

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7, 2010

Present: Ald. Schnipper (Chairman), Lennon, Albright, Salvucci, Gentile, Crossley, Danberg, and Lappin

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Finance Committee Members present: Ald. Ciccone, Linsky, Salvucci, Gentile, Rice, Danberg, Fuller, and Freedman

Post Audit & Oversight Committee members present: Lennon, Swiston, Rice, Shapiro, Schnipper, and Freedman; also present Ald. Fischman, Hess-Mahan, and Yates

City staff present: Alice Ingerson (Community Preservation Planner), Cindy Stone (Director of the History Museum), Susan Abele (Newton History Museum), Josh Morse (Facilities and Operations Supervisor; Public Buildings Department), Nancy Grissom (Chair of the Community Preservation Committee), David Tannozzini (Energy Officer; Public Buildings Department), Lou Taverna (City Engineer), David Turocy (Deputy Commissioner of Public Works), Ron Mahan (Superintendent of Equipment; Public Works Department) and Robert Rooney (Chief Operating Officer)

REFERRED TO CMT ON COMM PRES., PUB. FAC. AND FIN. COMMITTEES

#83-10 THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of sixty three thousand, eight hundred forty five dollars (\$63,845) be appropriated from the FY10 Community Preservation Fund's historic resources and general reserves to be expended by the Public Buildings Department to complete the design of storage and accessibility improvements for the archives at the Jackson Homestead. [03/09/10 @ 4:20 PM]

**CMT ON COMM PRES APPROVED 7-0 (Ciccone not voting) on 3/23/10
FINANCE HELD 6-0 (Ciccone not voting)**

ACTION: HELD 7-0 (Danberg not voting)

NOTE: The Finance Committee and the Public Facilities Committee met jointly to discuss this item. Chair of the Community Preservation Committee Nancy Grissom provided the Committees with information on the proposed project. In July of 2008, the Board of Aldermen approved \$37,500 for design work for the Newton History Museum to rehabilitate and expand storage space at the Jackson Homestead. In the process of design, issues related to accessibility arose and there was not enough design funds to address the issues. The History Museum is requesting an additional \$63,845 for design fees. The Community Preservation Committee and the Committee on Community Preservation approved the request unanimously. The Community Preservation Committee is also recommending that the Board of Aldermen vote the below item (Docket Item #147-08) no action necessary and resubmit a request for construction funds once the design is done and a more accurate construction estimate is available.

Director of the History Museum Cindy Stone, Board of Trustee Member Anne Larner, Susan Abele, Museum Curator, and Public Buildings Facilities and Operations Supervisor Josh Morse were present for the discussion. Unfortunately, Public Buildings Commissioner Arthur Cabral was unable to attend the meeting due to an emergency. The new design will provide universal access for disabled people visiting the History Museum. The additional money would also be used for archeological work, a site survey, and a ramp for wheelchairs to access the building.

Both Committees were concerned that there was not a rough construction estimate provided with the request for additional design funds. In addition, members of both Committees had many questions regarding the project and were not comfortable acting on the request, or the below docket item, without answers to those questions. Committee members requested the following material: a structural engineer's report for the museum, a rough estimate of construction costs, a more detailed breakdown of the architectural fee request, what other funding is being used for the project, and information on how other funding, such as private money, will be used.

Both Committees held the item until the requested information is provided. A more detailed report on the project will be provided when an action is taken on the item.

REFERRED TO COMM. PRES., PUB FAC & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#147-08 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of \$359,400, including \$2,000 for legal costs, be appropriated from the FY'08 Community Preservation Fund's historic resources and general reserves, for a project to rehabilitate and expand storage space for the research library and archives at the Newton History Museum, to preserve the existing collections, and enhance public access to the collections. [04-01-08 @ 4:10 PM]
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION APPROVED 6-0 on 4-29-08
(A) DESIGN FUNDS ESTIMATE \$37,500.00 – BOA APPROVED ON 07/21/08

(B) BALANCE OF PROJECT ESTIMATE \$321,900.00 – HELD
FINANCE HELD (B) 6-0 (Ciccone not voting)

ACTION: HELD (B) 7-0 (Danberg not voting)

NOTE: The Committee held the item in order to discuss it with the above item when they are next scheduled for discussion.

