweigh the needs of few. There are more common sense, lower-cost alternatives for safe routes to school.

## Recommendations

We can still find a way to keep cyclists on Middle Street and appease a larger percentage of the roadway users. I recommend the following: (1) Maintain the bike lanes between Andrew Jarvis Drive and Lincoln Street. (2) From Lincoln Street to Congress Street, restore parking adjacent to one side of the curb and provide bike lanes adjacent to the vehicular travel lane and adjust to shared vehicular/bike lanes where necessary. (3) Beginning at Lincoln Ave,

offer a safe bike route for children or wary cyclists towards the Elementary School, Public Library, City Hall and downtown.

Moving parking along the curb and bike lanes adjacent to vehicular travel lanes would help:

-Resolve site distance issues on side streets

-Reduce vehicular conflicts with the bike lanes on side streets

-Avoid hazards (catch basins, debris, leaves, ice, runoff, etc.) in the bike lane

-Increase visibility of cyclists

-Allow simpler snow removal for both vehicular and bike lanes

-Reduce maintenance costs for snow and litter removal

-Provide the bike lane less points of conflict

-Allow cyclists a greater perceived width and maneuverability

-Restore valuable residential and business parking

Lastly, I hope the City can consider ways to be more transparent with city meetings in general. Many communities have Electronic Messaging Signs spread throughout the community to share City information, whether parades, regular meetings, non-regular meetings (i.e. for transportation project or large developments), benefits, fundraisers, etc. I have noticed one EMS downtown, however, this is primarily a tourist area that does not serve the majority Portsmouth residents. I hope the City may consider other locations as a way to be more transparent to tax payers.

I look forward to resolution to improve the design and safety of Middle Street bike lane and dismissal of this citation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully, Hannah Giovannucci, PE

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 74.92.60.161

From:	James McSharry via FormMail.com
То:	<u>Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;</u> <u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	Outdoor Dining Extension
Date:	Tuesday, September 22, 2020 3:51:06 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by James McSharry (jaymcsharry@me.com) on Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 14:51:04

address: 1 Middle Street - Suite 1

comments: Dear City Councilors,

I am writing to you on behalf of Jumpin' Jay's, Moxy, The Franklin, Mr. Kim's, Luigi's West End Pizzeria, STREET, and Vida Cantina to request that you strongly consider granting the extension of outdoor dining in Portsmouth through October 31st.

As a Portsmouth restaurateur, I can say with confidence that some of our establishments would not have survived the summer without the City's gracious cooperation and support of creative outdoor dining solutions. We are now heading into colder months and have found that many patrons are still not entirely comfortable dining indoors. As we've already invested considerable resources to furnish, enclose, light and most recently heat these outdoor dining spaces, we are hopeful to squeeze as many outdoor dining days out of the season as possible.

Assuming that October grants us warm days as the Farmers' Almanac is predicting, it stands to be a worthwhile venture to extend the permitting just two more weeks. Maximizing the outdoor season to its full potential would bolster us all the more as we head into a winter season full of uncertainty for our industry.

I know that our guests, staff, and co-owners would greatly appreciate the extension through the 31st and I am hopeful that you will approve this request.

Sincerely, Jay McSharry

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 75.144.175.138

From:	David Takis via FormMail.com
То:	<u>Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;</u> <u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	Outdoor Patio extension
Date:	Tuesday, September 22, 2020 7:31:46 AM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by David Takis (David@thedistrictnh.com) on Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 06:31:43

address: 103 Congress St

comments: I think it is imperative that city council extends city outdoor patios As long as possible. It is obvious with covid that we all need the opportunity to get as much revenue as possible now because the future with indoor dining has so many restrictions. If The City of Portsmouth wants restaurants to survive this pandemic, the answer needs to be yes to extensions of contracts.

David Takis President/Owner District Restaurant 603-498-8254

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 74.70.24.84

From:	Courtney Homer via FormMail.com
То:	<u>Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;</u> <u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	Question
Date:	Monday, September 14, 2020 6:35:15 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Courtney Homer (chomer@sloan.mit.edu) on Monday, September 14, 2020 at 17:35:13

address: 38 Barrett Farm Drive, Greenland 03840

comments: Given the mask mandate, if passed, it will be a mandate/order (not a law), how is it legally enforceable?

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 174.255.67.174

From:	Mary Lou McElwain via FormMail.com
То:	<u>Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;</u> <u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	Restaurants
Date:	Friday, September 18, 2020 10:45:48 AM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Mary Lou McElwain (ml259@comcast.net) on Friday, September 18, 2020 at 09:45:47

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address: 259 South Street

comments: Greetings, first of all thank you for the mask vote and for not voting to put parked vehicles back to the curb on Middle Street.

But my comments this morning are for the positive way many restaurant owners have made so much of the city into a welcoming outdoor European cafe scene. It has been costly and time consuming for struggling businesses and we are going into a tough season.

Many picnic tables and trellises are festooned at these outdoor sites and are so charming. Where will they be stored over the winter months? My suggestion is that the City offer level five of the Foundry Garage to these businesses for the winter. The garage has lots of empty space and certainly won't be filled this winter. The city could offer this space at no or reduced rates . Might as well use the garage! I'm sure clever minds can figure out a plan to make this work. Let's continue to help keep the downtown economy viable.

Thank you for all your work and the time each of you devotes to Portsmouth. Mary Lou

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 66.63.85.187

From:	Andrew Bagley via FormMail.com
To:	Mayor Becksted; CC - Splaine; cc McEachern; CC-Peter Whelan; CC - Cliff Lazenby; CC - Kennedy; CC - Huda;
	<u>CC-John Tabor; CC-Paige Trace; City Council; CityCouncil Clerk</u>
Subject:	Seasonal resident on the HDC
Date:	Friday, September 18, 2020 3:54:05 PM

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Andrew Bagley (abagley21@gmail.com) on Friday, September 18, 2020 at 14:54:03

address: 40 Chauncey Street

comments: Dear Mayor Becksted and City Council,

I was surprised to see that Mayor Rick Becksted is planning to appoint a seasonal resident to the HDC Board. Does this mean that the HDC will not hold meetings during the months of December, January, February, and March? Why is preference given to seasonal residents over full time residents for such and important commission? Best regards, Andrew Bagley

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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REMOTE\_ADDR: 72.65.102.100