



## **Public Facilities Committee Report** **City of Newton** **In City Council**

**Wednesday, May 9, 2018**

**Present:** Councilors Crossley (Chair), Leary, Kelley, Laredo, Lappin, Norton

**City staff Present:** Commissioner of Public Buildings Joshua Morse, City Engineer Lou Taverna, Chief Operating Officer Jonathan Yeo, Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle, School Department Chief Financial Officer Liam Hurley

**#277-18      Eversource petition for grant of location in Cabot Street**

EVERSOURCE ENERGY AND VERIZON NEW ENGLAND petitioning for a grant of location to relocate one pole (P60/26) and remove one pole (P60/27) to accommodate the bus turnaround at Cabot School. (Ward 2)

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

**Note:**          Commissioner of Public Buildings Josh Morse presented the request to relocate one pole and remove one pole at the Cabot School. The Commissioner noted that the request to locate the new pole was overlooked during the 5-58 process. He stated that the new pole will replace two existing poles, one of which is leaning into the roadway, so there will be a net loss of one pole. The Commissioner also confirmed that the City will back feed several poles to eliminate poles from the front of the school.

The Public Hearing was opened and closed with no member of the public wishing to speak. Committee members expressed no concerns. Councilor Leary moved approval of the item which carried unanimously.

**#278-18      National Grid Petition for a Grant of Location in Dedham Street**

NATIONAL GRID petition for a grant of location to install and maintain approximately 1550'± of 12" gas main in Dedham Street from the existing gas main in the intersection of Dedham/Carlson in a southeasterly direction to house #912 in order to abandon the existing gas main.

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

**Note:**          City Engineer Lou Taverna presented the request to install conduit in Dedham Street from West of Carlson Avenue to house #912 on Dedham Street. Mr. Taverna stated that the City informed National Grid of the plans for intersection improvements at the intersection of Dedham/Brookline/Carlson. National Grid initially thought that minor repairs would be sufficient, but determined that it would be in their best interest to replace the existing pipe with

new pipe. Mr. Taverna noted that a portion of Dedham Street was paved in 2014, so the utility will be required to mill and overlay curb to curb. He confirmed that construction of the intersection has started and the contractor is working to coordinate work with the utility so that construction may continue.

The Public Hearing was opened and closed with no member of the public wishing to speak. Councilor Lappin moved approval of the item which carried unanimously.

**Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#283-18**      HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) from the Capital Stabilization Fund for Phase 1 of the Feasibility Study for the 150 Jackson Road project.

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

**Note:**      Commissioner of Public Buildings Joshua Morse presented the request to start feasibility at 150 Jackson Road for the development of a new facility that will house both the Newton Early Childhood Program (NECP) and the Lincoln Elliot elementary school. The Commissioner stated that the program planned for the site is unique and needs to be developed. He noted that it is the intent to mirror the MSBA process and programmatic requirements to the extent possible in the event that the City is approved for MSBA funding. The Commissioner stated that the request for funds will be sufficient to perform a programmatic analysis and feasibility assessment prior to returning to the Council to request funding for site planning and schematic design. He noted that that more information relative to enrollment, site layout, parking, massing, # of classrooms and program must be considered during this first phase. He said that some spaces may be shared among the programs (i.e. conference rooms, breakout spaces, special education spaces). The Commissioner noted that the two main cost drivers are for the OPM, who are the team that will assist the City with public outreach, establishing and maintaining A project web page, filing with the state, project scheduling and correspondence, and the Design Team, who will assist in evaluating the program relative to the site. The Commissioner noted that while site selection is not necessary, it is anticipated that the designer will identify alternative configurations for the site. He stated that during the first phase, fees are capped and the designer must design within the fee structure. He noted that design in excess of the fee cap is at the designer's expense. The Commissioner explained that the first phase will include consideration of where a gym might go and whether the auditorium will remain. A Committee member questioned whether the dormitory area will remain. The Commissioner noted that the dormitory space does not meet existing code requirements (is approximately 6' or so in height) and installation of HVAC equipment or a sprinkler system would be impossible. He confirmed that it is most likely that the dormitory space will be removed.

Committee members asked if the City were approved for MSBA funding, would a redesign of the project be necessary. The Commissioner noted that when selecting the design team, it is the intent to align with the MSBA process, therefore the City will be looking to select a designer with relevant experience. A Committee member questioned when public input would be solicited. The Commissioner stated that public meetings will be held from the beginning of the process during the design stage through to construction. He noted that Working Groups typically meet biweekly throughout design and construction and confirmed that there will be a community representative appointed. A Committee member asked that the abutters are taken into consideration regarding demolition. Commissioner Morse noted that he is cognizant of the site and will be very sensitive regarding demolition and construction. He also noted that he has already established a relationship with the neighborhood.

