

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2008

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

Absent: Ald. Lappin

Also present: Ald. Sangiolo

City staff: Josh Morse (HVAC Specialist; Public Buildings Department) and Nick Parnell (Commissioner of Public Buildings)

#105-08 KEYSPAN ENERGY DELIVERY petitioning for a grant of location to install and maintain a new district regulator station in the island on BEACON STREET at Hammond Street from the existing 12” gas main in Hammond Street northerly to the existing 12” gas main in Beacon Street to replace the existing district regulator station. [2-25-08 @10:11 AM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0 (Lennon and Salvucci not voting)**

NOTE: Mr. Harold Cooper, Keyspan Permit Representative, was present for the discussion of this petition. Keyspan is petitioning for a grant of location to install a new district regulator in the traffic island at Hammond and Beacon Streets to improve gas pressure in the area. There is currently an antiquated regulator located under the island. There will be no disturbance to the roadway, as all work will occur within the traffic island. The regulator is located underground with an access panel located on the top of the island. The Department of Public Works has no issues with the issuance of a grant of location for this project.

The public hearing was opened and Marcel and Sarah Sander spoke on the petition. They stated that they have lived in the area for approximately seven years and there seems to be constant odor of gas. Every six months or so someone reports a gas leak and Keyspan attempts to fix it; however, the odor remains. They wondered whether the new regulator would fix the gas leak. Mr. Cooper responded that it should help rectify the situation. Keyspan is currently working in the area trying to pinpoint the leak. Mr. Cooper will provide the Committee with an update on the gas leak and the repair efforts (attached).

Ald. Mansfield stated that he has the same type of gas smell in his neighborhood and asked if a new regulator would solve the problem. Mr. Cooper explained that it is the first step in correcting the problem. The regulator controls pressure in the gas lines making it easier to locate leaks. The leak is probably in the line and the line may need to be repaired or replaced. Ald. Mansfield also asked if there would be any type of traffic mitigation. City Engineer Lou Taverna explained that there is a requirement for a police detail while Keyspan is working. Ald. Gentile asked how long the project would take. Mr. Cooper estimated that it would take three to four weeks depending on the weather. Ald. Mansfield inquired about the hours that the work

would be performed. Mr. Taverna explained that the hours of work are regulated by the street opening permit.

Ald. Mansfield moved approval of the petition, which carried unanimously.

#81-08 EUGENE WONG, 63 Bencliffe Circle, Auburndale, petitioning for laying out, grading and acceptance of BENCLIFFE CIRCLE as a public way from Chaske Avenue to end (a distance of 726.7') to be the width of 45'. [11-01-07 @ 1:58 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0 (Lennon not voting)**

NOTE: The City Engineer, Lou Taverna, joined the Committee for the discussion of the petition. Bencliffe Circle is a private way that was created through a subdivision. There are fourteen homes located on Bencliffe Circle. The current roadway and the sidewalks are deteriorated beyond repair. The residents of Bencliffe Circle petitioned the City a number of years ago about having the street accepted as a public way; however, the City did not have the funds to dedicate to reconstructing the road. The residents have again approached the City to have the street accepted as a public way through the recently established ordinance allowing the City crews to reconstruct the road and residents to pay 100% of the cost of reconstruction through the betterment process. The estimated cost of the reconstruction is \$160,000, which includes a 20% contingency. The Public Works workforce will perform most of the work; however, they will contract out the sub base and top surface of asphalt for the roadway. The work is scheduled to begin in either late summer or early fall and completed by mid to late fall. The residents will have access to their homes and driveways every evening. Should there be times when access will be limited during the day the residents will be notified well in advance. The sidewalks will be asphalt with granite curbing. There is a tree encroaching on the planned sidewalk along the side of the property at 25 Chaske Avenue that may need to be removed. The Public Works Department will make every effort to save the tree and will consult with Marc Welch, the Tree Warden, before the plans are completed.

The public hearing was opened and Scott Lewis, 12 Bencliffe Circle spoke on the petition. He is anxious for the project to begin. He thought the plan was to install concrete sidewalks instead of asphalt because concrete was much more durable. Mr. Lewis also stated that it would be beneficial to have more cold patch put in the potholes until the reconstruction takes place.

