

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN\

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2003

Present: Ald. Johnson (Chair) Ald. Lipsitt, Parker, Fischman, Sangiolo, Coletti, Gentile

Absent: Ald. Merrill

Other Aldermen Present: Ald. Baker, Manfield, Stewart

Also Present: David Olson (Jackson Homestead) Carol Stapleton (Recreation) Marc Welch (Forestry Division) Gayle Smalley (Law Department)

Re-appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#47-03 HARRY O. LOHR, JR., 157 Cherry Street, West Newton, re-appointed on January 2, 2003 as a Trustee of The JACKSON HOMESTEAD MUSEUM for a term of office expiring February 1, 2006. (60-day Board action date 3/22/03)

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0

NOTE: Harry Lohr told the Committee he initially he became involved with Jackson Homestead when he bought an 1840's Greek Revival Home at 157 Cherry Street. He has served two terms on the Board of Directors of the Newton Historical Society and this is his second term as a Trustee of the Jackson Homestead. Mr. Lohr heads up the Old Burying Grounds Committee.

Re-appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#48-03 JOHN R. MORGANTI, 26 Lewis Street, Newton, re-appointed on January 2, 2003 as a Trustee of The JACKSON HOMESTEAD MUSEUM for a term of office expiring February 1, 2006 (60-day Board action date 3/22/03).

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0

NOTE: Mr. Morganti has been on the board of the Historical Society and also a Trustee of the Jackson Homestead. He is involved in the Finance Committee as well as seeing that programs of a historical nature be made more public. The burying grounds are also a priority of Mr. Morganti.

Re-appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#49-03 JANE O'HERN, 79 Withington Road, Newtonville, re-appointed on January 2, 2003 as a Trustee of The JACKSON HOMESTEAD MUSEUM for a term of office expiring February 1, 2005 (60-day Board action date 3/22/03).

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0

NOTE: Jane O'Hern has been a Trustee of the Homestead for 13 years. In the past Ms. O'Hern was Budget Director of the MBTA.

Re-appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#51-03 RUSSEL FELDMAN, 85 Langley Road, Newton Centre, re-appointed on January 2, 2003 as a Trustee of The JACKSON HOMESTEAD MUSEUM for a term of office expiring February 1, 2005 (60-day Board action date 3/22/03).

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0

NOTE: Mr. Feldman has been involved in both the Jackson Homestead and the Historical Society. The Committee voted 5-0 to approve his reappointment.

Re-appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#50-03 CAROL ANN SHEA, 24 Milo Street, West Newton, re-appointed on January 2, 2003 as a Trustee of The JACKSON HOMESTEAD MUSEUM for a term of office expiring February 1, 2006 (60-day Board action date 3/22/03).

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0. (Fischman, Parker, Johnson, Sangiolo and Lipsitt)

NOTE: Carol Ann Shea has served on Board of Aldermen as well as Jackson Homestead. She pointed out that the Museum has come a long way and is now an accredited museum. Ms. Shea noted that her particular interest is in the development committee.

President Lipsitt questioned when signage already approved would be put into place and Mr. Olson responded that both signage in the front and around the site is currently being worked on and hoped this would be implemented by spring. These signs will fit into the historic character of the site but be more visible than the current sign. There will also be signage to help visitors find the entrance. President Lipsitt asked if the burial grounds are accessible to the public and Mr. Lohr explained most are now locked but part of the long-range program would include making

them accessible seven days a week. President Lipsitt suggested that a sign be posted noting the appropriate number to call to allow access.

Ald. Parker questioned if there had been any further discussion on changing the name. Mr. Olson responded that the trustees and the directors of the Newton Historical Society have voted to use the name "*Newton History Museum at the Jackson Homestead*" and that will be placed on the new signage. Signs have been placed in Newton Corner, Walnut and Commonwealth and two signs at Walnut and Washington. Ald. Parker questioned how closely the Homestead is working with the School Department to expand cooperative efforts for students to use the museum to do research and Mr. Olson said efforts are being made to implement these kinds of programs. Another project currently being worked on involves a World War II program using high school students to gather information from veterans in the City regarding their experiences in World War II. He also noted that there is currently a nice exhibit relating to the history of Girl Scouts in Newton.

Ald. Sangiolo thanked the reappointees of the Jackson Homestead for their service, saying that they are a valuable resource for the City and the community and moved approval. The motion was approved 5-0 (Fischman, Parker, Johnson, Sangiolo and Lipsitt).

Re-appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#46-03 LILLIE B. JEFFERSON, 94 Adena Road, West Newton, re-appointed on January 2, 2003 as a Trustee of The JACKSON HOMESTEAD MUSEUM for a term of office expiring February 1, 2005 (60-day Board action date 3/22/03).

