

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2006

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

Also present: Ald. Linsky, Parker and Samuelson

City personnel: Nick Parnell (Commissioner of Public Buildings), Robert Rooney (Commissioner of Public Works), Clint Schuckel (Traffic Engineer), Candace Havens (Chair of the Traffic Council) and Shawna Sullivan (Committee Clerk)

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#382-06 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$190,165 from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of replacing the roof at Fire Station #4.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0 (Gentile and Weisbuch not voting)**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell joined the Committee for discussion of the item. The roof at Fire Station #4 was identified as in need of repair. The station is currently having its windows replaced and the new roof will tighten the building envelope. The roof replacement will begin in the spring. It is a membrane roof with insulation underneath. The membrane roof lasts for a number of years as long as it is installed correctly. Ald. Salvucci moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

#328-06 ALD. LINSKY, ALBRIGHT & JOHNSON, BAKER & SCHNIPPER requesting that the Design Review Committee periodically update the Board during the design phase of the Newton North High School project.

ACTION: **HELD 8-0**

NOTE: The Chair explained that this item was scheduled for discussion to determine how to go about getting updates. The Public Facilities Committee will hold a special meeting on Wednesday, December 13, 2006 with the Design Review Committee, Executive Department and the design team. Ald. Albright asked if the decisions on what is to be cut from the project could be made by that meeting. The Chair responded that nothing in terms of cuts is set in stone at this point.

Commissioner Parnell stated that the Design Review Committee has met and been updated on the project. The Commissioner plans to revisit the High Performance Building Committee with the design team. Ald. Salvucci asked for schematic drawings. The Commissioner will provide the drawings when they are available. The RFP has been sent to five construction manager at risk companies and are due back on November 29, 2006. Ald. Salvucci asked if there would be more than one estimate for the project. Commissioner Parnell responded

that the construction manager at risk would look at the project and provide an estimate. Ald. Salvucci moved hold on the item, which carried unanimously.

#386-05 ALD. SAMUELSON requesting an ordinance to require Board of Aldermen approval through the Traffic Council of new crosswalk locations.
TRAFFIC COUNCIL APPROVED 4-0 ON 2-16-06; Committed to PS&T for review of draft crosswalk policy; PS&T APPROVED POLICY 6-0 (Linsky, Harney not voting) on 3/22/06; postponed on 4/3/06 to date certain of 5/1/06; postponed on 5/1/06 to 5/15/06; postponed on 5/15/06 to date certain of 6/19/06; postponed on 7/10/06 to date certain of 8/14/06; referred to Public Facilities Committee on 8/14/06.

ACTION: **HELD 8-0**

NOTE: Commissioner Rooney, Candace Havens and Ald. Samuelson joined the Committee for discussion of this item. Ald. Samuelson stated that prior to Commissioner Rooney the Commissioner of Public Works would consult with the School Traffic Safety Officer and the School Department before putting in a new crosswalk. She is concerned that crosswalks are being put in unsafe locations. Many of the existing crosswalks are fading and difficult to see. Officer Hough, who is the School Traffic Safety Officer, would prefer to have fewer crosswalks with better maintenance. Crosswalks should be highly visible and well maintained particularly around schools. The Public Safety and Transportation Committee approved a draft crosswalk policy developed by the Traffic Council, which is attached.

Ald. Samuelson also pointed out that putting a crosswalk in implies that it is a safe place to cross the street. She used a recent project at Williams School as an example of what happens when the school and the School Traffic Safety Officer are not consulted. A crosswalk was removed due to safety concerns; however, the crosswalk remained on the plans. The location was a very dangerous spot for a crossing guard and children. Fortunately, the crosswalk was removed from the plans but it was a lot of work. Ald. Samuelson would like to see a body that approves crosswalks not just one individual. She has looked over Commissioner Rooney's draft proposal (attached) and would like to see stronger language requiring consultations with the School Department and Police Department.

Candace Havens noted that the Traffic Council receives proposals for crosswalks but there is no forum for discussion. She would like to create some consistency and have some standards for crosswalk locations. Ms. Havens also pointed out that it would be an opportunity to tie crosswalk locations into other traffic projects, such as traffic calming.

Commissioner Rooney stated that the Department of Public Works has the ability to determine where crosswalks should be located. He has no problem with people weighing in as appropriate and is willing to consult with school person when a crosswalk is to be located by a school.

