



Public Facilities Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, January 18, 2017

Present: Councilors Crossley (Chair), Brousal-Glaser, Danberg, Laredo, Lennon, Lappin, Gentile

Absent: Councilor Albright

City staff present: Associate City Engineer John Daghlian, Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle

#440-16 Sewer easement relocation at 255-257 Newtonville Avenue

DOROTHY NORCROSS, Manager of the Norcross Trust, LLC, 25 Fisher Avenue, Newton Highlands requesting, in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Ch. 40, Sec. 15., abandonment of a portion of a 10' wide City sewer easement in the northeast corner of Section 12, Block 16, Lot 8 (255-257 Newtonville Avenue, Newtonville) and acceptance of a 18' wide sewer easement located northerly of the existing easement. [12/07/16 @ 9:10 AM]

Action: Public Facilities Approved 6-0 (Lennon not voting)

Note: The Chair noted that the petition to relocate the sewer easement at 255-257 Newtonville Avenue is part of the special permit issued in June. The relocation of the easement will allow for a new building to be sited in a specific location.

Associate City Engineer John Daghlian noted that the 10' sewer line is off of Lewis Terrace. The relocation and relining of the sewer line from Lewis Terrace to the property line will be at the expense of the new property owner. Mr. Daghlian noted that the Engineering Department is in support of the easement relocation. It was confirmed that the location of the easement abuts the Mass Pike and should not interfere with any sidewalks. Councilor Laredo motioned to approve the item and the Committee voted 6-0 in favor of the motion.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#15-17 Transfer \$1 million for snow and ice removal expenses

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) from the Budget Reserve – Snow and Ice Removal Account to the following accounts:

Personnel Costs – Overtime	
(0140110-513001)	\$300,000
Sand & Salt	
(0110410-5532)	\$700,000

[01/09/17 @ 11:20 AM]

Action: Public Facilities Approved 6-0

Note: Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the request to transfer one million dollars from the Budget Reserve Account to accounts to cover personnel, salt and sand costs. The Commissioner noted that the item would be amended to 1.5 million dollars due to additional expenditures from the latest snow event. There have been six snow events requiring treatment, two of which were plowable events. Commissioner McGonagle stated that Public Works is working to pretreat roads whenever possible and noted that contractors were only used for the two plowable events.

A Committee member stated that on a day with notably icy conditions, the City had made clear and successful efforts to pretreat. Another Committee member noted that pretreating may be effective but may not be cost efficient. Councilor Danberg motioned to approve the item which carried unanimously.

#5-17 Discussion with DPW regarding salt use for snow clearing operations

COUNCILORS CROSSLEY, ALBRIGHT requesting a discussion with the Commissioner of Public Works about City Policy that determines the use of salt on roadways during snow clearing operations, to understand how we might minimize the amount of salt used overall and consider eliminating the placement of salt barrels at certain locations throughout the City. [12/23/2016 @ 8:37 AM]

Action: Public Facilities Held 7-0

Note: The Chair presented the discussion item and the intent to review the use and necessity of salt barrels placed throughout the City. It was noted that constituents and City personnel have observed salt being depleted from the barrels due to misuse and spillage. Commissioner McGonagle confirmed that the salt barrels have been placed throughout the City for over 40 years and DPW staff are often filling salt barrels when there has been no snow/ice event. It was noted that while the salt barrels are not for personal use, residents have been observed using the salt for personal use. Currently, 380 barrels are put out annually, but the number increases each year due to constituent requests.

Commissioner McGonagle believes that because the salt barrels have been put out for so long, there may be confusion from residents about their purpose. He noted that the barrels were originally provided for resident use only when DPW was not pretreating roads. Because DPW is pretreating and is aware of the City's problem areas; the Commissioner does not believe as many barrels should be located throughout the City. He did note that there are areas (ie. Crosswalks, school zones) where crossing guards need the salt to ensure pedestrian safety.

This year, DPW tried to delay putting the salt barrels throughout the City and received complaints from the public. An issue related to the misuse of the salt barrels is the spillage of salt into storm drains, berms and the roadway.

Andreae Downs, 854 Chestnut Street, Noted that there are locations where it is spilling into the road and storm drains causing an increase in chloride in the river. She stated that at some point the

EPA will regulate the amount of salt going into the river and the City should take a proactive approach to preventing it.

Committee members discussed whether to discontinue the use of some salt barrels. It was noted that the salt expenditure has not been consistently tracked, but that approximately 400 man hours are used to fill and maintain the barrels. Some Committee members believed that the expense of the salt and labor might be better used towards the Roads Program. Other Committee members felt that the cost savings were not significant enough to withdraw a program utilized by residents. It was agreed that the Commissioner can and should more judiciously select locations for the salt barrels to avoid salt spillage into storm drains. Committee members additionally agreed that as the Roads Program is implemented, the City should use the opportunity to provide education to residents about appropriate use of salt from the barrels. The Committee requested that the Commissioner provide a list of locations where salt barrels are placed accompanied by his recommendation.

After a motion to hold the item, carried unanimously; the Committee adjourned at 7:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah J. Crossley, Chair