**ACTION:** HELD 5-0

Re-appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#52-03 THOMAS TURNER, 60 Wyoming Road, Newtonville, re-appointed on January 10, 2003 as a regular member of the NEWTON HOUSING AUTHORITY for a term of office expiring February 16, 2006. (60-day Board action date 3/22/03)

**ACTION:** APPROVED 4-1 (Fischman, Lipsitt & Johnson, Sangiolo in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstaining (Ald. Parker)

**NOTE:** Mr. Turner has been a life-long resident of Newton and has had a strong interest in housing. He has been involved with the Allen House and Newton Development. Mr. Turner became involved with housing as he felt that anyone who would like to live in Newton should be able to find housing.

Ald. Lipsitt asked if Mr. Turner was familiar with the Inclusionary Zoning Task Force. He noted the Housing Authority is currently involved in lengthy discussion on this issue and is at a point where a decision is about to be made. Ald. Parker echoed the sentiment that there is a big need for affordable housing but was concerned about a number of issues related to the Housing Authority's stance on several issues. There was a motion to approve with 4 in favor, 0 opposed and 1 abstention.

**REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#57-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$206,826 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of funding current and future snow and ice and tree emergency expenses in the Parks and Recreation Department.

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0 (Coletti,Gentile not voting)(See Resolution)

NOTE: Carol Stapleton and Marc Welch of the Recreation Department were present for discussion of this item. Ald. Lipsitt suggested the Chairman of Programs and Services discuss with the Mayor the fact that money has been spent that has not been appropriated. She went on to say she is aware it is almost impossible to predict exact monies needed but was not happy to have to make up deficits. There was a motion to approve with the following resolution: **The Board of Aldermen request the Mayor to only spend Parks & Recreation Department snow, ice, and tree emergency funds that have been previously approved by the Board of Aldermen. In addition, the Board requests that all requests for additional funds be brought to the Board prior to depletion of any snow, ice and tree emergency accounts.** The item was approved 5-0 (Fischman, Parker, Johnson, Sangiolo, Lipsitt in favor.)

#466-02(2) PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE requesting Monthly progress reports from the NNHS Renovation Task Force.

ACTION: HELD 7-0

NOTE: Ald. Lipsitt reported the Task Force had its first meeting and will meet every Monday. A schedule was adopted that includes a dozen Monday meetings. Three meetings are planned that are designed for public participation following the Monday night meetings on February 10, March 10, and April 14 at Newton North High School Auditorium. The Committee agreed on a timetable whereby the first half dozen meetings will be spent on getting everybody up to date on the status of the building, the plan as it was proposed, what the City's financial situation is, as well as what the educational needs of the schools are. At the suggestion of the

Chairman of the NNHS Renovation Task Force, Dr. Jellinek, the Committee agreed to have a competition for several architectural firms come and evaluate whether Newton North as it exists can be rehabilitated. The Committee would like the architectural firms to provide cost estimates and information on several different designs including a hybrid design which is a design that includes a portion of the original building and new construction. The three or four firms selected will receive a stipend of up to \$7,500, which will not cover their costs but hopefully, it will make it somewhat worthwhile. Other non-selected architects will be given the opportunity to offer propositions and responses. The selection of the architects will be done by four of the citizen representative members of the Committee.

Ald. Coletti reported the first meeting was a good start. He plans to try to see that citizens understand that Design Review, Board of Aldermen, Public Facilities Committee, Programs and Services Committee, Finance Committee, Mayor's Office, and School Department have all reviewed some plans. Ald. Coletti is concerned on how things could be accomplished that quickly and come up with proposed alternatives that would have real credibility. He suggested that Nick Parnell reproduce for all Task Force Members the original Strelakovsky and Hoit Report as well as the original dollar breakout. Ald. Coletti has toured the new completed addition to Newton South and reported it had come out extremely well. This was a project that came out only a little over budget.

Ald. Sangiolo asked how communication would be handled. President Lipsitt said reports would be available and questions could be handled at the update meetings at Programs and Services. Ald. Sangiolo expressed concern regarding how architects will be selected and wondered why it could not have been a self-funded competition. She added that she was disappointed that the competition was limited to only 4 firms and recommended that parameters be given to the participating architects. She questioned the process by which consensus was arrived and was concerned that only three public meetings were scheduled. Alderman Sangiolo also suggested that members might be confused about speaking with the public. Alderman Johnson agreed that the issue of communicating with the public needs to be clarified to the members of the Task Force so that everyone was on the same page.

Ald. Parker expressed his concern that ultimately the accountability of how the public's money is spent has to be done by the elected officials. He understood the Task Force would bring out all the information so the elected officials could make a decision. He said at that time he did not want the policy decisions to be made de facto by the Task Force. His

hope was that options and information would come from the Task Force. Ald. Johnson felt it was important to have strong input into this process.

President Lipsitt assured the Committee that she would share these concerns with the Task Force and the Chair.

**REFERRED TO PROG. & SERV.&FINANCE COMMITTEES**

# 33-03      ALD. COLETTI requesting discussion with representatives of the School Department and Superintendent of Schools regarding lease vs. purchase options for technology equipment to develop a policy for acquisition of computers and technology for schools.

