



Public Facilities Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, April 6, 2016

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

Absent: Councilors Lennon, Gentile.

Also present: Councilors Norton, Yates.

City staff present: James McGonagle (Commissioner of Public Works), John Daghlian (Associate City Engineer), Aland Mandl (Assistant City Solicitor), Shane Mark (Public Works Director of Operations)

#108-16 Eversource Grant of Location petition for conduit in Franklin Street

EVERSOURCE ENERGY petitioning for a grant of location to install 350' ± of conduit in FRANKLIN STREET from existing Manhole #MH4210 at the intersection of Beechcroft Road easterly to 100 Franklin Street. (Ward 7) [02/26/16 @ 8:27 AM]

Action: Public Facilities Held 6-0.

Note: Eversource Permit Rep Karen Johnson reviewed the location of the proposed conduit in Franklin Street. It was confirmed that Franklin Street has not been paved since March 16, 2003. The conduit would provide service to 100 Franklin Street. Ms. Johnson confirmed that in order to provide service to multiple homes, the plans would have to be reengineered.

Michael Quinn of 115 Staniford Street is developing the property. Mr. Quinn urged the Committee to approve the petition tonight so that he could move forward. He stated that there is a buyer for the home waiting to move into the house; however, due to delays beyond his control, they do not yet have electricity in the house. It was confirmed that the delays were due to Eversource Energy's process which was started in October of 2015. Mr. Quinn stated that there are plans to put various utilities in when the street is opened and that he has already initiated requests with the other service providers.

Victor Colantonio of 99 Franklin Street indicated that as the conduit did not have the capacity to service multiple homes, it would be limiting to others in the neighborhood that have interest in underground service. Mr. Colantonio is an advocate for underground utilities provided the construction can be done efficiently and includes all service providers. He noted that this conduit is only for electric. Mr. Colantonio would like to ensure that all the homes on the street have the opportunity to have service underground. Mr. Colantonio stated that an application has recently been filed with Eversource for the purpose of installing a conduit that would meet the needs of the abutters who are interested but does not have a time frame from Eversource as of yet. Eversource confirmed that it was filed yesterday. He indicated that he plans to contact additional utility service providers.

Judy Star of 132 Farlow is opposed to opening the street multiple times for the same purpose. Ms. Star feels that all the work should be carried out at the same time.

Carl Sussman of 125 Franklin Street is opposed to the construction of the underground service. He noted that there has been minimal collaboration on behalf of the builders with the community.

Sarine Rodman of 114 Franklin Street indicated that she has concerns about how the construction will impact her heated driveway. Associate City Engineer John Daghlian stated that the construction would have no impact as it should not be that close to her property.

The Engineering Department sees underground utilities as an improvement but is aware of the costs associated with making the change. Mr. Daghlian stated that while the trench can be held open until all of the utilities are inside, the Council can impose a condition that no Certificate of Occupancy be granted until after the road is milled and paved.

Committee members questioned how the process moved ahead without prior plans to get electricity to the house. It was determined that due to the location of the utility poles behind the properties; abutters would have had to grant an easement to the builders in order to allow access. It appeared that there was some confusion amongst neighbors including what was entailed. Mr. Quinn stated that when the planning process started, he was aware of the access to electricity via the manhole on Franklin Street and as such there was little concern about access at that point.

It was confirmed that the plans sent to ISD initially provided plans for water, gas and drainage. It was unclear whether ISD had a provision for the electrical plans when they were submitted. Clarification was requested in regard to the City permitting and review process, including what ISD has control over.

The Committee asked that the neighborhood work collaboratively with the developer and city engineers to agree on a path forward, before the Committee votes on the item. Mr. Colantonio volunteered to organize the neighbors in order to come to an agreement. The Public Hearing will continue when an agreement has been made. Councilor Laredo moved to hold the item which carried unanimously.

#109-16 Verizon Grant of Location petition for wireless communication equipment
CELLCO PARTNERSHIP d/b/a VERIZON WIRELESS petitioning for a grant of location to attach wireless communication equipment to existing utility poles at the following locations:

Locations

Grove Street (near corner of Grove and Washington Streets) at Pole #185/79

Crafts Street (near 224 Crafts Street) at Pole # 108/30

Public Facilities Held 6-0.

Cabot Street (near corner of Cabot and Centre Streets) at Pole # 60

Wheeler Road (near Shuman Circle) at Pole # VZ3

Dedham Street (near Carlson Avenue) at Pole # 177/87
Parker Street (near 270 Parker Street) at Pole #340/29
Derby Street (near 114 Derby Street) at pole # 120/14
Crafts Street (near 542 Crafts Street) at Pole # 108/65A
Highland Street (near 200 Highland Street) at Pole # 208/22
Needham Street (near Charlemont Street) at Pole #113/26
[03/09/16 @ 10:00 AM]

Public Facilities Approved 6-0.

Note: Attorney Elizabeth Mason appeared on behalf of McLane Middleton representing Celco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless. The petition is to install small cell wireless communication equipment (“cantennas”) on existing utility poles in order to address capacity issues. The device is a cylinder approximately 2 feet tall; however there is additional equipment that is required for operation that would also be fastened to the utility pole. Atty. Mason indicated that while the equipment is designed to be as subtle as possible, there will be differences in how the equipment is situated on different poles.

The public hearing was opened and closed with no comment.

There was a question about the capacity expectations of the equipment and whether Celco would want to replace them to meet greater capacity needs. It was stated that the equipment meets the capacity requirements for their respective areas at this point and it would be difficult to predict future needs. A question was raised whether future plans to underground utilities would be affected by this additional equipment and it was noted that Celco assumes that risk.

