

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA OPEN FORUM  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
July 9, 2025**

**COUNCILORS PRESENT:** Amber Thibeault, President; Marcus Certa, Vice President; Tim Miller, Clerk; Elaine Haney, Brian Shelden.

**ADMINISTRATION:** Regina Mahony, City Manager;

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Bethany Clark, Steve Eustis, Michael Lalancette, John O'Brien, Sheila Porter, Dennis Thibeault, Jim Waite, Stephen Wille Padnos, Resa.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

City Council President Thibeault called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

**2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

None.

**3. APPROVE AGENDA**

None needed.

**4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

**a. Comments from Public**

Steve Eustis asked whether Councilors and members of the Essex Selectboard met to discuss the old Colchester Road Tree Farm and the outcome of those discussions, noting that the trails have not yet been mowed. City Manager Mahony provided an update on discussions between the Town Selectboard and City Council related to renewing the Tree Farm Management Group's lease, noting that they will be reviewing draft amendment language with the Tree Farm Management Group later this month. She said she would inquire about trail maintenance during non-school seasons. Mr. Eustis then noted several comments from members of the public related to the Connect the Junction draft report regarding concerns with increased traffic, and he pointed out that some of this may be due to the increased housing coming online that the community has been pushing for. He spoke about the Crescent Connector project, noting that at one time the plan had been to turn Main Street into a pedestrian thoroughfare, and asked that any proposals take into account the flow of car traffic. He asked that the Council be thinking with a long-term view when making its plans and decisions related to infrastructure, given that short-term changes (such as remote workers moving back to commuting full-time) can occur quickly.

Resa spoke about the proposal to make Main Street pedestrian, saying that that would result in more traffic on Maple Street or cutting through Lincoln Street to Central Street. She spoke about the merits of walking, but noted that it is not feasible in some instances (grocery shopping with many bags, or during the winter if there is snow). She also expressed concern about the plans for an Amazon warehouse to be potentially located in the Town and the negative impacts that will have on traffic. Resa then asked for an update on the 2 Lincoln Street renovation project. City Manager Mahony noted that the project is progressing, and that the elevator was installed and is slated to be inspected during the last week in July. She said they will likely be able to move back into the 2 Lincoln Space in August.

John O'Brien spoke about bikeability and walkability in general, noting that municipalities that give thoroughfares to bicycles and alternate transportation see a reduction in car traffic. He spoke about the potential increased traffic in the northwestern quadrant of the City with the consolidation of the district schools. He also discussed concerns about the lack of well-designated or well-practiced routes for those who choose to walk or bike to school in that area, and said he would like to see trial projects to determine recommended routes. Councilors discussed the possibility of setting up a bike bus and engaging with the School Board and Local Motion to explore this further. Councilors and Mr. O'Brien discussed the difficulties around traffic on Hiawatha Avenue during school drop-off and pick-up times, and Councilor Certa suggested

having the Bike Walk Advisory Committee explore this issue further. Councilor Certa also suggested that the Bike Walk Advisory Committee explore the feasibility of having a continuous biking/walking path down the entirety of West Street. Councilor Haney suggested making Hiawatha Avenue one-way during certain times of the day.

Stephen Wille Padnos also spoke about traffic issues at the Five Corners intersection and asked that the traffic signals be improved/smartened. He agreed with concerns about traffic increases related to an increased population in the Junction over the next several years. He noted a right-of-way between Taft Street and Athens Street that contains a bridge structure going over a creek. He noted that the bridge is deteriorating and asked who is responsible for maintaining that structure. City Manager Mahony replied that she will follow up with more information. Mr. Wille Padnos then expressed concern about the number of intentionally loud vehicles driving down Pearl Street and asked about enforcement, and City Council President Thibeault replied that the Police Department is aware of these incidents but that enforcing the City's noise ordinance related to loud vehicles is a challenge.

Resa noted that there should be calming measures in place, especially on South Street headed toward Park Street, given heavy tractor trailer traffic on narrow roads.

Sheila Porter spoke about safety concerns crossing the Crescent Connector intersection as a pedestrian. She noted that the crosswalk button at that intersection does not have a noise, and asked that this be looked into as an improvement, especially for the visually impaired.

5. **BUSINESS ITEMS** - None

6. **CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. Acting as the Liquor Control Commission – Approve Liquor/Tobacco Licenses

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed 5-0.**

7. **COUNCILOR COMMENTS & CITY MANAGER REPORT** – Councilor Certa thanked Nick Myer from the Tree Advisory Committee for helping a resident arrange for tree removal after the last large storm, and also thanked the Fire Department for responding so promptly and professionally to several structural fire incidents that have occurred recently. City Council President Thibeault noted that this extended public forum session was a trial but that they will conduct more similarly-formatted City Council meetings in future to encourage more engagement with the public.

8. **READING FILE** – None

9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – None

10. **ADJOURN**

**Councilor Certa made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 5-0 at 7:40 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amy Coonradt