



# Public Facilities Committee Report

## City of Newton In City Council

**Wednesday, November 8, 2017**

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

**Also Present:** Councilor Fuller

**Absent:** Councilor Lennon

**City staff Present:** City Engineer Lou Taverna, Commissioner of Public Buildings Joshua Morse, Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle, Director of Environmental Affairs/Recycling Manager Waneta Trabert

**#330-17      Verizon petition for grant of location on Bellevue Street**

VERIZON petition for a grant of location to install one new Pole (P.13/20S) on the southerly side of Bellevue Street, 30'± southerly to existing pole (P.13/20) in front of 35 Howard Street, to remove a guy wire from a tree. [(Ward 1) 10/10/2017 @ 12:08 PM]

**Action:**      Public Facilities Held 5-0 (Brousal-Glaser, Danberg not voting)

**Note:**      City Engineer Lou Taverna presented the request on behalf of Verizon Wireless to install one new pole in the berm between houses 170 and 164 on Bellevue Street to allow a guy wire to be removed from an existing (dying) tree and placed onto the new pole.

The Public Hearing was Opened.

Jian Wei, 164 Bellevue Street, has concerns that an additional pole on Bellevue Street will exacerbate unsafe conditions on the curved road. Ms. Wei does not believe that the guy wire is attached to the tree and questioned the necessity of a new pole.

Mr. Taverna confirmed that the guy wire is attached to is a dead or dying tree. A new pole is required to provide tension so that the existing pole is not pulled by other poles in the line, upon removal of the tree. Verizon Representative Steve Bigley (arrived 20 minutes into the discussion) stated that the request to remove the guy wire came at the request of the City's Tree Warden. Committee members questioned whether the proposed solution is the best solution or if it is the easiest solution for the utility company. Mr. Bigley noted that when a curve exceeds a six degree standard (in other words, if a pole is not aligned with a straight run of poles), installing a new pole and guy wire is the solution proposed to secure the installation. He could not confirm whether the existing pole exceeds the six degree curve standard. Committee members asked whether a larger, pole could replace the existing pole at Bellevue (digging it deeper), rather than installing a second new pole. Committee members asked that Mr. Bigley confirm that there is no alternate solution to the new pole and relocated guy wire on Bellevue Street. Committee members also requested that Mr. Taverna demonstrate to Ms. Wei why the tension and pole is necessary and confirm that the

request to remove the guy wire from the tree came from the City's Tree Warden. With a motion to hold the item until November 29, 2017 from Councilor Albright, Committee members voted unanimously in favor.

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

**#320-17 Request to construct fence around Rumford Avenue solar site**  
COUNCILORS SANGIOLO, HARNEY AND GENTILE requesting that His Honor the Mayor take the necessary steps to construct a 9 ½' chain link fence with ivy around the exterior of the Rumford Avenue solar site. [09/29/17 @ 2:18 PM]

**Action:** **Public Facilities Approved 5-0 (Brousal-Glaser, Danberg not voting)**

**Note:** Commissioner of Public Buildings Josh Morse provided an overview of the request to construct a fence at the Rumford Avenue Solar site. The Commissioner stated that after installation of the solar panels began and the panels became visually apparent, residents on Staniford and Lexington raised concerns relative to aesthetics. Several community meetings were held to address concerns and review shielding options. After multiple discussions, the residents and City representatives agreed to the proposed fence; a 2.5' extension on the existing 7.0' fence, covered with ivy. In order to facilitate growth of the ivy, a temporary drip irrigation system must be installed. The total cost of the proposed fence, plant material, temporary irrigation and labor is \$97,000.

Councilor Gentile noted that there was an expectation from residents in the neighborhood that the City would solicit feedback relative to screening prior to installation of the existing fence at Rumford. However, those conversations did not occur. Councilor Gentile reiterated that there have been a number of community meetings to rectify the situation and noted that the proposed fence is a compromise solution. Ms. Sarah Rahman, 33 Staniford Street, has a backyard that abuts the site. Ms. Rahman stated that she moved to the site after it was converted to landfill and emphasized the detrimental visual impact of the solar panels. She reiterated that the 2.5' fence addition is a compromise and stated that there is no way to eliminate the panels entirely from view of the abutting apartments above the first level.