Ald. Yates moved hold on the item, which carried. The Chair suggested that Ald. Samuelson and Commissioner Rooney meet to come up with a policy that was agreeable to both parties.

#376-06 ALD. YATES requesting discussion of the recommendations of the Bicycle Task Force and markups to be made in road to implement them.

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

NOTE: Ald. Yates docketed this item in response to maps and mark-ups provided to the Board for pike paths. He is concerned that the aqueducts are not marked and it was his belief that people were being encouraged to use them as bike routes. Commissioner Rooney explained that the aqueducts need to be constructed as bike paths before they can be marked out. The Commissioner also stated that any discussion concerning state roads needs to be had with the state. The Commissioner will not provide bike markings on any roadways that cannot accommodate them. The share the road signs give definition to where bikes belong and warn motor vehicle operators to expect bicyclists also bike lines act as traffic calming by slowing traffic down.

Miles Smith, Vice-chair of the Bicycle Pedestrian Task Force spoke on the item. The Newton Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force Master Plan is in line with the state's Paulsen Amendment to MGL 90E requiring Newton to provide accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians in all roadway projects funded by the Mass. Highway Department. The plan does not offer off-road or recreational routes. There are groups working on other aspects of bicycle routes. The task force does not recommend bike lanes or bike paths in the plan. Sean Roche, 42 Daniel Street, commented that it is very important to provide share the road signs on narrow roads. The more markings for bicycles that are provided the greater expectation motorists will have that they may come across bicyclists.

Ald. Yates moved no action necessary on the item, which carried.

#289-03(4) COMMISSIONER ROONEY requesting approval of roadway modification plans for curb-line geometry changes to calm traffic at the intersection of Daniel and Jackson Streets.

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0 SUBJECT TO SECOND CALL (Yates not voting)**

NOTE: Commissioner Rooney presented the item to the Committee. The intersection of Daniel and Jackson Streets has been a safety concern of the neighborhood for some time. The neighborhood hired a consultant who came up with three designs. The Commissioner believes the one that has been selected is the best most affordable solution to the safety issues at the intersection. The proposal is to create an extended bump out of the curb line. The bump out would create a more definitive intersection at Daniel and Jackson Streets causing traffic to slow down when turning onto Daniel Street. The proposed bump out has been sand bagged for a trial and it is working well. Ald. Salvucci asked if the Fire Department has done a test run to make sure that the trucks can maneuver the corner. Commissioner Rooney responded that he would ask the Fire Department to make a test run.

Sean Roche, 42 Daniel Street, stated that the sand bagging had an immediate, positive effect on the speed of vehicles. Many of the neighbors have noted the improvement. He would like the neighborhood to have the opportunity to comment on the details of the design before it is finalized. The Commissioner responded that the neighbors would have an opportunity to comment. Donald Neuwirth, 193 Jackson Street, questioned why there could not be stop signs. It was explained that stop signs may make the problem worse but it can be revisited in the Traffic Council.

Ald. Salvucci asked if the family with the driveway to be extended is okay with the proposal. The Commissioner explained that the owners of that property actually make out because their driveway is very small and their car hangs over onto the sidewalk. With the extension, they will gain additional space for their driveway. Ald. Salvucci is not comfortable approving the item without a letter from the Fire Department stating that they can make the turn in their trucks. Ald. Weisbuch moved the item subject to second call in order to receive the letter from the Fire Department. The item carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#289-03(5) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$25,000 from the Bradford Development Traffic Mitigation Fund for the purpose of installing curb-line geometry changes at the intersection of Daniel and Jackson Streets in Newton Centre.

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

NOTE: This is a request to fund the above proposed bump out of the curb line. The funds will be appropriated from the Bradford Development Traffic Mitigation Fund. The funds were set aside under a special permit for traffic mitigation projects. The funds are due to expire in March of 2007 and will be returned to the developer if they are not used. It has been determined that the above project is the best use of these funds. The Committee was in favor of the project and voted to approve the item unanimously.

#152-06 PS&T COMMITTEE requesting discussion re Road Classification Design Types (as outlined by the Planning and Development Department) for future use as an overall management tool for the City.

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

NOTE: The Committee held the item without discussion and will discuss it at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

All other items were held without discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman