

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2009

Present: Ald. Schnipper (Chairman), Lennon, Albright, Salvucci, Gentile, Yates and Mansfield

Absent: Ald. Lappin

Also present: Ald. Danberg, Linsky and Parker

City staff present: Joshua Morse (HVAC Technician; Public Buildings Department), Arthur Cabral (Project and Budget Specialist; Public Buildings), Thomas Daley (Commissioner of Public Works), Clint Schuckel (Traffic Engineer), David Koses (Transportation Planner) and Shawna Sullivan (Committee Clerk)

#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 5-0**

**NOTE:**      A discussion regarding the plans for the proposed bathrooms for the athletic fields was scheduled for discussion. Unfortunately, the plans are not ready for discussion, as the price for the proposed bathrooms is not set. At this point, the price for the proposed 16 bathrooms is significantly higher than expected and the project team is working on bringing the price down. If the price remains too high, the construction team will look at other viable options. The City received a waiver from the Plumbing Board, who agreed that with access to the proposed bathrooms, it is not necessary to install 50 bathrooms within the multi-purpose stadium.

Ald. Schnipper and Gentile provided an update on the construction progress. The project is on schedule and within budget. The new building is expected to be turned over to the City in July 2010 for opening in September 2010. There is no expectation that there will be a need to use any of the Board of Aldermen's contingency. It is also unlikely that it will be necessary to use all of the other contingency funds. Ald. Albright inquired why the theater portion of the building seemed to be further behind than the academic wing. It was explained that the most intricate work is within the academic wing. The construction manager is working to have the building envelope tight before the installation of interior material, such as wallboard. The gym and theater are large spaces with less intricate structures. Almost all of the trades are on time or ahead of schedule. The one exception is the brickwork, which is slightly behind due to the work of the other trades but it is expected that they will catch up shortly. There had been some concern regarding the installation of windows; however, several windows have been installed without any issues.

Walks through for the Aldermen and School Committee are being tentatively scheduled for June. The Aldermen and School Committee will receive invitations when the dates have been selected. Ald. Mansfield requested that it be scheduled either earlier or later in the day to have less impact on work schedules. The walks through will likely take place in the late afternoon. Ald. Gentile pointed out that if people cannot make the walk through, they can visit the site at any time. With that, the Committee voted unanimously on a motion to hold the item.

**REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#36-08(2) **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting to amend docket item #36-08 by appropriating an additional one hundred nine-thousand six hundred twenty-seven dollars (\$109,627) from Budget Reserve for the fuel tank replacements at the Elliot Street DPW yard. [04/28/09 @ 6:02 PM]

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 5-0-2 (Gentile and Lennon abstaining)**

**NOTE:** The request is for an amendment to a previously approved docket item for funds to replace fuel tanks at the Elliot Street Public Works Yard. The Public Buildings Department requires an additional \$109,627 for additional grading, asphalt and other unanticipated increases in costs to the project. Arthur Cabral of the Public Buildings Department stated that the majority of the funds are for asphalt material. The project originally included asphalt paving only in close proximity to the new fuel tanks. It was later determined that the better choice would be to pave a much larger area to create a more level surface in the portion of the yard located near the fuel tanks. The Department of Public Works will be performing all of the paving included in the project.

Mr. Cabral provided the Committee with a breakdown of the cost of the entire project including the additional costs; however, the breakdown did not include the specific uses of the additional funds. Mr. Cabral explained that the original paving estimate was too low, and the Department of Public Works estimates the need for approximately 1,000 tons of asphalt to do the necessary paving. The supplemental cost was compounded by the additional paving necessary due to the grade issues with the new fuel tanks. It is estimated that 20% of the yard will be repaved to correct the grading issues.

Ald. Salvucci asked if there would be a canopy cover over the tanks. Arthur Cabral responded that there is no canopy cover. Ald. Salvucci thought that a canopy cover was included as part of the original project. Mr. Cabral explained that it was discussed but it was determined that the canopy would be too expensive. Committee members inquired when the tanks would be operational. The tanks should be operational in the next two to three weeks. Ald. Gentile and Lennon suggested that Mr. Cabral provide a more detailed breakdown of the additional funds before the Finance Committee discusses the item. Mr. Cabral agreed to provide the information. Ald. Yates moved approval of the item, which carried by a vote of five in favor, none opposed and two abstentions.

**REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#131-09 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting authorization to appropriate and expend from Budget Reserve the sum of eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000) for the purpose of upgrading the automatic temperature control system at the library. [04/28/2009 @ 6:04 PM]

*Note: A letter from His Honor the Mayor was received on 5/12/09 requesting that the funding source be changed from budget reserve to capital stabilization.*

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 7-0**

**NOTE:** Josh Morse explained that the Library Director requested that Mr. Morse look at the electrical consumption and cost of electricity at the library. Mr. Morse noticed that the consumption of electricity had steadily increased over the years by a significant amount,

approximately 35 to 40%. In looking further into it, Mr. Morse determined that the cause was the failure of the variable frequency drives for the HVAC equipment. The units adjust the speed or frequency of the large motors, which drive the air handlers that cool and heat the building. When they are not working correctly, they have to be placed in bypass, which means that they are operating at 100 percent. When they are operating correctly, they operate as low as 10 to 15%, especially when the building temperature is up to where it needs to be. At 100%, it is very inefficient. When the variable speed drives are started, they were designed to slowly increase to 100%, which reduces your peaks and your peak demands. As it stands now, when you turn the drives on, it goes right to 100% and typically, they all come on at the same time making the peak demand higher. The City is seeing a huge peak in demand, which not only increases how much the city is consuming but how much the bills are, as they are calculated based on peak consumption hours.

Mr. Morse recommends that the city replace the variable speed drives and replace the motors, as well. The motors were designed to operate slowly and to ramp up as needed; however, as they have been operating inefficiently at 100%, the motors have been overtaxed. The City's engineers evaluated the motors and they agree that it would be a good idea to replace the motors. If the city were to replace only the variable frequency drives, it would have cost approximately \$30,000 and they would pay for themselves in about a month and a half. With the motors, payback is going to be a little longer. Mr. Morse is anticipating payback in a year to a year and a half. The estimated annual savings in electricity is approximately \$25,000 to \$30,000. There will be some additional significant savings in heating and cooling as well.

Ald. Gentile asked how many variable speed drives there are within the library. Mr. Morse responded that he thought there were eight drives and eight motors. Ald. Gentile then asked if Trane® would be performing the work, as they maintain the HVAC equipment at the library. Mr. Morse stated that the project will go out to bid, as it is an even swap of equipment and should not create any issues with the HVAC equipment. Ald. Mansfield asked if there would be any training provided on the operation of the HVAC system. Mr. Morse responded that there would be no change to the control sequencing or the sequence of operation; therefore there will be no training required. Mr. Morse also stated that Larry Walsh the Head Custodian at the library has been involved in the process and Mr. Morse is sure that he will monitor the project. If Mr. Walsh were to request additional training, Mr. Morse would provide the training.

Ald. Gentile asked for the schedule of the project, as he believes that the greatest savings would be realized during the summer. The item still needs to be discussed by the Finance Committee and then voted by the full Board before it could go out to bid. Ald. Schnipper spoke with the Chair of Finance and there is no regular meeting of Finance scheduled until June 8, 2009. Ald. Gentile asked Mr. Morse if there is a possibility that the work will not be completed during the summer. Mr. Morse felt that due to the Finance Committee's schedule, there is a potential that the work will not happen during the summer. Mr. Morse added that the variable frequency drives are failing on a regular basis and there is a real possibility that the library could lose air conditioning this summer. Ald. Schnipper thought that there might be a possibility that the Finance Committee could meet before the Full Board meeting on June 1, 2009. Ald. Gentile suggested that Mr. Morse telephone Ald. Coletti and explain the necessity of moving forward with the project. Ald. Albright moved approval of the item including the change in funding source from budget reserve to capital stabilization and an emergency preamble to allow the project to move forward as quickly as possible. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

#127-09      IRA KRONITZ requesting that the Board of Alderman rescind Board Order #289-03(4) dated November 20, 2006, relating to roadway modification plans for curb-line geometry changes to calm traffic at the intersection of Daniel and Jackson Streets. [04-28-09 @ 3:48 PM]

**ACTION:**      **HELD 7-0**

**NOTE:**      The Board of Aldermen approved a bump out at the intersection of Jackson and Daniel Streets on November 20, 2006. The Commissioner of Public Works, Tom Daley, provided the Committee with a timeline of various proposals, meetings, and other activities at this location. An item was filed requesting a stop sign at Jackson and Daniel Streets to reduce speed in 2001. The request was denied by the Traffic Council and a new request (#289-03) was made for the installation of a three-way stop sign in May 2004. The Traffic Council voted no action necessary on that request but created a new item (#289-03[2]) requesting that the traffic mitigation funds from a special permit project be used to hire a consultant to study and recommend a redesign of the intersection.

