

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2006

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

Also present: Ald. Samuelson, Lennon, Linsky, Burg, Harney, Danberg, Vance, Fischman, Merrill, Sangiolo and Parker

City personnel: Nick Parnell (Commissioner of Public Buildings), Lou Taverna (City Engineer), Sandy Pooler (Chief Administrative Officer), David Tannozi ((Energy Officer), Clint Schuckel (Traffic Engineer) and Shawna Sullivan (Committee Clerk)

REFERRED TO PUB. SAFETY/TRANSP., PUB. FAC. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#378-05(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$58,385 from Free Cash for the purpose of supplementing funds authorized under board order #378-05 (approved 11/21/05) for the installation of windows at Fire Station #4.

PS&T APPROVED 8-0 ON 09/20/06

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: The Public Facilities and Public Safety and Transportation Committees met jointly on this and the following item. Commissioner Parnell presented the item to the Committee. Docket item #378-05, which was approved by the Board on November 21, 2005, was an appropriation for \$150,000 to make unspecified repairs to the fire stations. It was determined that the best use of those funds would be to replace the windows at Fire Station #4. The project was sent out to bid and the lowest bid came in at \$183,700. The 5% contingency for the project would be \$9,185 and the design and project administration costs are \$15,000 bringing the total cost of the project to \$208,385. Therefore, the Mayor is requesting an additional \$58,385 to fund the project in its entirety.

Ald. Lennon pointed out that this past spring the Board was told that after the contractor did an analysis of the fire stations a formal report on the analysis would be produced and provided to the Aldermen, which has yet to be received. Ald. Lennon is upset with the lack of progress on the fire station improvements. He is curious how the administration is going to proceed with further improvements. Commissioner Parnell apologized for dropping the ball on the updates but that does not mean that the fire stations have been ignored. The Public Building Department tries to identify those things not of capital nature through the ongoing maintenance and repair program. The department continues to look at capital projects that can be done. The next project that will be done is the road on Station 4. It is in terrible condition and the Commissioner will be requesting substantial funds to do this project. The Commissioner is aware that a list of what needed to be done on the stations was presented to the Board. The list was prioritized by the envelope and life safety things until something more formidable in terms

of funding is available. Ald. Lennon stated that he would still like to see the report and it his recollection that making the repairs piecemeal was not the way to approach it. He would like a better understanding of the comprehensive plan and how the city is planning to approach the problem with the fire stations. Ald. Gentile reminded the Aldermen that Sandy Pooler had asked the Board to give him some time to go back to the consultants in order to get firmer numbers on the work. However, the Board has been very patient and should have the numbers that were requested. Sandy Pooler stated that he has not had the time and will get back to the Board in the near future.

Ald. Weisbuch asked the Commissioner why there was such a large price margin between the lowest bidder and the other bidders. Commissioner Parnell responded that the low bid contractor works with the window manufacturer. Normally, he would be concerned that there was such a difference but the low bidder has worked with the City before and has always provided quality material and services. The contractor's most recent work is the Peirce School window replacement and the Commissioner is very satisfied with the work.

Ald. Mansfield asked what the funds for design and project administration. Commissioner Parnell explained that the funds are for the on-call architect. The City has three on-call architects that have been pre-qualified by the Designer Selection Committee. Commissioner Parnell is very pleased with the architect, who will be handling the design for the window replacement. Ald. Lappin realizes that the City's usual contingency is 5% but she asked if the standard contingency is 10% of the project. The Commissioner stated that he would like to see a greater contingency on smaller projects, such as the window replacement. Ald. Schnipper agreed to docket item to discuss a larger contingency percentage.

Ald. Salvucci moved approval of the item in Public Facilities, which carried unanimously. Ald. Lennon moved approval in Public Safety and Transportation, which carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUB. SAFETY/TRANSP., PUB. FAC. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#378-05(3) **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$90,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of providing funding for the Fire Department Wires Division to replace and/or repair fire alarm systems in the firehouses throughout the city.

PS&T APPROVED 8-0 ON 09/20/06

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: The Public Safety and Transportation Committee joined the Committee for discussion of this item. Chief LaCroix joined the Committees for discussion of this item. This is a request for an appropriation to replace all of the fire alarm systems in the six fire stations. There was a quotation from Northeast Integrated Systems provided with the agenda detailing the equipment. Each of the fire stations will have smoke, heat and carbon monoxide detection devices and will be fully code compliant. The system also allows a sprinkler system to tie in with the fire alarm systems. In addition, it is possible to disassemble the fire alarm system during renovations.

The Wire Division of the Fire Department will provide the labor for the installation of the alarms systems. It will take three to four weeks per station to install. After the system is installed in each fire station, they will all tie into a master box. The alarms are addressable, which means that it allows the firefighters to know exactly where a problem is occurring and they can take just one alarm off-line leaving the rest of the areas protected.

Ald. Linsky asked if the systems are state of the art and whether there were other bidders besides Northeast Integrated Systems. The Chief responded that the systems are state of the art and it is a State contract and it is unlikely that the City will find a better price. Ald. Gentile attested that he has used Northeast Integrated Systems and the City is getting a great discount.

The Committees had no further questions and Ald. Lappin moved approval in Public Facilities, which carried unanimously. Ald. Lennon moved approval in Public Safety and Transportation Committee, which carried unanimously.

#296-06 VERIZON NEW ENGLAND, INC., petitioning for Grant of Location to relocate pole 104/8 in CORNELL STREET to a point 4 feet east of its current location. This movement is required to maintain a handicapped access ramp.

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: This item was discussed at the previous meeting of the Committee and held for the Engineering Department's input. Gary Savignano, Verizon Permit Representative, and Lou Taverna were present for the continuation of the public hearing and discussion of this item. The petition is to relocate a pole at the corner of Atkinson and Cornell Streets 4' east in order to put in a handicap access ramp.

The City Engineer explained that the Board of Survey approved a definitive subdivision plan for Atkinson Street. A Certificate of Action was attached to the plan with conditions. Condition 5 requires that the property owner of 15 Atkinson Street construct curb cuts that meet the standards of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. The existing ramps at the intersection of Cornell and Atkinson Streets do not meet the standards. In order to meet the standards for curb cuts at the corner of Atkinson and Cornell Streets the pole must be relocated. Condition 3 requires that no building permit be issued until all of the underground utilities have been installed and so forth. The water, drainage, sewer and gas have been installed and tested and the roadway has been paved. However, the electric and telephone have not been installed and cannot be until the utility pole is relocated since the wires for those services are located on the pole. The building permit was issued, as it is apparent that the conduit for the electricity and telephone are meant to be installed after the pole is moved. The Engineering Department can condition the sidewalk opening that the work for the handicap ramp and the conduit be done at the same time.

Mr. Steven Melly 63 Cornell Street, spoke on the petition. Mr. Melly did not understand that the curb cut was to be located on Atkinson Street. He would be pleased if all of the work in front of his house takes place at one time. Ald. Mansfield asked how long it would take to move

all the wires onto the new pole. Gary Savignano responded that he cannot give a time line as it is up to the individual companies on the pole to move their wires. Verizon will notify all of the companies on the pole and he does not believe that there are many companies on the pole so it should be faster. Mr. Savignano will work on coordinating the wire transfer with the other companies. Ald. Schnipper suggested consulting the Law Department to determine if there is any type of fine that the City can implement in the future to encourage companies to transfer their wires in a timely manner. Ald. Albright suggested bringing the problem to the State level for resolution, as it is a problem for all cities and towns.

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

#252-06 BOSTON EDISON d/b/a NSTAR petitioning for a grant of location to install one pole (758/4) in PRINCETON STREET on the easterly side at Hilltop Street.

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-1 (Weisbuch opposed)**

NOTE: Maureen Carroll and Tom Morahan were present for the discussion of this petition. This petition was held on June 21, 2006, as there was a question regarding why the pole is being placed across the street from the rest of the poles already located on the street. The pole is already in place due to an error by NStar's contractor. Ald. Mansfield discussed this item with the NStar representatives when he met with them earlier. The pole is necessary to improve reliability in the area. A motion to approve carried by a vote of seven in favor and one opposed.

#251-06 BOSTON EDISON d/b/a NSTAR petitioning for a grant of location to install one pole (#1282/0) in FARQUHAR ROAD on the northerly side approximately 49' east of Harvard Street.

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-1 (Weisbuch opposed)**

NOTE: Maureen Carroll and Tom Morahan were present for the discussion of this item. This item was held on June 21, 2006 for further discussion. The pole is already in place due to an error by NStar's contractor. This petition is similar to the one above; as it appears that, the pole is being located on the other side of the street from the rest of the poles.

Ald. Albright spoke on the petition, as she also met with NStar earlier this week regarding the pole locations. She explained that one of the poles shown on the plan is not really a pole but a street light. When they went out to look at the pole, it was determined that there was a possibility of locating the pole on the same side the street although it may have interfered with a handicap ramp located on the corner. Ald. Albright stated that it does bear to go and look at the pole locations not just from an engineering perspective but also from an aesthetic perspective to determine if there might be a better location. Ald. Mansfield suggested that the Alderman from each Ward should do a site visit for pole locations to provide more information about the site before the public hearing and determine if it is the best location for the pole in terms of aesthetics. Ald. Gentile suggested that as the Engineering Department already does a site visit they can consider these things. Ald. Schnipper asked Ald. Mansfield to write a summary of what he would like the Engineering Department to include in its review of the grant of location.

Ald. Mansfield pointed out that all of the poles in the area have been replaced leaving double poles. Mr. Morahan responded that NStar is waiting for other companies to transfer their wires to the new poles. Ald. Schnipper suggested consulting the Law Department to determine if there is anything that can be done to hasten the wire transfer process. Ald. Albright moved approval of the petition, which carried.

Item Recommended by the Board on May 15, 2006

#180-06 VERIZON NEW ENGLAND, INC., petitioning for a grant of location to place one new pole (100/8) on COLUMBUS STREET on the southeasterly side 15' southwesterly from Standish Road.

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0 WITH A RESOLVE TO VERIZON AND NSTAR TO CONSULT WITH THE DIRECTOR OF URBAN FORESTRY AT THE TIME OF POLE AND WIRE INSTALLATION FOR ADVICE ON TREE TRIMMING**

NOTE: This petition was recommitted by the Board on May 15, 2006 for further clarification. Verizon is petitioning for the new pole, however, the new pole is necessary for electric service. Ald. Mansfield stated that he had a discussion with NStar and received an informative discussion concerning the site. He was able to get a clear explanation to why the wires appeared to be criss-crossing back and forth across the street. It was also discovered that the plan that was submitted has the wrong dimensions. The pole is not located on top of a street tree. It is actually to be located 108' from the next pole. The pole is to be located on the other side of the street as there are fewer trees on that side of the street. The intent is to bring service from the Forest Street end rather than the Lincoln Street end, as the Lincoln Street end is overloaded. This means that the wires will have an impact on the street trees. Mr. Morahan explained that there will only be one wire located on the pole, therefore there should not be a very significant impact on the trees. Ald. Mansfield asked to include a resolution that Verizon and NStar consult with the Director of Urban Forestry when the wire is installed on the new pole with the motion. Ald. Lappin moved approval with the resolution, which carried unanimously.

Item Recommended by the Board on May 15, 2006

#157-06 BOSTON EDISON d/b/a NSTAR petitioning for a grant of location to install one pole (330/8) on the westerly side of OLD ORCHARD ROAD 737'± east of Hammond Street.

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: The petition was recommitted for further discussion. Maureen Carroll and Tom Morahan were present for the discussion of this item. The petition is for a new pole on the westerly side of Old Orchard Road to improve reliability in the area. There have been several outages in the area. There are no overhead wires between the two existing poles and the span is too great to run the wires between those two poles. Therefore, the new pole is necessary to attach the wires and there will be a switch on the new pole, as well. The pole will be placed on the grass strip and NStar will be asking a property owner to install a hip guy and anchor on their property.

Ald. Vance joined the Committee for the discussion and asked where on Old Orchard Road the pole is located. Mr. Morahan responded that the pole is located in the public way on the berm to the side of the Mary Baker Eddy Estate. Ald. Schnipper asked the NStar representatives if they were aware the estate was up for sale and may be developed and if that were the case would the current electric equipment support that. Mr. Morahan responded that there would be a couple of options in terms of feeding the development and the development does not influence the need for this pole. Ald. Gentile moved approval of the petition, which carried unanimously.

Item Recommended by the Board on May 15, 2006

#156-06 BOSTON EDISON d/b/a NSTAR petitioning for a grant of location to install one pole (212/28A) on the southerly side of HOMER STREET at Greenland Avenue.

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: The petition was recommitted by the Board for further discussion. Maureen Carroll and Tom Morahan were present for the discussion of this item. Ald. Mansfield and Ald. Albright visited the site with NStar representatives and were convinced that the pole was necessary for an upgrade to service. During the site visit, NStar representative stated that they could probably consolidate some of the equipment located on the poles. Ald. Mansfield moved approval of the item, which carried.

#327-06 ALD. LINSKY requesting discussion with representatives of NStar regarding why a particular section of Newtonville experiences ongoing power outages, including one occurring August 2, 2006, despite representations by NStar that service to this particular area has been upgraded and is more than adequate to carry the service load even though such load is soon due to increase with a new housing project coming on line.

ACTION: **HELD 8-0**

NOTE: Ald. Linsky presented the item to the Committee. Ald. Linsky docketed an item in 2005 relating to the power outages in Newtonville. The outages have been an ongoing problem and the Committee had several discussions relating to the outages. The concern centered on a new housing development to be located in the same area as the outages. NStar addressed the concerns by stating that there was a plan to upgrade the adjacent circuit to increase the tie capacity, which is the ability to move customers from one circuit to another during outages. The work was also to include moving some customers to a different circuit increasing the available capacity in Newtonville. Unfortunately, the same area of Newtonville has been experiencing outages.

Ald. Albright stated that she understands that there are two things that contributed to the recent outages. Mr. Morahan stated that part of the problem related to the work on Farquhar Street and the equipment located on the pole on Farquhar Street has not been activated, as it had not received Board approval. NStar will be activating the equipment, as soon as it receives approval from the Board. In addition, a cable failed on Walnut Street creating significant

outages. NStar has recently upgraded the cable on Walnut Street creating a new feed and changed out at least 45 transformers.

Several residents of Newtonville stated their concern regarding the age of the infrastructure and NStar's ability to solve the outage problem. Ald. Salvucci asked if the problem would be resolved when the new system is activated. Mr. Morahan explained that there is more work to be done in the area but when it is complete, reliability should be improved. Mr. Morahan cannot guarantee that there are no outages but the upgrades will allow the power to come on-line quicker. Ald. Lappin asked at what point NStar determines it needs to replace the entire infrastructure of an area. Mr. Morahan explained that a group of reliability engineers analyze areas and rank in order of poor service. This area of Newtonville has and is receiving upgrades to the infrastructure. The item was held to determine if the upgrades and improvements will alleviate the problem.

#321-06 ALD. SCHNIPPER proposing a Resolution from the Public Facilities Committee to His Honor the Mayor to proceed with the Street Light Replacement Program as soon as possible.

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: The Committee has heard presentations regarding the cost saving advantages of street light replacement. Eric Olson, Chair of the Newton Citizens' Commission on Energy submitted a letter urging the Committee to approve a resolution (attached). Ald. Yates voiced his support of the item, as he feels it will create streetlights that are more reliable and generate cost savings. Arvin Grable of the Citizens' Commission on Energy spoke on the resolution. The Energy Commission made a specific recommendation that high-pressure sodium lights be used for the replacement program. The resolution will not state a specific light source choice, as the best choice of light has not been determined. The resolution is asking the Mayor to proceed with a plan of action on the street light replacement.

Sandy Pooler stated that he would like to a test of the new high-pressure sodium bulbs on some streets around City Hall. The test can be done very quickly. The Administration feels strongly that the City should continue to engage a consultant. The Administration has been meeting with all of the involved City departments to pursue the street light program. He would like to go with an RFP in order to see pricing on the different street light options. Mr. Pooler felt that a resolution would be helpful, as it engages the Board in the project.

Ald. Gentile asked Mr. Woodbury if anyone has approached NStar regarding grants and rebates. Clint Schuckel explained that the City has used all of its contract money with Mr. Woodbury, the lighting consultant. In addition, Mr. Schuckel pointed out that it may be difficult to have discussions with NStar when the project is in such preliminary stages and no decisions have been made. Mr. Woodbury stated that if the City goes with a standard offering such as metal halide or high-pressure sodium bulbs the rebate is clear. However, if the City were to go with something else it will require negotiations with NStar to receive a rebate. Mr. Woodbury testified at the DET regarding NStar's performance on energy conservation and spoke on rebates.

The Committee agreed that the City should proceed with a street light replacement program. Therefore, Ald. Salvucci's motion for approval carried unanimously.

#160-06 PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE requesting that the City further investigate possible benefits of hiring an energy savings performance contractor for possible energy conservation and cost saving.

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0 AS A RESOLUTION TO HIS HONOR THE MAYOR TO CONTINUE TO PURSUE ENERGY CONSERVATION IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS**

NOTE: The Committee has had two presentations from energy savings contractors. After listening to the presentations, the Chair would like a mechanism to ask some of the contractors to do an audit of one city building to see what types of things they would recommend and what kinds of savings are out there. David Tannozi was present for the discussion and provided the Committee with a draft resolution (attached). Mr. Tannozi is investigating other options for the City to pursue energy conservation. The resolution is very general and recommends that the Mayor pursue energy conservation for a variety of means. After reviewing the draft resolution, a motion to approve carried unanimously.

A MOTION TO MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION MAY BE ENTERTAINED

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

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

NOTE: The Committee voted 8-0 in a roll call to go into Executive Session to discuss matters related to legal proceedings. The Committee again voted 8-0 in a roll call to come out of Executive Session

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman