

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT  
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH FINANCE COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2005

Public Facilities Committee Present: Ald. Salvucci (Acting Chairman), Gerst, Albright, Stewart, Yates, Mansfield and Lappin

Absent: Ald. Schnipper

Finance Committee Present: Ald. Coletti (Chairman), Gerst, Linsky, Stewart, Parker and Lipof

Absent: Ald. Gentile and Schnipper

Also present: Ald. Baker, Danberg, Harney, Hess-Mahan, Johnson, Sangiolo and Vance

City staff: John Daghlian (Associate City Engineer) and Shawna Sullivan (Committee Clerk)

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#238-05 WENDY KIMMEL, et al. filing on 6/20/05 a group petition pursuant to Section 10-2 of the City Charter for a public hearing for the purpose of capping the cost of the Newton South High School project at the "revised current budget" of \$59,305,020.

**ACTION:** **FINANCE HELD 5-1 (Stewart opposed)**  
**PUBLIC FACILITIES 7-0**

**NOTE:** The Public Facilities and Finance Committees met jointly to hold a public hearing on this item. Ald. Coletti opened the public hearing. Anatol Zuckerman, 17 Noble Street, spoke on the item. Mr. Zuckerman also provided the Committee with a letter regarding the public hearing and a list of questions for Commissioner Parnell and Heidi Black (attached.) Mr. Zuckerman stated that he has been monitoring the progress of the construction at the high school and has observed many problems with the construction. He is very concerned about the cost over runs associated with the construction. He is dismayed that the construction is not complete and has no confidence that the project will be complete in September. He is aware that the petition to cap the cost is obsolete. However, Mr. Zuckerman would like the Board to create a process for information on the project to be disseminated to the public. He would also like the Board to form a committee of citizens, who have construction, engineering or architectural skills to investigate and monitor this project. Mr. Zuckerman was disappointed that Commissioner Parnell and Heidi Black of the School Department were not at the hearing as requested in the petition. Ald. Coletti explained that the Commissioner and Ms. Black were required to attend the Designer Selection Committee, which was scheduled at the same time as the public hearing. Ald. Coletti stated that he would provide a breakdown of the project funding including what has been spent and what has not been spent. The project is currently 7% over budget and would require Board approval to increase funding for this project. Ald. Parker asked Mr. Zuckerman why he thought more money than what is appropriated is needed to complete the project. Mr. Zuckerman responded that the capping is obsolete because additional change orders have been submitted and will exceed the

current budget if accepted. Ald. Coletti stated that the latest expense status report dated June 17, 2005 (attached) states that the Phase I change orders have been completed and Phase II Change Orders #1 through 23 have been accepted and completed.

Jeff Siedeman, President of the Newton Taxpayers Association, 53 Eliot Memorial Road, stated that the Newton Taxpayers Association, although supportive of the petition, is not the initiators of the petition. Mr. Siedeman wished to reinforce Mr. Zuckerman's statements. Mr. Siedeman stated that during a tour of Newton South High School when he questioned Ms. Black about the HVAC system she stated that the system is working. He is very concerned that the Newton North Project will be handled in much the same way as the Newton South Project. Ald. Coletti pointed out that the projects are very different, as Newton North is new construction not renovation, which is generally much quicker. Sam Robbins, West Newton, would like to see a cap on the project and would like the City to be aware that the funding for the project is taxpayers' money.

Linda Lancaster, 17 Noble Street, stated that she is disappointed that the commissioning was approved but thankful that the amount was amended. She related her experience with moving to a new building with a new HVAC system. It was her job to ensure that the HVAC functioned correctly. Although the contractor and manufacture had to return several times to correct the system, there was no further charge. Ms. Lancaster feels strongly that if the HVAC at Newton South does not function it should be corrected without further expense.

Ald. Coletti closed the public hearing and Ald. Parker moved hold in Finance on the item, which carried by a vote of five in favor and one opposed (Stewart). Ald. Lappin moved hold in Public Facilities, which carried unanimously.

### **Public Hearing Continued**

#142-05 BOSTON EDISON d/b/a NSTAR ELECTRIC requesting a grant of location to relocate Pole 52/3 located 160' north of Washington Street on the northerly side of COURT STREET approximately 16' north of Washington Street.

**ACTION: APPROVED 5-0-2 (Albright and Mansfield abstaining)**

**NOTE:** This item was held and the public hearing was kept open, as an NStar representative was unavailable on May 18, 2005 to comment on the proposed grant of location. Maureen Carroll, NStar Right of Way Manager, John Daghlian and Ald. Johnson were present for the continuation of the public hearing.

Ms. Carroll explained that a new pole was installed in front of 21 Court Street 8' from the old pole pursuant to the grant of location given on November 3, 2003. NStar transferred its wires but Verizon could not without moving underground conduit. Ald. Johnson explained that the cost of the alterations would be charged to the special permit holder by Verizon. The estimated cost of the alterations is \$30,000. The petition is to move the pole back to within 18" of its original placement, in order to resolve the problem.

Phyllis Arcese, 21 Court Street, reiterated her support of the new pole location, as the pole is directly in front of her house. Mr. Daniel Simonelli, 25 Court Street, is not in favor of moving the pole pack, as it will make it difficult for him to use the driveway. The Associate City Engineer, John Daghlian, presented enlarged photos the proposed and existing pole locations. The proposed site will widen Mr. Simonelli's driveway by 18" and should not cause any additional problems to the driveway opening. Mr. Daghlian stated that the Engineering Division is in favor of the grant of location. He stated that the proposed location does not interfere with any of the underground utilities or the easement located next to Ms. Arcese's property.

Ald. Gerst pointed out that it creates a better right of way for 25 Court Street and removes a pole in front of Ms. Arcese's home. Therefore, he moved approval of the petition which carried by a vote of five in favor and two abstentions.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony J. Salvucci, Chairman