Commissioner Morse noted that the existing fence is on the cap and is not ballasted sufficiently for an additional 2.5' of fencing. He noted that much of the expense associated with installing the fence is to expand the ballasting system needed to support the additional 2.5'. Committee members noted that had the additional height been considered and incorporated during the initial installation, most of the costs would have been included in the solar PPA. To the left of the site, the additional proposed fence ends because the vegetative buffer is sufficient to shield the view. At the right of the site, the property owners of an existing apartment building do not feel that the fence is necessary. The Commissioner noted that the added fence will shield the panels from the street level view of approximately 10-15 residences.

The Chair asked how and why the ivy was chosen for planting, as it can be high maintenance. The Commissioner noted that due to DEP's regulations of the site, plantings that

penetrate the ground too deeply are prohibited. The ivy was selected because it remains green year-round. It was noted that Ameresco will be responsible for maintenance of the fence and ivy. The Chair asked that the Commissioner review all options for plantings to ensure that ivy is the most appropriate option. Councilor Gentile moved approval of the item which carried unanimously.

**#331-17      Acceptance of a drainage easement at the end of Lake Terrace**

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of a 20' wide drainage easement from the Lake Terrace Right-of-Way extending to the shore of Crystal Lake, as noted on the proposed drainage easement plan.

**Action:**      **Public Facilities Approved 5-0 (Brousal-Glaser, Danberg not voting)**

**Note:**      City Engineer Lou Taverna presented the request to accept an easement from the Lake Terrace Right-of-Way for an existing drainage system. The property owners at 12 Lake Terrace and 138 Lake Avenue have agreed to grant the City an easement for maintenance and monitoring. The proposed easement is 20' wide and 55' in length. The City intends to install an underground stormwater unit that will capture and filter water from the existing drainage pipe before it discharges into the lake. Councilor Laredo motioned to approve the item, which carried unanimously.

**Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#356-17      Bond authorization for \$280,000 to purchase a Gradall for DPW**

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend two hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$280,000) from bonded indebtedness to purchase a Gradall vehicle for the Public Works Department. [10/30/17 @ 2:17 PM]

**Action:**      **Public Facilities Approved 5-0 (Brousal-Glaser, Laredo not voting)**

**Note:**      Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the request to replace an 18 year old Gradall. Gradalls, used primarily for excavating on sidewalk construction, have a life expectancy of approximately 15 years in commercial construction. It was noted that this item is on the CIP. The Commissioner confirmed that the Gradall will be traded it, but stated that the value will be minimal due to the age of the equipment. Councilor Lappin moved approval of 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 Voted No Action Necessary 6-0 (Brousal-Glaser)**

**Note:**      In January 2016, the Committee began a discussion with the Commissioner of Public Works relative to reviewing the placement of salt barrels around the City. Committee members asked that the Commissioner evaluate the possibility of reducing the number of barrels placed in

an effort to minimize both discharge into the storm drains and misuse of salt for private purposes. The Commissioner stated that salt barrels were previously placed in problem areas and as requested by residents. This year, the Highway Division mapped out and inspected areas where salt barrels have previously been placed. By eliminating the placement of salt barrels in locations that are flat, hand cleared or near commercial businesses; DPW will reduce the number of barrels placed throughout the City by 120 barrels, from 288 to 168. The Commissioner noted that the Department is aware that there is some misuse of the salt (taking for private use), but that there is also strong need in some areas, particularly on steep hills. It was stated that the salt used costs approximately \$52/ton and the barrels are filled up multiple times a year. It is expected that the reduction in salt barrels will save the City several thousand dollars and will reduce labor.

Committee members noted that there are areas where the salt barrels provide a useful public service. The Commissioner confirmed that the salt barrels will remain in areas where necessary and stated that DPW can work to locate the barrels downstream from storm drains. Committee members were in agreement that the Commissioner should exercise discretion when balancing the reduction in salt barrels with sensitivity to safety concerns. With a motion from Councilor Danberg to NAN the item, Committee members voted unanimously in favor.

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

**#123-17** **Pilot Program for curbside food waste collection**  
COUNCILORS SANGIOLO, NORTON, CROSSLEY, LENNON, AUCHINCLOSS, HARNEY, FULLER, ALBRIGHT, LAPPIN, AND LAREDO requesting the City through the Department of Public Works, pilot a curbside food waste collection program.  
[04/21/17 @ 11:15 AM]

**Action:** **Public Facilities Voted No Action Necessary 7-0**

**Note:** Director of Environmental Affairs/Recycling Manager Waneta Trabert presented the attached PowerPoint presentation to provide updates to the Committee on the Solid Waste Pilot Program and general Updates.

### **Curbside Waste Pilot Program**

In Massachusetts, up to 40% of the waste stream is from food waste. In Newton, food waste totals between 3,550 and 7,100 tons. The City's cost associated with removal of this waste ranges from \$241,000 - \$480,000 annually. The goal of the proposed pilot program is to gain an understanding of how to implement an effective food waste reduction campaign, measure the impact (financial and environmental) of removing food waste, and understand whether the model is sustainable for both the City and the vendor.

The pilot program will include 200 households and is scheduled to run from March to the end of June 2018. The program will have two components; educating participants on how to reduce food waste and offering curbside collection for unavoidable organic waste (i.e. watermelon rinds, banana peels). The City has selected Boston-based Bootstrap Compost as the City's vendor in part due to their unique model. Bootstrap provides five gallon buckets which participants fill with

unavoidable organics. On a day coinciding with trash pickup, Bootstrap will pick up and replace the bucket. Ms. Trabert noted that bucket maintenance can be a major deterrent for residents trying to compost. The compost materials are processed at local farms and donated to community garden projects. Participants will also have the option to receive a six pound share of the material composted over 6 months. Bootstrap will provide the City with an impact statement after the first half of the pilot. The impact statement will detail greenhouse gas emissions, weight and how much compost is estimated. A second impact statement will be issued at the end of the program.

Committee members questioned whether an analysis of the waste reduction is possible, given the small sample size. Ms. Trabert noted that the sample of 200 households will be taken from an area of a route of approximately 1100 households. Because the sample size is approximately 1/5 of the route, Ms. Trabert is confident that reductions can be identified. Survey data is currently being gathered to determine which geographic area to pilot, which the City expects to determine by January. Ms. Trabert noted that while the Department is targeting residents interested in participating, it will not include those who are currently composting. Ms. Trabert stated that the program will start with a pre-survey and orientation. Residents will be given a guidebook with the goal of "Don't fill the Bucket". At the end of the pilot, participants will complete a post-pilot survey. Data collected from the pilot program will be used to apply for a larger grant in June 2018 to expand the pilot program in January 2019. The total cost of the current pilot is estimated at \$13,200 which will be funded by grants received in 2017.

### **General Updates**

- Citywide mailing sent out on policies and practices sent to all residents in July
- Full update of website; reducing the number of web pages from 54 to 11
- Enhanced cart fleet management and service
- Bulk assessment of Bulk Waste program; funded by a DEP technical assistance grant
- Received \$44,000 in grant funding from the Recycling Dividends Program
- Distribution of new educational materials
- Curbside Compliance Improvements
- Sandwich Board Program promoting a new App & the end of yard waste
- Development of a new App (nearly 1000 users)

### **Concerns**

In June, a notice was issued to the World Trade Association from China stating that they are putting stricter conditions on the materials being accepted for mixed paper and plastics. Because 50% of the recycled materials from the world are sent to China, this will have a major global impact. While the stricter regulations are set to take effect on January 1, 2018; there is little information being distributed relative to implementation. There are various ongoing efforts underway with the Chinese government and various trade associations to establish a timeline that will allow other nations to adjust to the new regulations. Ms. Trabert noted that this was previously done in 2013-2014. China is looking to clean up the materials they are receiving. Additionally, it was noted that China is looking to incentivize domestic markets to promote increased supply from

domestic sources. It is expected that the higher standard for mixed recycled products will have long term cost impacts. It is likely that Waste Management will file a force majeure, eliminating the \$30 cap in the City's contract. The City is working with Waste management to establish a fair methodology for sampling and to determine what the potential cost increases might be.