In 2005, a neighborhood meeting was held by the Planning Department and the traffic consultant presented three recommendations for the redesign of the intersection. The three recommendations were a roundabout, a bump out to create a "T" intersection or an all way stop. The Public Safety and Transportation Committee requested that a trial of the roundabout be performed to make sure it would achieve the desired speed reduction. When the trial was completed, it was determined that the roadway was not large enough to support a roundabout. The Public Safety Committee then requested that a trial of the bump out be performed in 2006. The Commissioner of Public Works deemed the trial a success and docketed an item before the Public Facilities Committee requesting approval of the bump out at Daniel and Jackson Streets in November 2006. The Public Facilities Committee and Board of Aldermen approved the bump out to be funded through traffic mitigation funds.

The Department of Public Works marked out the proposed curb line in the spring of 2007 and it triggered several comments and complaints from the neighbors. The Department of Public works met with interested neighbors in June of 2007. In the summer of 2007, the Department of Public Works installed a temporary smaller bump out than what was originally proposed. The trial continued until October 2008 and analysis of the traffic patterns and speed in the area were done. The Public Works Department then remarked the curb line based on the original proposed bump out and received several phone calls regarding the curb line. The city's Traffic Engineer collected further data on the less severe bump out in early October 2008. The temporary curb line was removed and the Traffic Engineer collected speed and traffic pattern data with nothing in place in Mid October 2008. In early November 2008, a trial bump out of the original approved plan was put in place and data was collected. The temporary bump out is still in place.

A petition signed by several of the neighbors of the Jackson and Daniel Streets intersection requesting the Board rescind the Board Order approving the bump out was submitted by Ira Kronitz to the Board of Aldermen on April 28, 2009. On May 11, 2009, John Maypole another resident of the Jackson and Daniel Streets intersection area submitted a request to the Board of Aldermen for a resolution to the Commissioner of Public Works instructing the Commissioner to build the bump out approved by the Board in November 2006. The plan of the approved bump out is attached.

Commissioner Daley stated that the bump out creates a three to four mile speed reduction at the intersection. When the data from the trial was examined, no real diversion of traffic onto neighboring streets was seen. Ald. Albright thought that the turn around the bump out looked tight. Commissioner Daley responded that the traffic lanes are the full and proper width and a school bus is able to maneuver through the intersection without creating any conflict with oncoming traffic. The bump out has been in place for almost two years and there have been no accidents. If the bump out becomes a permanent structure, the Commissioner would be willing to reduce the size of the bump out by two feet, as a compromise solution. Ald. Gentile has received conflicting reports regarding whether or not the resident residing at the house where the driveway intersects the bump out is in favor of the project. Commissioner Daley stated that the Public Works Department has met with the property owner to see if design modifications, per his comments, were feasible. Without the bump out, the resident's automobile is too long for the driveway and encroaches on the sidewalk. The addition of the bump out gives the resident additional driveway space that provides ample space for the automobile.

Mr. Kronitz spoke in favor of the request to rescind the bump out approval. He stated that the majority of the neighbors object to the bump out and feel it creates an unsafe intersection. Several e-mails from the community stating their dissatisfaction were submitted to the Committee and were attached to the agenda. Mr. Kronitz does not believe that the traffic data supports the theory that the bump out slows traffic and does not divert traffic to Walter Street. He also stated that many of the neighbors have felt that there has been misleading information and a lack of communication by the City regarding the entire project.

Sean Roche spoke on behalf of the residents in favor of the construction of the bump out. He gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee, which included video of cars driving through the intersection of Jackson and Daniel Streets with the bump out in place. It is his contention that the bump out creates a safer intersection and slows traffic in the area. He pointed out that the Bowen Elementary School is located just up the street from the intersection and the slower traffic makes the area safer for children.

Several options were discussed by the Committee such as the possibility of a raised crosswalk or the possibility of creating a "T" intersection on the opposite side of the roadway and adding two stop signs. Both Commissioner Daley and the Traffic Engineer, Clint Schuckel, felt that the best solution for traffic calming is the bump out. Ald. Schnipper pointed out that the raised crosswalk is a very expensive option and there probably were not enough funds to pay for it. Several Committee members asked if it were possible to do a trial of the "T" intersection and three-way stop. Mr. Schuckel explained that the Traffic Council had already voted no action necessary on the three-way stop because they did not believe that it solved the speeding problem. Ald. Schnipper suggested sending a resolution to the Traffic Council that asked that the Council approve a trial of the stop signs with the "T" intersection. Mr. Koses, Chair of the Traffic Council was present and Ald. Schnipper asked when the Traffic Council could discuss a trial. Mr. Koses responded that typically the Council discusses items in chronological order; therefore, the item would not be discussed until October. The Chair asked Mr. Koses if it would be possible to take the trial up at the Council's next meeting. Mr. Koses stated that if the Committee directed him to discuss the item, he would discuss it at the June 25, 2009 Traffic Council meeting. On a motion to approve a resolution requesting that the Traffic Council implement a trial as soon as possible, the Committee failed to approve the resolution. Ald. Gentile directed the Commissioner of Public Works to find a way to implement the trial, such as