#24-10 ALD. ALBRIGHT requesting a discussion regarding requiring any utility company that requests permission to bury wires in the street (to handle increased capacity or for any other reason) be required to: (1) choose a section of the street that has enough clearance to add additional conduit at the time of the work, or in the future, to bury additional conduit; (2) to add sufficient conduit to bury that utility's wires currently on the poles on that street at the time the work requested is undertaken. 01/11/10 @ 11:47 AM]

ACTION: NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0 (Danberg not voting)

NOTE: Marc Lucas, NStar Community Relations Representative, met with the Committee to discuss the possibility of providing additional empty conduit when NStar is installing conduit in a street. Mr. Lucas responded that NStar is willing to install the empty conduit, as long as the City has a plan and funding for undergrounding wires in the area of the conduit installation. NStar will not provide the conduit on speculation. Mr. Lucas pointed out that if empty conduit is installed, it depreciates in value and quality when it is not being used. Some of the streets within the City have excessive conduit and other equipment underground, making it difficult to install unused conduit.

Committee members discussed the different options for paying for the undergrounding of wires. Ald. Albright asked if it were possible for NStar to bill people residing on streets that opt to underground the wires. Mr. Lucas stated that this is an option but if those property owners do not pay for the undergrounding, all of the ratepayers in the City would pay for the undergrounding of a street. Ald. Albright requested that NStar inform property owners on streets that are scheduled for underground work that they have the option of undergrounding their wires during construction at their cost. Mr. Lucas will investigate the possibility of providing the information to property owners. It was suggested that Ald. Albright and Mr. Lucas meet to discuss various options.

Committee felt that it was appropriate to take an action of no action necessary on this item and Docket Item #418-09. The Committee suggested that Ald. Albright might want to docket another item after meeting with Mr. Lucas and reviewing undergrounding possibilities.

#418-09 ALD. ALBRIGHT requesting discussion with NStar Electric Company regarding standards for installing underground conduits and the possibility of providing additional conduit for future undergrounding projects.

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0 (Danberg not voting)**

NOTE: Please see the above note.

#457-08 ALD. LAPPIN AND SALVUCCI requesting discussion with NStar regarding the timely repair of City streetlights and the development of a standard response timeframe. [11/20/08 @ 12:51 PM]

ACTION: **HELD 7-0 (Danberg not voting)**

NOTE: Marc Lucas, NStar Customer Service Representative, joined the Committee for discussion of this item. The docket item is an ongoing discussion item that was last discussed on October 21, 2009. Mr. Lucas updated the Committee on the streetlights. There are eight street lights still out that were on the original list of light outages and an additional fourteen lights that need to be investigated. Mr. Lucas and Mr. Schuckel, the City's Traffic Engineer, have been working well together to solve outages regardless of the legal issues. Mr. Lucas stated that the on-site outage meetings continue and NStar and city staff work to determine what is causing an outage and repair the problem.

In addition, an NStar attorney has been in contact with the Law Department concerning whether there is any agreement between the City and NStar regarding whose responsibility it is to repair

faulty wiring located between the manhole and the pole. Mr. Lucas believes that the City and NStar will enter into informal mediation to determine responsibility. The Committee would like additional information from the Law Department regarding the conversation with the NStar attorney. The Committee held the item in order to invite a representative from the City's Law Department to a Committee meeting.

REFERRED TO PROG & SERV AND PUBLIC FACILITES COMMITTEES

#68-10

ALD. FULLER, CROSSLEY, SCHNIPPER, DANBERG, FREEDMAN, JOHNSON, LAPPIN, SWISTON, BAKER, LINSKY, ALBRIGHT & YATES

requesting a Resolution to His Honor the Mayor to conduct a comprehensive survey of the physical condition, maintenance and renovation/replacement needs of municipal buildings, roads, sidewalks, recreational, utility and other infrastructure elements throughout the city, resulting in a database for prioritizing, maintaining and tracking of maintenance, and capital projects. [02/23/10 @ 2:04 PM]

ACTION: APPROVED AS AMENDED 6-0-1 (Gentile abstaining; Danberg not voting)

NOTE: The Programs and Services Committee approved the item unanimously on March 17, 2010. Ald. Fuller and Crossley submitted the attached information on the requested resolution to the Mayor to provide a capital assets inventory and database. It would be a benefit to the City to create an inventory of the City's capital assets. A database that can be continuously updated with improvements to physical assets would provide a tool to prioritize projects and provide a realistic picture of what funding is necessary for the repair of assets. The inventory would include public buildings, parks, recreational facilities, roadway infrastructure, electrical infrastructure, city-owned equipment, and water and sewer assets.