### **Future Goals and Objectives**

- Investigate participation in Recycling IQ through DEP; a program to help the City understand where the largest sources of contamination are coming from, and work to increase recycling efforts in that neighborhood
- Implement ongoing Education Plan
- Continue Improvements in Operations and Efficiency
- Communicate Waste and Recycling Goals
- Discuss Stakeholder priorities with SWC
- Establish long term strategy with SWC; Ms. Trabert noted that the SWC is working on a long term strategy and prioritizing objectives defined in her report. They hope to have a draft by the end of 2017
- Investigate the impact of a polystyrene ban

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Continued Education & Outreach
- Resident Accountability/Curbside Compliance
- Commercial Sector Involvement
- Emphasis on Source Reduction; reduction is commonly neglected
- Sustainability tie-ins i.e. measure emissions reduction
- General performance measures
- Long term planning
- Operational efficiencies

A Committee member questioned what percentage of Newton's recycling is contaminated. Ms. Trabert noted that she is currently in the process of working with Waste Management to evaluate the City's contamination percent. She stated that the contractor provided a number, but she is questioning its basis. She anticipates that a number will be determined shortly. Councilors asked that Ms. Trabert work to define success for specific goals. Committee members were appreciative of Ms. Trabert's ongoing efforts and requested that she provide educational materials and app information to the Committee for distribution. With a motion from Councilor Lappin to NAN the item, Committee members voted unanimously in favor.

#### **#313-15 Request for an update on the Second Water Meter Program**

ALD. LAPPIN requesting an update from the Department of Public Works on the second water meter program including: the progress of the inspection and programming of the approximately 900 new outdoor irrigation meters provided by the City to property owners that have yet to be inspected and/or programmed by

the City; the process going forward for the issuance, inspection, programming and tracking of second meters; and the notification of residents who already had second meters regarding the process for registering their meters. 10/26/15 @ 7:15 PM]

**Action:** **Public Facilities Voted No Action Necessary 6-0 (Laredo not Voting)**

**Note:** Director of Utilities Ted Jerdee provided a memo stating that there are currently 11 people remaining who have not paid for their second water meters, and who are being pursued. It was noted that there is now a clear tracking system in place. With a motion from Councilor Lappin to NAN the item, Committee members voted unanimously in favor.

### **Referred to Programs & Services and Public Facilities Committees**

**#201-15** **Discussion regarding the condition of the Kennard Estate building**  
ALD. SANGIOLO requesting a discussion with the Commissioner of Public Buildings, the Commissioner of Parks and Recreation, and the Executive Department regarding the condition of the property located at 246 Dudley Road (Kennard Estate) and how much, if any, repairs and upgrades will be needed as the City relocates the Parks and Recreation Department to that location. [09/01/15 @ 4:00 PM].

**Action:** **Public Facilities Voted No Action Necessary 7-0**

**Note:** Committee members were in agreement that while the condition of the Kennard Estate must be discussed, it cannot be done before the end of term. With a motion from Councilor Brousal-Glaser, Committee members unanimously voted No Action Necessary.

### **Referred to Public Safety & Transportation And Public Facilities Committees**

**#413-11** **Updates on the renovations to the City's fire stations**  
ALD. CICCONE, SALVUCCI, GENTILE & LENNON updating the Public Facilities and Public Safety & Transportation Committees on the progress of renovations to the city's fire stations. [11-17-11 @11:07 AM]

**PS&T Voted No Action Necessary 6-0 (Fuller, Norton not Voting) on 10/18/2017**

**Action:** **Public Facilities Voted No Action Necessary 7-0**

**Note:** Because there are no ongoing renovations at the City's fire stations, Councilor Gentile moved No action Necessary which carried unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Deborah J. Crossley, Chair**

# Proposed Plan for Curbside Organics Collection Pilot

Public Facilities Committee Meeting  
November 8, 2017

**Waneta Trabert**  
Director of Environmental Affairs Division  
City of Newton DPW



## Materials Management Hierarchy



## Why divert organic waste from the residential waste stream?

- Higher uses
  - Water and nutrients for soil amendment
  - Production of methane in anaerobic digestion
- Offset greenhouse gas emissions
- 26.6% of the waste stream by weight (MassDEP, 2014)
  - With liquids, up to 40%
  - For Newton this equates to 3,550-7100 tons
    - Disposal cost at \$68/ton = \$241,400 to \$482,800





## Organics Collection Pilot Overview

- Four month pilot for 200 households
- Planned start: March 5, 2018
- Two components:
  - Educational campaign to reduce food waste
  - Curbside collection for unavoidable organics
- One collection vessel: 5 gallon bucket
- Data gathered will be used to apply for funding to expand pilot efforts (assuming success from initial pilot)



## BOOTSTRAP COMPOST

- Boston-based year-round collector and processor of curbside organics
- Residential, office, and restaurant service
- Material is processed at and used at local farms (Saugus & Winchester)
- A portion of compost is donated to school and community garden projects
- Pilot participants will have option to receive a 6lb compost share at pilot's end



## Eliminate the “Ick Factor”

- One receptacle
- Secure lid for indoor or outdoor use
- Bucket is swapped out each week
  - No container maintenance for residents



## Too Good To Waste Campaign

- Food waste reduction
- Tools for residents
  - Shopping
  - Storage
  - Preparation
- Orientation sessions
- Guidebook
- Pre and post surveys



Goal is NOT to fill the bucket!