Another questioned whether health studies have been done with respect to how the frequencies of the equipment will affect people. It was stated that the frequencies are compliant with all exposure standards as set by the Federal Communications Commission.

There was concern about two utility poles: Grove Street (near corner of Grove and Washington Streets) at Pole #185/79 and Crafts Street (near 224 Crafts Street) at Pole # 108/30 because they are double poles. As there are conscious efforts to reduce the number of double poles in the City, the Committee considered approval based on the condition that the petitioner removed the second pole. Because the poles do not belong to the petitioner, there was question about whether the Committee could condition approval on removing the poles. The Committee requested that the petitioner meet with pole owners and report back. Councilor Danberg moved approval on all but the two double pole locations. The Committee approved 6-0. The two double pole locations were held 6-0.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#118-16 Funding for traffic signalization, traffic signal knockdowns, streetlight work

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of four hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$425,000) from the Public Works' Street Maintenance Full-time Salaries Account to the following accounts:

Electrical Equipment R&M – Streetlighting (0140109-52404)	\$85,000
Electrical Equipment R&M – Transportation (0140115-52404)	\$215,000
Public Property R&M – Transportation (0140115-52409)	\$125,000

[03/15/16 @ 4:51 PM]

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

Note: Commissioner of Public Works James McGonagle reviewed the figures being requested for transfer. The \$85,000 requested is for streetlights. The \$215,000 requested is to address repairs for traffic signalizations. The \$125,000 requested is for street markings. Eversource has been contacted to correct faulty power connections with streetlights, but did note a reduction of one hundred from two hundred since the fall.

The Commissioner was asked what accounts for the excess in staffing funds. It was noted that there are 26 open positions within the DPW and the majority are in the highway department. Several professional positions in the transportation and waste management divisions remain unfilled for most of FY16 as well. DPW is working to fill open positions. Councilor Lappin moved to approve. The Committee approved 6-0.

Referred to Programs & Services and Public Facilities Committees

#141-15 **Discussion on tracking and improving the condition of the gas utility infrastructure**
ALD. BROUSAL-GLASER, SANGIOLO, HESS-MAHAN, COTE, NORTON AND ALBRIGHT
requesting a discussion with the Director of Urban Forestry, a representative of the Department of Public Works and a representative of the Law Department about tracking and improving the condition of the gas utility infrastructure in Newton, new state statutes governing infrastructure repairs, coordination of increased repair work with city operations, the status of negotiations with National Grid to compensate for tree deaths resulting from gas leaks, and the possibility of creating a utilities working group to monitor progress on these and related issues. [05/26/15 @ 2:52 PM]

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

Note: Assistant City Solicitor Alan Mandl spoke on behalf of the Law Department. He indicated that negotiations resulted in a settlement of \$100,000 from National Grid to compensate the City for tree damage recorded in 2010 coincident with ongoing gas leaks. It was suggested that the City aggressively pursue utility companies in an effort to ensure they are more proactive in their efforts to repair gas leaks. It was also suggested that the City actively record gas leak and tree damage and

continue to inform the gas utility of problem areas. Director of Urban Forestry Mark Welch coordinates with National Grid in order to avoid planting where there are gas leaks. Atty. Mandl noted that it can be difficult to prove causality with gas leaks and dying trees. More information was requested in regard to how to detect gas leaks in the vicinity of shade trees.

There was concern that there is no apparent coordinated effort to find leaks rather than repair them as they become larger threats. National Grid has identified approximately 70% of the pipes in Newton to be leak prone. One solution might be to change the classification of gas leaks which would obligate National Grid to address the issue sooner.

DPW has provided a list of sewer and water main replacements occurring in the City over the next year to National Grid, who have has committed to work to repair gas pipes in many of those locations. An update was requested in relation to the ongoing work at the intersection of Commonwealth Ave and Lowell Ave. The Commissioner noted that a list of priority paving projects was also provided and these locations are to be discussed at a next meeting. The Committee requested information regarding Bill H. 2871 from Atty Mandl.

City Departments are now meeting monthly with the gas utility to encourage coordination of street work. It was noted that Sustainability Director Andrew Savitz is working on a project that will result in monthly updates on leaking gas pipes in Newton, and as well is tracking emissions due to gas leaks.

Councilor Laredo moved to hold the item which carried unanimously.

#83-16 Request for a website and e-mail list to provide updates for Elliot St Bridge project
COUNCILOR YATES requesting the City of Newton create a website and an e-mail list to inform area merchants, residents, and workers on the status of the closing and rehabilitation of Cook's Bridge. [02/22/16 @ 4:45 PM]

Action: Public Facilities No Action Necessary 6-0.

Note: Community Outreach has been ongoing for both residents and businesses that may be affected by the temporary closing of Cook's bridge for repairs. Economic Development Director Nancy Hyde coordinated outreach efforts ahead of holding community meetings. Councilor Yates suggested broadening the outreach efforts and provided a list that he will review with Ms. Hyde. DPW indicated that as soon as they have a finalized schedule, they will post it online. Councilor Laredo moved to NAN the item, which passed 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Deborah J. Crossley, Chair

To" Public Facilities Committee

From: Councillor Brian Yates

Subject: 83-16, Request of Councillor Yates that the city develop a web-site and e-mail notification program to keep residents, merchants, and workers informed of the status of the rehabilitation of Cook's Bridge.

E-mail Lists to be used

Friends of Hemlock Gorge

Upper Falls News

Upper Falls, Waban, and Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Councils

Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce

Mary Immaculate of Lourdes Parish (Newton/Needham Congregation)

Ward 5 Democratic and Republican Ward Committees

Etc.

Web page on city of Newton web site

Model; on Mass DOT web site for Add a Lane project

Ask above agencies to include links to site on their web pages

Details of plan for site

Current status of work

Timetable for completion