



# CITY OF CONCORD

## REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Matthew R. Walsh, Deputy City Manager – Development

DATE: August 14, 2023

SUBJECT: License Agreement for Concord Coach Display within South Main Street highway rights-of-way

### **Recommendation:**

Approve the attached consent resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a License Agreement, or other similar legal instrument, with the Duprey Company LLC, or other related party, relative to construction of a structure for the display of an Abbot-Downing Company Concord Coach within the City's highway rights-of-way located between #45 and #49 South Main Street, as well as City financial support of said project in the amount of \$100,000 as appropriated in the FY2024 Budget.

### **Background:**

The Abbot-Downing Company was a coach and carriage builder, who was headquartered in Concord in the vicinity of South Main and Perley Streets. The company, which was established circa 1820, was world famous for its products, particularly their iconic "Concord Coach". The Concord Coach was a stage coach, which was used to transport goods and people throughout the United States during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Coach's design was revolutionary for the time, and remained unchanged for the nearly 75 years the Abbot-Downing Company produced the vehicles. Today, Concord Coaches are highly valued historical artifacts. Only a limited number remain in existence. As such, original coaches in good condition can fetch prices upwards of \$500,000.

In 1916, the Abbot-Downing Company transitioned from building coaches and wagons to motorized vehicles. The Company later ceased operations around 1928. Much of the Company's former manufacturing complex was destroyed by fire in the 1950s.

The Abbot-Downing Company, and their Concord Coaches, is historically significant for the community. As such, in 2015 the City acquired the Shattuck Wagon. The "Shattuck", which was manufactured by the company but is not one of the iconic stage coaches, was part of a joint effort to purchase seven carriages and wagons spearheaded by the Abbot-Downing Historical Society. The Shattuck is currently in storage pending the potential development of a museum at the City's Concord Stables Property located on Warren Street by the Abbot-Downing Historical Society for the display of this, and other Abbot-Downing vehicles / artifacts.

## **Discussion:**

Local developer and City resident Stephen Duprey, doing business as the Duprey Companies LLC, desires to construct a structure located within the City's public sidewalk located between 45 and 49 South Main Street for the purposes of displaying a museum quality replica Concord Coach. Mr. Duprey will provide the coach that will be placed on display.

The structure, which will be approximately 12' wide, 20' long and 15' tall, will be located on the sidewalk bump out in the City's highway rights-of-way. Given the unique contents of the building, this will be a relatively sophisticated structure featuring lighting, specialized glass, and HVAC systems. Please see the attached locus plans, as well as preliminary design plans for more information.

The Duprey Companies will be solely responsible for designing, permitting, constructing, owning, operating and maintaining the structure. Construction will include required utility connections, as well as in-kind restoration of those areas of the City's sidewalk / rights-of-way which are disturbed by construction activities. Operations and maintenance by the Duprey Companies shall include all utility costs, as well as maintenance of the structure.

The License shall be subject to the City's normal and customary terms and conditions. Additionally, because this structure is located within the Central Business Performance Zoning District, the project will require Planning Board architectural design review approval and building permits. Additionally, project will also require normal and customary street and utility permits from the City's Engineering Division, as applicable.

The estimated total development cost of the project is approximately \$200,000-\$250,000. As part of the FY2024 Budget, the City Council appropriated \$100,000 to support this project. As such, the License, or similar agreement, will outline terms and conditions for providing these City funds to the Duprey Companies for the project. Subject to ongoing discussions with the Duprey Companies, it is anticipated that City funds will be disbursed upon the structure receiving a certificate of occupancy from the City's Code Division of the Community Development Department.

Final terms and conditions of said Agreement shall be acceptable to the City Manager and City Solicitor. The project will likely be completed within the next 12-18 months.