## Pilot Costs

### Operations

\$3/household × 200 households × 17 weeks  
= \$10,200

### Education/Outreach

\$10 participant guidebook printing × 200hh  
= \$2,000

\$5 kitchen scrap bucket (optional) × 200hh  
= \$1,000

Total = \$13,200

Funding source: MassDEP Recycling Dividends Grant Funds



## Project Goals

Gain an understanding of:

- How to implement a food waste reduction program and its effectiveness
- The impact of food waste being removed from trash disposal (GHG & cost reduction)
- Coordination, education, and administrative responsibilities for City staff
- Costs for the City and the vendor

Is this a sustainable and scalable model?



## Next Steps

- MOU under review by Law Dept
- Use survey data to determine geographic area for pilot via online survey
- Finalize education plan & draft materials
- Send letters/emails to residents in selected geographic area
- Plan one hour orientation sessions for pilot participants; get pre-pilot survey info



## Round 1 Pilot Timeline

Nov/Dec 2017:  
determine pilot location; education materials

February:  
orientation sessions; pre-pilot survey

Late April:  
Impact Statement 1

January:  
solicit participants via letter

March 5:  
Pilot starts

June 29:  
Pilot completes; post-pilot survey; Impact Statement 2



## Big Picture Next Steps

- Finalize pilot planning
- Run pilot March through June 2019
- Use data and information gathered from pilot to apply for grant in June 2018 to fund longer and larger organics collection pilot
- If grant is awarded, plan for expanded pilot to start in January 2019 using lessons learned



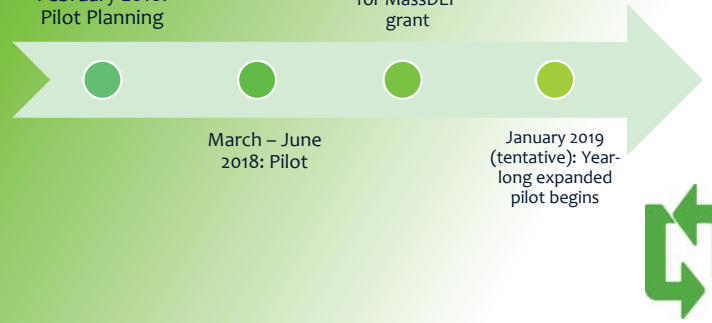
## Big Picture Timeline

August 2017 –  
February 2018:  
Pilot Planning

Mid-June  
2018: Apply  
for MassDEP  
grant

March – June  
2018: Pilot

January 2019  
(tentative): Year-  
long expanded  
pilot begins



## Environmental Affairs Update

- City-wide mailing sent late July
- Full webpage update completed
- Enhanced cart fleet management & service
- Bulk Assessment completed
- MassDEP Recycling Dividends Grant funding for CY18 awarded: \$44,000
- New educational materials being distributed
- Improving curbside compliance efforts



## Environmental Affairs Update (cont'd)

- Late Nov: end of yard waste collection campaign



## International Trade Concerns

- China import ban on scrap plastic and scrap paper filed in June; effective January 1, 2018
- Impacting local governments nationwide
- Increase in costs for Newton for contamination over 10%; audit data in progress
- Long term cost increases anticipated
  - Event qualifies as Force Majeure of contract
- Significant uncertainty and new developments almost daily



## Future Goals and Objectives

- Participate in the Recycling IQ Program through MassDEP
- Continue to develop and follow annual education plans
- Continue to improve operations
- Communicate waste and recycling goals
- Discuss stakeholder priorities with SWC
  - Establish a long-term strategy



## Areas for Improvement

- Education and outreach
- Resident accountability
- Commercial sector
- Emphasis on source reduction
- Sustainability tie-ins
- Performance measures
- Goal and long term planning development
- Operational and administrative efficiency



## Contact Me

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Recycle Right Newton app