ACTION:      HELD 7-0

NOTE:            Ald. Coletti said some years ago the City had a policy whereby copy machines and other equipment in the School Department were leased. A decision was made about six years ago to buy new high volume copy machines for the School Department and also for the municipal side. That policy has worked fairly well. Five or six months ago the School Department took approximately \$800,000 out of their technology money and used it to finish off Newton South High School. Technology equipment is now needed for the students. There have been informal discussions with the Comptroller's office and Sandy Guryan's office to consider leasing all the computer equipment. Ald. Coletti felt more discussion should take place before there are any further lease agreements. Chairman Johnson said she would work on this item with Ald. Coletti. The Committee made a motion to hold until representatives of the School Department would be present.

#336-98      ALD. PARKER, MANSFIELD, SANGIOLO proposing an ordinance to limit light trespass across property lines.

ACTION:      HELD 7-0

NOTE:            Ald. Parker, Mansfield, and Sangiolo had discussions with the Inspectional Services Commissioner and two representatives of the Police Department regarding the enforcement issue. Both discussions are ongoing. The Inspectional Services Commissioner has problems with the fact that his department is backlogged and he felt would be unable to handle enforcement. Ald. Sangiolo said the Police Department suggested that the Fire Department should handle these enforcement calls because they also work 24 hours/day and are in charge of wiring inspections. Ald. Gentile felt strongly that this ordinance, if passed, would not be enforced. Ald. Lipsitt echoed Ald. Gentile's concerns. Ald. Colletti suggestion was that a position be created similar to the fence viewer. Ald. Lipsitt

suggested that department heads should attend a Programs and Services meeting. Ald. Johnson agreed. Ald. Johnson noted that there had been a recommended change from the Law Department that had not passed. Ass't. City Solicitor Gayle Smalley said she would like to address the Committee on that point at a subsequent meeting. Ald. Mansfield said that he learned that the Police Department has been called fairly often on complaints about light and they do respond. Since there is no law, there is nothing they can do.

Ald. Gentile would like to know if it is as easy as represented to measure light pollution and he suggested that we start with some of the city's own properties. He stated that we might have properties of our own that are in violation. He reported since this item was docketed, he has not heard from one person who feels there is a need for this. The last point he made was if this goes forward, Ald. Coletti's idea of a fence viewer approach is an excellent idea. Chairman Johnson said in her three years on the Board, she has dealt with several issues around light. She has received calls regarding light problems at Second Step, lights in the back of the property of Boston Ballet and issues with lights on Foster Street.

Joe Herlihy, General Counsel for Boston College, requested that a Public Hearing be scheduled on this matter. He has problems with the proposed ordinance including enforcement. He stated the ordinance makes no attempt to set different standards for different times. He would like to bring an engineer to testify at a meeting involving technical portions of the ordinance.

Ambrose Donovan, resident of Rochester Road was present and said he felt the light trespass ordinance would be good for the quality of life in Newton.

Lorraine Kohr of the Chamber of Commerce said from the Chamber's point of view, the most important issue was safety.

The Committee agreed to hold this item for discussion at a March meeting.

#345-02      ROBERT CONLEY et al requesting a discussion of the potential of relocating the Boston Red Sox within the City of Newton at a proposed site bordering Woodland Golf Club.  
**(Referred to ProgServ by Full Bd. On Oct. 21, 2002)**

ACTION:      NAN 7-0

NOTE: Mr. Conley and Mr. Boccabella were present for this discussion. Mr. Boccabella addressed the Committee and stated the proposal has been in the works for several years. He said the proposal was for an area of Newton, which Mr. Boccabella thought, was exactly the right place. It would be located near the Riverside Station that has parking. It is close to the Intersection of 128 and the Mass Pike as well as bus terminals. Mr. Conley said he has spoken to many people who were in favor of this idea.

Ald. Gentile addressed Mr. Boccabella and said in order to have a real estate transaction work, you need a willing buyer and seller. He went on to say there was no way he could support this issue as he knows Woodland is not interested in selling and could not see any reason to further pursue this.

Ald. Fischman felt at this point there is not enough information to talk about this type of proposal.

Ald. Parker said he felt only if there was communication from the Red Sox and Woodland Golf Club that they were interested, a discussion could then take place. Otherwise he felt it was presumptuous for the City to become involved and would strongly support a no action necessary motion. Ald. Baker felt this was not an appropriate project for Newton. Ald. Johnson felt this was not an item for a ballot question.

Ald. Lipsitt said she was aware that Mr. Boccabella wanted this on a ballot. She went on to say that would not be without cost and would not support putting on a question that was such a distant possibility in front of the voters at this time. She thanked Mr. Boccabella for bringing this forward but suggested it be brought back if there were some written expression of interest from one party or the other. Possibly at that point, the Aldermen could perhaps take this issue farther, but with no clear interest from either party, we are dealing with issues that are too theoretical for us.

Ald. Lipsitt moved NAN and the Committee voted 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Johnson, Chair