Although the inventory itself is expensive and may need to be phased in, it is an essential tool for the City. The docketors would like a resolution to the Mayor asking that the inventory and database be undertaken. The Committee reviewed the provided information. Ald. Albright questioned whether an expensive inventory and database might not be where funds are most needed. She was concerned that if the funds are spend on the inventory and database, they would not be available for capital projects . Ald. Johnson agreed that many of the City's assets need to be repaired but the inventory provides a blue print for which capital projects to undertake. Ald. Freedman stated that the inventory and database may be expensive it is a necessary tool for the City. Ald. Albright pointed out that existing studies and databases may be useful and if used might save the City some money. She offered a friendly amendment to the resolution to include language for existing materials.

Ald. Gentile asked if there were examples of other communities implementing a capital assets inventory and database. The City of Newton is behind the curve on implementation and many examples can be obtained throughout the Commonwealth. Ald. Gentile has some concerns regarding the cost and would like to have a discussion with the person who will be responsible for capital assets, when they are hired regarding the inventory and database. The Chief Operating Officer Robert Rooney stated that the Executive Department is working on hiring a Capital Asset Manager. Mr. Rooney believes that the Mayor will embrace the concept of a

capital assets inventory and database, as a capital plan is one of his priorities. Ald. Lappin moved approval of the resolution, which carried six in favor and one abstention.

#50-10 ALD. CROSSLEY, HESS-MAHAN & LINSKY requesting the adoption of a policy to reduce energy use baseline inventory for municipal buildings, vehicles, street and traffic lighting by 20%, in order to satisfy the requirements to qualify as a Green Community under Mass General Law Ch. 25A, §10(c). [02/09/10 @ 7:25 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0 (Danberg not voting)**

NOTE: The Committee began an initial discussion of the proposed policy on February 17, 2010. Ald. Crossley updated the Committee on the progress related to the establishment of the energy action plan. The establishment of an energy use baseline inventory for all public buildings, streetlights and city buildings and a program to reduce the baseline by 20% over five years has been completed. The energy action plan was accomplished through the efforts of the Public Building Department's Energy Engineer, David Tannozzini, Carol Bock at the School Department and volunteer Stephanie Gilman who has been invaluable in providing her expertise in data collection and documentation. The energy-use baseline inventory is one of the five State requirements that Newton must meet in order to obtain the State's Green Community Badge. If the City could meet all the requirements by May 14, 2010, it would be eligible for up to \$1 million in grant funds from the State. Ald. Crossley explained that it is her intention that one resolution containing requests for each of the policies be submitted to the Mayor's Office.

Ms. Gilman provided the Committee with a PowerPoint presentation of the State's Energy Insight software. The State provided the software and training to all the municipalities at no cost. The software allows the City to capture energy emissions and overall energy use at individual City buildings. Ms. Gilman has been working on inputting data into the software program to display energy use and emissions data for individual buildings. The presentation included energy information on individual City buildings. The software is a great benchmarking tool for documenting reductions in energy consumption at individual buildings.

Committee members thanked Ms. Gilman for all of her hard work. Ald. Gentile moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#112-10 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) from Wage Reserve for the purpose of supplementing the payroll accounts of the Department of Public Works to fund the projected wages through the end of the fiscal year pursuant to the agreement reached with the Newton Municipal Employees Association in June 2009. [03/30/10 @ 4:09 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0-2 (Crossley and Lennon abstaining; Salvucci not voting)**

NOTE: Deputy Commissioner of Public Works David Turocy explained that the request for \$200,000 to avoid a shortfall in the payroll accounts in the Public Works Department is related to the agreement reached in June of 2009 with the Newton Municipal Employees

Association (NMEA). When the agreement was reached, the department needed \$720,000 to pay retroactive increases to its employees. The previous Mayor provided the Department with \$120,000 from Wage Reserve in August of 2009 to fund a portion of the retroactive payments. The original shortfall totaled \$600,000 but the department has been able to absorb \$400,000.

