



Public Facilities Committee Report

City of Newton

In City Council

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Present: Councilors Leary (Acting Chair), Norton, Kelley, Gentile, Laredo, Lappin, Albright, Downs

Absent: Councilors Crossley, Danberg

City Staff Present: Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle, City Engineer Lou Taverna, DPW Director of Transportation Jason Sobel

#132-19 Appointment of Anne Cedrone to the Design Review Committee

HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing ANNE CEDRONE, 49 Walker Street, Newtonville, as a community representative member of the DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE for the 687 Watertown Street Project for a term to expire upon completion of the building project. (60 days: 5/29/19)

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 3-0 (Kelley, Leary, Norton not Voting)**

Note: Committee members invited Ms. Anne Cedrone to discuss her appointment to the Design Review Committee as a community representative for the 684 Watertown Street Project. Ms. Cedrone noted that she has been a Newton resident for seven years and has children at Horace Mann and Day Middle School. She stated that she is interested in how the building will evolve and impact the surrounding neighborhood. Ms. Cedrone noted that she is very involved in the community, has attended a few DRC meetings and is up to date on the proposed plans for the school. Committee members encouraged Ms. Cedrone to keep the Horace Mann community informed of the ongoing plans. A Committee member asked that Ms. Cedrone work to facilitate conversations with the Boys and Girls Club regarding a shared parking program between the two facilities. With that, Councilor Laredo motioned to approve the item which carried 3-0.

#131-19 Appointment of John Mulligan to the Design Review Committee

HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing JOHN MULLIGAN, 115 Waban Street Newton, as a community representative member of the DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE for the 150 Jackson Road Project for a term to expire upon completion of the building project. (60 days: 5/29/19)

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 5-0 (Norton not Voting)**

Note: The Committee invited Mr. John Mulligan to discuss his appointment to the Design Review Committee as a community representative for the 150 Jackson Road project. Mr. Mulligan noted that he has two children at Lincoln Elliot and has been following the project at Aquinas since the property was sold to the City. Mr. Mulligan stated that he believes that the City has done a good job with Zervas and Angier and that the 150 Jackson Road project has a lot of potential. Mr. Mulligan noted that he is

particularly interested in how the school spaces are situated on the site. Committee members encouraged Mr. Mulligan to keep members of the community informed as the project moves forward. With that, Councilor Leary moved approval of the appointment which carried unanimously.

#116-19 **ExteNet Systems petition for wireless grant of location on Commonwealth Avenue**
EXTENET SYSTEMS, LLC petitioning for a grant of location to install a small cell wireless facility on an existing city-owned streetlight pole located in the right-of-way in the vicinity of 140 Commonwealth Avenue. The installation will include an antenna, radio equipment, an electric meter, and cabling for fiber and power to enhance wireless coverage in the area. (60-day action date: 05/04/19)

Action: **Public Facilities Held 5-0 (Norton not Voting)**

Note: The public hearing for this item was opened on April 3, 2019. Because the proposed streetlight pole is City-owned, the grant of location is subject to a licensing agreement. At the meeting on April 3, 2019, the licensing agreement was not ready and as such, the Committee held the item. The licensing agreement was finalized on May 6, 2019 and distributed to Councilors. ExteNet was not notified that the petition was on the Public Facilities Committee agenda and as such was not present at the meeting on May 8, 2019. Committee members expressed concerns relative to approval of the grant of location without the ExteNet representative's presence. City Engineer Lou Taverna explained that there is a 60-day shot clock for petitions for wireless grants of location. It was noted that while the Law Department is working on a tolling agreement with ExteNet to extend the amount of time that the Council may act on the petition, the Committee can meet before a Council meeting to discuss the item. With that, Committee members voted unanimously in favor of a motion to hold the item from Councilor Gentile.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#158-19 **Appropriation of \$250,000 for design of library parking lot**
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend two hundred fifty thousand dollars from Free Cash for the purpose of funding the architectural and engineering design of a "new" Newton Free Library parking lot.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 4-1-1 (Laredo abstaining, Gentile opposed)**

Note: Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the request for \$250,000 to fund the design of the library parking lot. The Commissioner explained that the solar installation at the library must happen prior to any paving of the parking lot. He stated that the City is looking to use impervious pavement wherever possible. He noted that there is a high water table at the site and stated that the City will need to conduct some investigation prior to determining stormwater solutions. The Commissioner noted that at this time there are two conceptual designs for the parking lot. The first conceptual design includes walkways and an increase in parking stalls from 181 to 206. The second design includes no new walkways but increases the number of parking stalls from 181 to 217.