Committee members questioned what will happen with the current preschool once construction begins. Commissioner Morse stated that while it may be possible to keep the children at the site during construction, it may be cost prohibitive. He noted that it is more likely that the children will be relocated to a different site, possibly Horace Mann. Committee members questioned whether it is the expectation that the auditorium will remain. Chief Operating Officer Jonathan Yeo noted that there is very little auditorium space in the City and the administration would like to keep the space as an auditorium if possible. The Commissioner confirmed that site analysis will provide information on whether the auditorium can be compartmentalized to operate effectively with an elementary school on site. He noted that there are several details that need to be reviewed relative to the auditorium (parking impact during shows, evaluating its capacity). A Committee member suggested that the relocation of the central administration from the ed center should be considered in order to reconfigure the administrators' space more effectively. In response to a question from a Committee member, the Commissioner confirmed that the request for funds will be sufficient to cover the cost of the study. Councilor Leary moved approval of the item which carried unanimously.

#### **Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#284-18**      HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the design of the Horace Mann elevator accessibility project.

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

**Note:**      The Commissioner presented the request for \$70,000 to begin design for an elevator and various accessibility upgrades at Horace Mann. He stated that the accessibility project has been in the CIP for several years and noted that the school does not have programmatic accessibility, meaning that individuals with accessibility needs can only access a limited portion of the school. Commissioner Morse noted that the elevator was previously sited, is centrally located and requires sacrificing only a small area of classroom. He confirmed that the

request for funds includes a study of the accessible route, in addition to the elevator and other accessibility improvements. Committee members asked what the long-term plans are for the school and questioned whether it is cost effective to install the elevator at Horace Mann given the condition of the school. The Commissioner noted that it is likely that Horace Mann will be used as the swing space for the NECP program during construction at 150 Jackson Road. He stated that if Horace Mann were not selected to host the growing program, NECP would need to be relocated, ultimately resulting in additional investment. He noted that the elevator is an improvement to the school and reiterated that the funds will include other accessibility upgrades. Councilor Norton moved approval of the item which carried unanimously.

**Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#285-18**      HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of one hundred forty thousand eight hundred dollars (\$140,800) from Budget Reserve for Snow/Ice Removal and one hundred ten thousand dollars (\$110,000) from DPW Full-time Salaries to Contracted Services – Snow/Ice Removal, as well as six hundred seventy thousand dollars (\$670,000) from Overtime – Snow/Ice Removal to Contracted Services – Snow/Ice Removal.

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

**Note:**          Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the request to transfer \$140,800 from budget reserves and \$110,000 from DPW full-time salaries to the Contracted Services – Snow/Ice Removal Account. The Commissioner stated that the request for funds is to pay final bills for snow and ice removal for FY18. The request for \$670,000 is a request to transfer funds within the existing DPW snow accounts. The Commissioner stated that the snow total for FY18 is \$7.4 million dollars (\$96,000/inch) including approximately \$80,000 for the cost of storm related damage (fence damage, curbing). He confirmed that the \$7.4 million dollars does not include the funds to remove storm damaged trees. A Committee member questioned whether DPW will be repairing berms damaged during plowing. The Commissioner said ‘yes’ and noted that when the ground does not freeze, the plows damage grassy areas. He confirmed that DPW is working to repair damaged areas and stated that the department should be notified of any areas that need repair. Councilor Norton moved approval of the item which carried unanimously.

**Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#286-18**      HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate three million seven hundred thousand dollars (\$3,700,000) from bonded indebtedness to upgrade the water main infrastructure within the City.

**Action:**      **Public Facilities Approved 5-0-1 (Lappin abstaining)**

**Note:**          Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the request for \$3.7 million dollars from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of upgrading water main

infrastructure in the City. The Commissioner stated that the request for FY19 is \$1 million dollars more than is typically requested. He stated that \$500,000 will be used for the repair of high pressure relief valves on Langley Road. A company has created a way to repair the valves without replacement of the water main. He noted that two of the relief valves have previously failed, causing catastrophic conditions for the neighborhood. The other \$500,000 is to cover the cost of higher than anticipated bids for the cost of construction. The Commissioner stated that the City put the water contract out to bid at \$4 million dollars and the bids came in at \$4.5 million. He noted that there were a significant number of bidders and confirmed that the City is also utilizing a \$1.3 million-dollar, zero interest loan from the MWRA each year. Commissioner McGonagle confirmed that DPW is monitoring the cost increases. Councilor Leary moved approval of the item which carried 5-0-1 (Lappin abstaining).

**#276-18      President Laredo appointing Councilor Kelley to the Design Review Committee**

Andrea Kelley, 7 Taft Avenue, West Newton, appointed as a member of the DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE for a term to expire December 31, 2021.

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

**Note:**      Councilor Kelley noted that after serving on the DRC as a School Committee appointee for 30 years, she is excited to serve as a Council representative. She stated that since her resignation two years ago, no landscape architect or site planner has served on the DRC. Committee members were grateful that Councilor Kelley is willing to serve. Councilor Lappin moved approval which carried unanimously.

The Committee adjourned at 9:15 pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Deborah Crossley**