Committee members were concerned that the department’s Chief of Budget and Finance did not catch the shortfall until now. Mr. Turocy stated that he believes it was the intent of the previous administration to submit a request for the additional funds. Ald. Lennon stated that there needs to be a check and balance system in place. The Chair suggested that the Finance Committee should discuss the financial aspect of the item with the Public Works Department’s Chief of Budget and Finance. Ald. Albright moved approval of the item, which carried with the understanding that the Finance Committee would investigate why the additional money was not provided in the FY’ 10 budget.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#399-09(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an amendment to Bond Authorization Board Order #399-09 for various sewer system improvements as follows:

FROM:	Oakdale Road Sewer Project (37A401E1A).....	\$18,500
	Farina Road Sewer Project (37A401E2A).....	\$18,500
	Irving Street Sewer Project (37A401E3A).....	\$18,500
TO:	Old Farms Road Sewer Project (37A401E4A).....	\$55,500

[03/30/10 @ 4:48 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0 (Salvucci not voting)**

NOTE: Board Order #399-09 that was approved by the Board of Aldermen contained individual appropriations for each project, which necessitates the request for this amendment. The bids for sewer construction projects on Oakdale Road, Farina Road, and Irving Street came in much lower than estimated. The Board Order designated \$125,000 for Oakdale Road, \$125,000 for Farina Road and \$135,000 for Irving Road and the actual bid costs are \$68,000 for Oakdale Road, \$68,000 for Farina Road, and \$68,053 for Irving Road. The sewer design costs for Old Farm Road are higher than expected. The original estimate was \$115,000, as reflected in Board Order #399-09; however, the design cost is actually \$170,500 due to the scale of the project, as it will include drain repairs, a water system, and a sewer system and road reconstruction. The Public Works Department would like to transfer the savings from the sewer construction projects to the sewer design for Old Farm Road, as shown in the above docket item.

Ald. Danberg moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO POST AUDIT AND PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE

#107-10 **ALD. YATES, LAPPIN, FREEDMAN, FISCHMAN AND HESS-MAHAN**
requesting an update on the Newton South High School athletic field drainage
project. [03/15/10 @ 12:09 PM]

POST AUDIT HELD 6-0

ACTION: **HELD 8-0**

NOTE: The Public Facilities Committee and the Post Audit Committee met jointly on the item. City Engineer Lou Taverna informed the Committees that the construction of the Newton South High School athletic fields and track facilities is not completed, and will continue through June 2010.

Nathan Collins of Gale Associates reviewed the remaining items to be completed. The track area around the football field needs final asphalt paving, and the installation of top rubber surface. Additional synthetic turf also needs to be placed on the edge of the field. Mr. Collins anticipates that this work will be completed in May. The entire surface of the softball outfield needs to be rolled and finished with loam and grass turf. However, the field is not drying properly due to the shade trees located in the area. The Civil Engineer from Gale Associates will design additional subsurface drainage features to properly drain the outfield, to be installed in April. The contractor needs to roll and rake the synthetic turf surface and remove excess sand and silt to properly drain the soccer field.

Paul Tyrell of Gale Associates confirmed that the fields previously flooded due to the high clay content and the low and high spot areas in the fields that do not have catch basins. The local Conservation Commission require that the silt sacks, which are used to filter the water as it enters the drains, remain in place during the remainder of construction. Mr. Tyrell said the silt sacks trap silt and sand on the surface, preventing this material from entering the storm drain system. Therefore, the catch basins are not draining surface water properly, and the surface water is clearly visible. The silt sacks cannot be removed without the permission of the Conservation Agent, which will most likely occur upon issuance of a Certificate of Compliance at the completion of the project. Once the silt sacks are removed from the catch basins, the drainage swale will drain properly and will shed surface water from the fields.

Mr. Tyrell provided Committee members with photographs from the March 2010 rainstorm. He said the storm was equal to a 100-year storm. The water collected in the swales as it was designed to but unfortunately, was detained in the swales because of the silt sacks. Natural grass fields take longer to drain during these types of rain events. Mr. Tyrell said the drainage swale is designed to channel storm water from the field and from abutting properties into the catch basins. Once construction is completed, the water will drain to the drainage swales and flow to the catch basins. The back yards of abutters were always wet during rain events prior to construction due to upstream contributory areas, not the athletic fields. The fields and drainage swales are lower than the abutting back yards. Ald. Albright asked how often the silt sacks have to be replaced. Mr. Tyrell answered after each 1 1/2" storm event they should be inspected.