Committee members expressed concerns relative to the sequencing of the solar canopy installation and the paving of the parking lot. Councilors emphasized that the solar canopy project was approved by the Council and the Library Board of Trustees as a combined project with the parking lot expansion and

stormwater improvements. The Commissioner explained that the project was initially planned to be one project, but the solar vendor's pricing of the parking lot portion of the project was cost prohibitive. He noted that the projects are now independent but will be closely coordinated. Chief Operations Officer Jonathan Yeo confirmed that no solar canopies will be installed until after the Council has approved the parking lot design. It was noted that the design for the solar project will be based on DPW's design of the parking lot. A Committee member questioned whether the priority of the library parking lot has escalated due to the solar canopy project. Commissioner McGonagle stated that the library parking lot was previously a higher priority but was deescalated to allow coordination with the solar canopy project.

Committee members agreed that the library parking lot design should be complete and approved prior to any solar canopy installation. Committee members requested that the department provide both concept designs for the Council's review. Committee members remained concerned relative to communication, design and the split of the project into separate projects. Councilor Lappin motioned to approve the item and Committee members voted 4-1-1 with an abstention from Councilor Laredo and Councilor Gentile opposed.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#162-19 Appropriation of \$3 million for the Accelerated Road Repair Program

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend three million dollars (\$3,000,000) from Free Cash for the purpose of funding the City's Accelerated Road Repair Program.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 6-0**

Note: Commissioner McGonagle presented the request for \$3 million dollars for the continued funding of the Accelerated Roads Program. The Commissioner noted that \$3 million dollars was previously appropriated to allow the City to go out to bid for the FY20 contracts. He stated that the City was able to extend the contract from FY19, noting that the contractors were good and held their pricing. The Commissioner noted that the Upland Avenue and Pearl Street parking lots are going out to bid.

A Committee member questioned whether the Pearl Street parking lot will integrate stormwater management. City Engineer Lou Taverna explained that the Pearl Street parking lot is held up by two retaining walls and stated that he is reluctant to integrate stormwater infiltration at the site, not knowing the capacity of the retaining walls, which were designed many years ago. A Committee member questioned whether trees will be removed from the Pearl Street lot. Mr. Taverna noted that one tree will be removed, but the City is working with Director of Urban Forestry Marc Welch to replant additional trees. He noted that it is the intent to install tree wells so that the parking lot water is used to water the trees.

Committee members expressed no concerns relative to the request. With that, Councilor Norton motioned to approve the item which carried unanimously.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#161-19

Appropriation of \$2 million for design of the Washington Street corridor

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend two million dollars (\$2,000,000) from Free Cash for the purpose of developing 25% conceptual design of the Washington Street corridor in order to make the improvements to the corridor eligible for the State's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding.

Action: **Public Facilities Held 6-0**

Note: Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the request for \$2 million dollars for the purpose of designing Washington Corridor Improvements from West Newton to Newton Corner to a point of 25%. It is the intent to design up to 25% of the total design for the project in order to qualify for the State's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Commissioner explained that the process will take several years and will include the collection of traffic counts, a topographic survey, a trial, public meetings, selection of a design and ultimately design engineering. He noted that the City will first work to establish a baseline so that any improvements from the trial can be measured. The Commissioner noted that the designs will be focused on improved safety and stated that a one-year trial is necessary to effectively measure crash reduction, traffic flows, peak times, school impacts and lessons learned.

Committee members acknowledged that the proposed work within the Washington Street Corridor is critical and urged DPW to begin the topographic survey quickly. DPW Director of Transportation Jason Sobel explained that the survey should be completed prior to design engineering work, but not before ongoing improvements on Washington Street are completed. Committee members agreed that the request for \$2 million dollars seems high, noting that it represents 25% of the total design costs. Mr. Sobel stated that if the City can design to 25% of the total design, it will allow them to apply to be considered for TIP funding. Once the improvements are ranked and if approved, could be awarded Mass DOT funding for construction. Mr. Sobel confirmed that Washington Street is under local jurisdiction for roadway construction but must be consistent with Mass DOT construction standards and design guidelines to maintain eligibility for TIP funding. Commissioner McGonagle stated that the City anticipates scoring highly on the TIP, based on the opportunities for improvements (bicycle, vehicle, pedestrian) in the Washington Street Corridor but noted that there are no guarantees relative to Mass DOT funding. He emphasized that the design process will take several years to complete and noted that under perfect circumstances the City may be ready to apply for TIP funding in 2025.