contacting the Chief of Police, who has the authority to erect stops signs as an emergency measure. The Commissioner responded that he would consult with the Law Department to determine if he has the authority to implement a trial and would speak to the Chief of Police regarding the stop signs.

Commissioner Daley requested that the Committee provide him with direction on whether to install the bump out permanently. The Committee felt that they could not make any recommendation until the proposed trial of the stop signs had been completed. They directed Commissioner Daley not to proceed with the bump out. The Committee held the item and the item below until the proposed trial was completed.

#289-03(6) JOHN S. MAYPOLE proposing a Resolution to the Commissioner of Public Works to install curb-line geometry at the intersection of Daniel and Jackson Streets as originally designed by the Traffic Engineer and approved by the Board of Aldermen on November 20, 2006.

**ACTION:** **HELD 7-0**

**NOTE:** See the note on the above item.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman

City of Newton



David B. Cohen  
Mayor

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton Centre, MA 02459-1449

## Daniel / Jackson Intersection Timeline

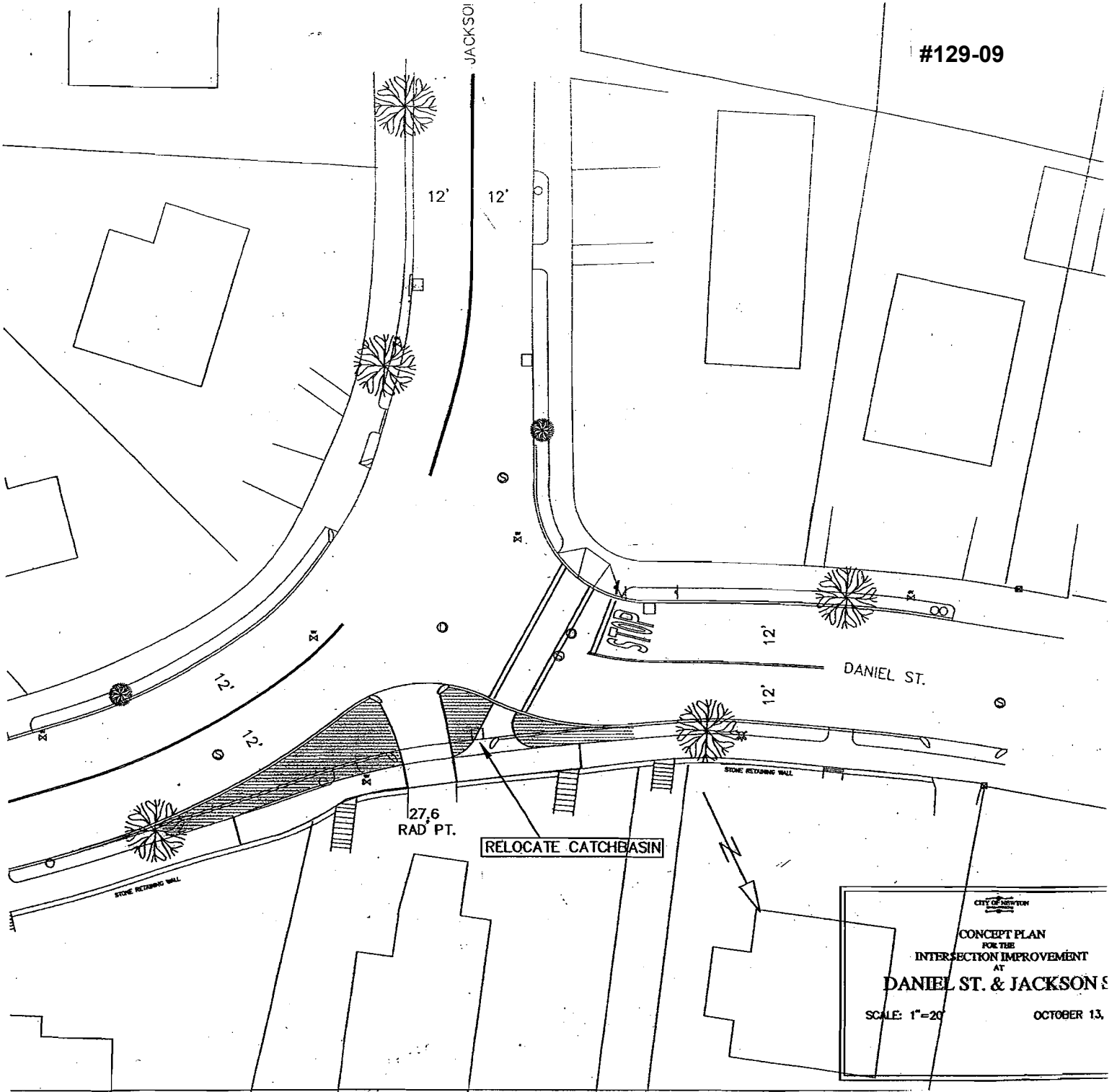
- May of 2001 - Traffic Council heard from residents of Daniel St. regarding the installation of a stop sign at Jackson and Daniel Streets. The request was denied by Traffic Council.
- May of 2004 - Traffic Council heard from residents of Daniel St. regarding the installation of three way stop signs at Jackson and Daniel Streets. The request was held by Traffic Council.
- November of 2004 - Traffic Council voted to take no action on the three way stop request but did vote to recommend intersection reconfiguration plans to be prepared.
- Early 2005 - City hired Traffic Solutions, LLC to study and make recommendations for the intersection.
- 6/2/05 - Public meeting was held at City Hall by the Planning Dept. (with Traffic Solutions, LLC) to solicit public input.
- 6/28/05 - Another public meeting was held by the Planning Dept. (with Traffic Solutions, LLC) and potential recommendations were presented and discussed with the public.
- 9/16/05 - The final report and recommendations from Traffic Solutions was issued. The report recommended three options:
- Roundabout
  - “T” intersection
  - all way stop

- 10/19/05 - Public Safety / Transportation Committee held a public meeting where the final report and recommendations were discussed with public input. The Committee voted to hold the item until a sandbag trial was performed for the roundabout.
- November and December of 2005 - sandbag trial was performed
- 5/3/06 - Public Safety / Transportation Committee held a public meeting to discuss the results of the trial. It was presented that after further review there was insufficient right-of-way area to construct the roundabout. Also in general it was deemed that the trial was not very successful. As a result the Committee held the item in order to do a sandbag trial of the "T" intersection option.
- 11/8/06 - Public Facilities Committee held a public meeting and approved the "T" intersection project.
- 11/13/06 - Finance Committee held a public meeting and approved the funding for "T" intersection project.
- 11/20/06 - Board of Alderman approved the "T" intersection project including the funding.
- Spring of 2007 - Engineering Division marked out the proposed curb line which triggered many phone calls, etc. including a meeting on 6/7/07 with interested parties, including people from Walter Street who were concerned that the improvements would divert traffic to their street.
- Summer of 2007 - DPW installed a berm as a trial in a location that was less "severe" than the plan previously approved by the Alderman. Traffic analysis was done on Walter St. before and after the berm installation in the Fall of 2007. The berm trial continued until October of 2008.
- Summer of 2008 - DPW Engineering Division remarked out the curb line based upon the Alderman approved plan. Immediately thereafter, similar to last year many phone calls were triggered.
- Early 10/08 - DPW counted traffic for five days on less "severe" berm trial. Data collected looked at speed reduction and traffic diversion.



- Mid - 10/08 - DPW removed all berms (the "do nothing" option) and counted traffic for five days. Data collected looked at speed reduction and traffic diversion. **#127-09**
- Early 11/08 - DPW installed a trial berm on the Alderman approved plan location and counted traffic for five days. Data collected looked at speed reduction and traffic diversion. This berm remains in the field to this day.
- 4/28/09 - Petition received by Board from Mr. Ira Kronitz to rescind 11/20/06 Aldermanic approval.
- 5/11/09 - Petition received by Board from John Maypole instructing the Commissioner of Public Works to build the Alderman 11/20/06 approved plan.

#129-09



CITY OF NEWTON  
 CONCEPT PLAN  
 FOR THE  
 INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT  
 AT  
**DANIEL ST. & JACKSON ST.**  
 SCALE: 1"=20'      OCTOBER 13, 2008

2008 OCT 31 1 PM 5: 34  
 CITY CLERK  
 NEWTON, MA 02159

Encl A