Mr. Taverna was under the impression that the majority of residents wanted asphalt sidewalks due to the increased cost if concrete sidewalks were installed. Mr. Taverna indicated that the Public Works Department is neutral on either choice. It was suggested that the residents be surveyed regarding the option of concrete or asphalt sidewalks (attached) and that whichever option the majority of the residents preferred be installed. Claire Gerstein, 57 Bencliffe Circle, would like concrete sidewalks. Mr. Taverna explained that the sidewalks must be uniform on the street. Dina Golden, 45 Bencliffe Circle, pointed out that the area used to be an oak grove and urged the City to save the tree. She also supported the suggestion to survey residents regarding the sidewalks. John Pine, 25 Chaske Avenue, believes the tree is mostly on his property and it has sentimental value to him and his family. Mr. Pine would like the City to show him where the

sidewalks will be located on his property before the work is begun. He does not want to create a delay but he would like to know how much of his yard he would lose due to the reconstruction. Mr. Taverna responded that he would send a city surveyor out to meet with Mr. Pine as soon as possible.

Ald. Sangiolo has been working with the residents for a number of years. She is pleased that the street will finally be reconstructed. Ald. Gentile pointed out that there might be further changes to the proposed lay out of the street when the surveyors look at the street. Ald. Gentile would suggest that the item be approved, however he would hope that in the interim between the Committee meeting and the Board meeting the question of concrete or asphalt sidewalks could be determined. In addition, he urged that the City Engineer meet with the Pine's as soon as possible. Ald. Gentile also told the Pine's to contact him if they had any objections after the meeting. Mr. Pine also suggested that the City install a stop sign at the corner of the road as he has witnessed many near accidents. Ald. Gentile moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

Re-appointment by the Board President

#48-08 ALD. BAKER recommending Lawrence Bauer, 42 Eliot Memorial Road, Newton, be re-appointed as an Aldermanic appointee to the DESIGNER SELECTION COMMITTEE, term of office to expire 12/31/09. [01-17-08 @ 3:48 PM]

ACTION: **HELD 6-0 (Lennon not voting)**

NOTE: Mr. Bauer was unexpectedly unable to join the Committee for discussion of his reappointment, therefore the item was held for discussion later.

Re-appointment by Board President

#44-08 PRESIDENT BAKER recommending Peter Barrer, 24 Hazelton Road, Newton Centre, be re-appointed as an Aldermanic appointee to the DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE, term of office to expire 12/31/09. [01-17-08 @ 3:48 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Mr. Barrer joined the Committee for discussion of his reappointment. Mr. Barrer is an engineer with a strong background in energy efficiency analysis and energy conservation. He has also designed HVAC, plumbing and electrical systems for new and renovated buildings. He began serving on the Design Review Committee in 2002. Ald. Albright inquired whether Mr. Barrer had any opinion on how to improve the Design Review process. Mr. Barrer felt that the Committee could have moved faster at the beginning of the process. It is currently a more efficient process. Ald. Yates asked if Mr. Barrer would comment on the energy efficiency on the proposed Newton North High School. Mr. Barrer is very happy with the energy efficiency aspects of the building. It is being designed with efficient mechanicals and lighting. The building is as energy efficient as it can be in terms of cost.

The only concern of Mr. Barrer has is that the design team has not responded to all of his recommendations that were made during review of the plan documents, such as the use of daylight dimmers. Commissioner Parnell believes that the daylight dimmers are part of the

working documents. Ald. Mansfield inquired how recommendations from the Design Review Committee are relayed to the design team. The design team and the Commissioner of Public Buildings are present at the committee meetings. Ald. Gentile asked if Mr. Barrer was okay with the value engineering list. Mr. Barrer stated that the list seemed reasonable, if there needed to be reductions. Ald. Albright asked if Mr. Barrer was comfortable with the loss of the roof screens. Mr. Barrer stated the building is better with the screens. He thinks that the rooftop mechanicals will be visible from a number of angles but he cannot determine how big an issue it creates. Commissioner Parnell stated that he has seen computer created renderings of the building without roof screens and the impact of the loss is minimal. The Commissioner will ask Mr. Dore to provide the renderings to the city. Ald. Gentile had hoped to discuss the Mayor's request for bond authorization forthwith as he would have offered a resolution to put the roof screens back on the academic wing. He feels that it is appropriate to include the roof screens in the project for the neighborhood's sake.

Ald. Gentile also asked Mr. Barrer to look at the Additional Service Requests (ASR) submitted by the design team and give his opinion on whether the city is being treated fairly. Ald. Gentile feels that it would be a benefit to the city if the Design Review Committee reviewed change orders for building projects. Mr. Barrer agreed to look at the ASRs, although they are outside the scope of the Design Review Committee's charge. Commissioner Parnell will provide Mr. Barrer with the ASRs. Ald. Gentile is a little concerned about some of the Design Review Committee members' attendance at the meetings. He will be asking every reappointment if they are willing to put in the time that is necessary. Ald. Salvucci stated that Mr. Barrer is very dedicated and is always at the Design Review Committee meetings. Ald. Gentile moved approval of the reappointment, which carried unanimously. Ald. Schnipper thanked Mr. Barrer for his service to the City.

#178-06 ALD. SCHNIPPER, LINSKY AND ALBRIGHT requesting a report on the commissioning of Newton South High School.

ACTION: **HELD 7-0**

NOTE: Josh Morse, HVAC Engineer, and Commissioner Parnell were present for the discussion of this item. Mr. Morse is the new HVAC Engineer and works within the Public Buildings Department. The Committee was very pleased that someone had been hired and was very impressed with Mr. Morse's qualifications. Mr. Morse joined the Navy in order to pay for school. The Navy sent him to several schools and trained him in nuclear engineering and HVAC systems. After Mr. Morse left the Navy, he worked at the Town of Concord in the same position before coming to Newton.

The first task assigned to Mr. Morse was to address the HVAC issues at Newton South High School. Mr. Morse has addressed or identified all of the issues within the commissioning report. Ald. Salvucci asked Mr. Morse if during his review of the HVAC system he found design or mechanical flaws. Mr. Morse responded that he found none and most of the issues were technical. Ald. Salvucci then asked if he is satisfied that the system is working correctly. Mr. Morse indicated that the staff at Newton South is now trained on the system. There were over 700 alarms on the HVAC system on the first day and now there are none. The custodians are expected to call regarding any issues and do the schedules for the heat and air conditioning

for specific rooms and areas of the building. Mr. Morse believes that the problems were created because the system had been overridden excessively. The system is designed to operate automatically. Work orders regarding the HVAC system have dropped by almost 100% and the staff and faculty are pleased.

Mr. Morse is also working on the current Newton North High School. The biggest problems in terms of HVAC with Newton North are the multiple systems and controls. The building cannot maintain the proper temperature, as none of the systems are designed to work together. He dedicates most of his time on improving energy efficiency with low-cost solutions.

Commissioner Parnell will provide the Committee with the executive summary of the commissioning report. Ald. Yates moved hold on the item until the executive summary is received, which carried unanimously.

#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 7-0**

NOTE: Ald. Gentile stated that the majority of time spent at the last two design team meetings has focused on getting a cap, when to bring the cap to the Board and when to docket the request for the bond authorization. Dimeo Construction has been a strong presence at both meetings. A lot of time has been spent getting the entire design team to agree to a cap in order for the Mayor to present to the Board. Ald. Schnipper has asked what is happening in the industry and on many big jobs; favorable bids are coming in due to the economy. The Mayor has stated that he will cut the project rather than go over the cap. The project could come in lower than the price cap. It is clear that the Board of Aldermen is saying that there has to be a final number. Dimeo has said that they can complete the project for \$197.5 million. The Mayor has told the design team that they need to be able to explain how the \$197.5 million had been reached. Both Ald. Gentile and Ald. Schnipper felt that it was important for the Board to have something as close to a guaranteed maximum price as possible.

Ald. Albright understands that the design team had a terrific meeting with the School Committee. She asked if the same type of meeting is going to be held with the Board. Ald. Schnipper stated that it is the plan and that all of the design team will be there to explain how the cap was reached. The drawings will be complete on April 15, 2008, the subcontractors have been pre-qualified and the lowest bid will be taken. The only subcontractor that has not been pre-qualified is the elevator company; however, there is not a concern as it is a minor piece. There is some concern as the city has exactly thirty days to accept the low bid. If not, the subcontractor can withdraw their bid and submit a higher number. The city cannot sign any contracts without the bonding in place. The Committee held the item with no further discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman

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