A Committee member noted that the Planning Department worked with the MAPC to analyze the Washington Corridor in 2014 and questioned whether the City will be able to use the data gathered. City Engineer Lou Taverna confirmed that the data generated from this and other studies will be important and helpful and will be used to guide the improvements. A Committee member provided the attached conceptual design. The design includes bike lanes on either side of the road, one lane of parking and through-ways east and west bound. A planted boulevard separates the two sides of the road with designated turns at cross street. The Committee member suggested that a similar design can be easily trialed with flex posts or barrels, noting that PVC barriers are cost prohibitive. Committee members were supportive of the design and encouraged DPW to begin a trial as soon as possible. Commissioner

McGonagle and Mr. Sobel explained that elements of the trial will need to be put out to bid and DPW needs to ensure that the trial is designed safely. Mr. Sobel noted that an aerial photography plan and pavement markings will be necessary.

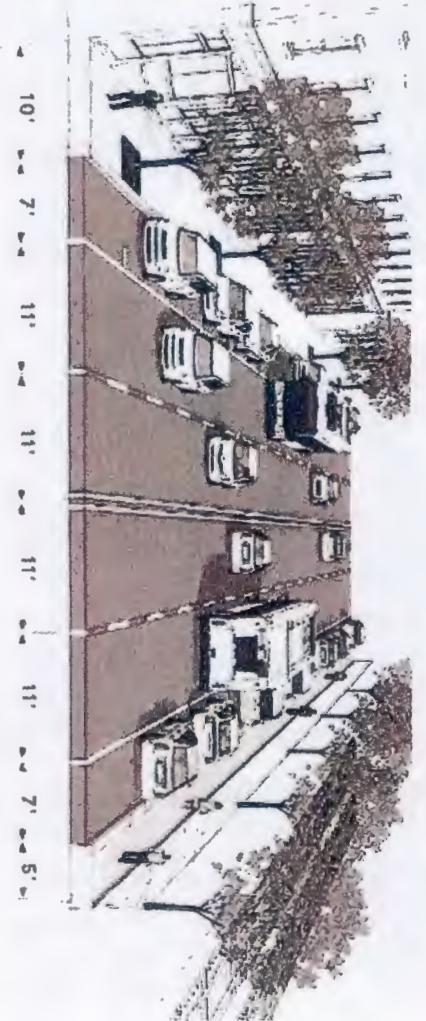
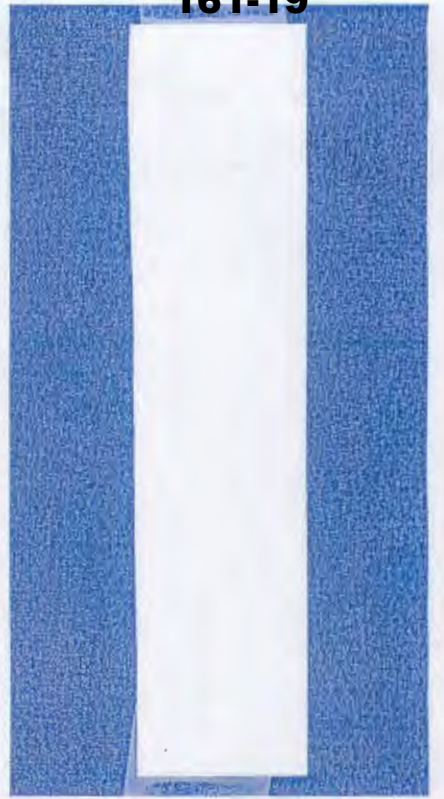
Committee members were supportive of starting the design work and trial for the Washington Street Corridor but acknowledged that there is a learning curve when making changes to the road. Committee members encouraged DPW to provide enough time during the trial to allow residents to adjust to the road changes. Committee members agreed that the Washington Street Corridor must be addressed soon. Commissioner McGonagle confirmed that the timing of other projects (i.e. Newton Corner) have not been established but will be coordinated. Committee members asked that DPW provide a breakdown of the request for \$2 million dollars and a draft budget for the project (with TIP funding and without TIP funding). Committee members also asked that DPW provide an estimated timeline for construction and questioned whether the City might consider phasing the project in sections if no TIP funding is received.

With that, Committee members voted unanimously to hold the item with a motion from Councilor Kelley.

The Committee adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Crossley, Chair



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