Jay Portnoy, 60 Burdean Road, asked if the fields have been re-graded and if the catch basins and wells have been completed. Mr. Tyrell answered the entire campus has been re-graded and one of the natural turf fields is in use. He said the wells are not complete, pumps are in the

process of being manufactured, and it is the hope to have them up and running by the end of April. Mr. Tyrell said all drainage structures for the project are in place. Mr. Portnoy is concerned with the ponding water in close proximity to the abutters' properties and feels grading should have been completed after the catch basins were operational.

Stephen Farrell, 30 Winston Road, said he has photographs from September 2009 prior to the rainstorms in March proving ground water is on the surface virtually all the time. He feels water is not being drained properly and believes the swale and the berm do not have the appropriate mix of sand and is not absorbing water. He believes that the old dirt with the high clay content was used for the berm. Mr. Farrell said that prior to construction he had water in his yard but never to this extent, as shown in the photographs. Mr. Farrell strongly believes the way the berm was built is the reason. He said he does not believe the water is coming from upstream areas because the water would have to run uphill to the ball fields. He is also raised his concerns about mosquitoes posing a problem this summer, due to the standing water. Mr. Tyrell was concerned with one of the photographs Mr. Farrell provided. He agreed with Mr. Farrell that something was not right and stated that he would look at the situation to determine how to correct the issue. Ald. Schnipper asked that a soil test be completed. Mr. Collins and Mr. Tyrell assured the Committees that a test would be done on the soil content. Ald. Lappin asked if the soil is also tested after it is put in place and asked when the test can be completed. Mr. Tyrell said samples could be taken the week of April 15 to perform a soil test.

Ald. Swiston asked if the cross-country team, who use the perimeter of the fields to run, had any impact on the drainage around the berm because of the effect of their feet compacting the soil. Mr. Tyrell said that it is not a concern and the perimeter is only used during the cross-country season.

Ald. Albright asked Mr. Farrell when he informed the City of the issues with the drainage. Mr. Farrell spoke with the Athletic Director at Newton South regarding his drainage concerns in the fall and was told that the contractor would address his concerns. Mr. Taverna stated that he was unaware of the situation until after the rainstorms in March. Ald. Gentile asked what recourse the City has if other problems arise with the drainage until the project is completed. Mr. Tyrell said there is a one-year warranty on the fields from completion of the project. Ald. Gentile stated it is extremely important that the City be diligent and inspect the fields on a regular basis for the next year. The Newton South Athletic Director should be made aware that he would need to bring any issues to the attention to the contractor and the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department.

Ald. Albright and Ald. Hess-Mahan suggested neighbors should have a contact name if problems arise. Mr. Taverna suggested residents call the Public Works Department's Customer Service at City Hall. Ald. Albright asked if would be appropriate for the Executive Department to establish a liaison committee so that neighbors could communicate. The Aldermen discussed the possibility of providing a sign with the City contact information at various locations throughout the site. Ald. Swiston suggested that the City provide the information to abutters through a mailing list.

Both Committees held the item to receive information on the requested test and the resolution of the issues raised by Mr. Farrell.

#385-07 ALD. SCHNIPPER AND GENTILE updating the Public Facilities Committee on the progress of the Newton North High School Project. [11/21/07 @ 10:23 AM]

ACTION: **HELD 6-0 (Lappin and Salvucci not voting)**

NOTE: Ald. Gentile informed the Committee that there were three things he wanted to share with the Committee. First, the Newton TAB requested and was granted permission to attend the upcoming Friday construction meeting. Secondly, he wanted the Committee to be aware that the issue with the siting of the tennis court remains unresolved. However, it has been determined that the original distance stated by the property owners was incorrect. The tennis courts are only 1'9" from the original plan. Ald. Gentile and Schnipper are advocating that the courts be moved back the 1'9", as the only impact to the move would be that doubles could not be played on one court. Thirdly, there has been a request from the abutters regarding opening up the view at Hull Street. The removal of landscaping could trigger a significant change to the site plan. Ald. Schnipper and Gentile will keep the Committee informed regarding the direction the possible change is taking.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman

Capital Assets Inventory and Database
Prepared for the Board of Aldermen Public Facilities Committee
by Ruthanne Fuller and Deb Crossley
April 7, 2010

REFERRED TO PROG & SERV AND PUBLIC FACILITES COMMITTEES

#68-10 ALD. FULLER, CROSSLEY, SCHNIFFER, DANBERG, FREEDMAN, JOHNSON, LAPPIN, SWISTON, BAKER, LINSKY, ALBRIGHT & YATES requesting a Resolution to His Honor the Mayor to conduct a comprehensive survey of the physical condition, maintenance and renovation/replacement needs of municipal buildings, roads, sidewalks, recreational, utility and other infrastructure elements throughout the city, resulting in a database for prioritizing, maintaining and tracking of maintenance, and capital projects. [02/23/10 @ 2:04 PM]

ACTION: PROG & SERV APPROVED 8-0 on March 17, 2010

The City lacks an up-to-date inventory of municipal assets, greatly inhibiting a comprehensive preventive maintenance regime and proactive renovation and replacement of capital assets. An inventory will allow the City to define precisely the dimensions of capital funding needed for maintenance and renovation/replacement. It will also make it possible for the City to prioritize thoughtfully the City's capital projects.

A survey of the physical condition, maintenance and renovation/replacement needs of the City's assets should be comprehensive, including:

Buildings: The City stewards approximately 2.6 million square feet in 76 buildings. These include the 22 educational buildings (21 schools plus the Education Center and numerous outbuildings or 'annexes'), six fire stations and alarm headquarters, the police headquarters, garage and annex, the main and branch libraries, numerous Public Works, Parks & Recreation and Department of Public Buildings buildings for staff, service (garages and sheds) and utility buildings, the Senior Center, and City Hall, among others.

Equipment: The City owns an extensive assortment of equipment to provide public services. This includes fire engines, snow plows, a fleet of vehicles and motorcycles, dump trucks, audio/video equipment, backhoes, street sweepers, large construction trucks, small pickup trucks, cargo and personnel vans, calcium chloride storage tanks, information technology equipment (including computers and network servers), police and fire communications equipment, telephones, bullet proof vests, and voting machines.

Roads and Associated Assets: The City has approximately 310 miles of streets and associated sidewalks and curbing. (Approximately two-thirds of Newton's streets have concrete sidewalks and granite curbing.)

Parks and Recreation Capital Assets: Newton maintains over seventy parks and playgrounds. These include 22 basketball courts, 71 tennis courts, athletic fields, swimming facilities, play structures, bleachers and picnic tables. They stretch over more than 1100 acres.¹ While the land itself should not depreciate, it does require maintenance. Mowing, seeding, fencing, weed control, trash and snow removal, tree conservation, and related activities are needed to keep the land usable. Equipment used for such purposes must also be maintained, renovated and replaced. Newton also takes great pride in its thousands of public shade trees on city owned right of ways, requiring regular inspection and maintenance.

Electrical Infrastructure: The City has 8,440 streetlight poles and fixtures, which were relamped in 2008, as well as numerous traffic signals. Although NSTAR owns the lines to the grid, the city is responsible to maintain them from the connection.

Water and Sewer Assets: The City has a sizable investment in water and sewer assets. While water and sewer capital expenditures are not funded by tax revenues but by a combination of fee revenues and MWRA grants, these assets must be maintained, renovated and replaced. These include 306 miles of water supply and 264 miles of sewer mains, 280 miles of storm drains, 850 miles of pipeline, a storage reservoir and three storage tanks, pumping stations, 2,467 fire hydrants, 13,000 catch basins, and metered water and sewer connections.

This inventory will lead to a full understanding of the complete status of Newton's capital assets—the true value of these assets, the condition of these assets, their useful life, and their required maintenance and renewal needs. This, in turn, will help insure that appropriate maintenance, renovation and replacement costs are incorporated in the City's operating and capital budgets. While the cost of the inventory project may require a multi-year approach, it is an essential tool for successful operations management.

In June 2007, the School Department completed an assessment of the physical condition of the elementary and middle schools, the Carr School and the Education Center. The last comprehensive survey of the City's buildings was done in 1986. The Department of Public Works (DPW) has recently completed a road inventory. DPW has also commissioned a study called "Computerized Maintenance Management System" into which information can be entered.

The inventory should result in a database of information rather than just a written report. This will allow City staff to update the information as maintenance and capital projects are undertaken. In addition, the database facilitates prioritizing and monitoring.

¹ There is also a community golf course, operated by a private contractor but requiring some support from the City.