

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2005

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

Absent: Ald. Gerst and Lappin

City personnel present: Lou Taverna (City Engineer) and Shawna Sullivan (Committee Clerk)

#316-05 KEYSPAN ENERGY DELIVERY petitioning for a grant of location to install and maintain 75' ± of 6" gas main in DEBORAH ROAD from the existing 6" gas main in Deborah Road westerly to house #15. (Ward 8)

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: Harold Cooper, Keyspan Permit Representative, was present for the discussion of this petition. The extension will be to provide heat, hot water and cooking gas service to 15 Deborah Road, as requested by the homeowner. The public hearing was opened and no one spoke for or against the petition. Ald. Salvucci asked if it was a new home and Mr. Cooper responded that he believed the home was a few years old. Ald. Stewart asked whether the rest of the residents on the street had been notified and wished to convert to gas service. Mr. Cooper explained that it is Keyspan's policy to notify all the residents about the main extension. Ald. Salvucci moved approval, which carried unanimously.

#333-05 BOSTON EDISON COMPANY petitioning for a grant of location to install 454' ± of conduit at Pole 450/82A on Watertown Street to Manhole 7053 in Washington Street and to install one manhole (MH28595) in Washington Street. (West Newton)

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: Carol McManus from Boston Edison was present for the discussion of this item. There have been several outages in the West Newton Square area and Boston Edison has tried a number of repairs to resolve the problem. However, Boston Edison has determined the only way to rectify the problems is to upgrade the service, which will require the addition of a new manhole and conduit in the area. It is expected that the project will begin as soon as the grant of location is approved by the Board of Aldermen. The project will take about one month to complete and will provide room for growth in West Newton Square. The public hearing was opened and no one spoke for or against the petition.

Ald. Salvucci asked if business owners would be notified and whether there will be any outages associated with the project. Ms. McManus responded that people have been notified and

NStar representatives have met with owners. Ms. McManus stated that there would be loss of power associated with the project. It is expected that electricity will be shut down for 12 hours during non-peak hours.

Ald. Salvucci then asked how traffic detours would be handled, as the intersection of Watertown and Washington Streets is one of the busiest in the City. Lou Taverna explained that the City and the MWRA has done recent work in the area, which required traffic management plans that worked fairly well and he would be happy to share the plans with Boston Edison. Boston Edison will need to consult with the Police Department, as well. Ald. Salvucci would like to see the traffic management plan before the Full Board vote on the grant of location. Ald. Mansfield pointed out that the area will lose some parking and the traffic management plan should address that issue.

Ald. Salvucci also questioned how the Public Works Department addressed the reinforced concrete plates on Watertown Street. Mr. Taverna responded that the Engineering Department would require NStar to comply with twenty-one conditions (attached). The concrete roadway is addressed in that list and will be a requirement of the street opening permit. Ald. Mansfield asked if the project would have any impact if the City needs to plow. Mr. Taverna responded that the plates used for covering the trenches would need to be properly recessed each night. If the weather turns inclement and requires the project to stop, all trenches will be backfilled.

Ald. Stewart asked if the entire system was being replaced. Ms. McManus stated that Boston Edison is keeping the existing system and adding conduit to join the existing system. Ald. Schnipper asked if Boston Edison would be placing extra conduit. Ms. McManus stated that there would be unused conduit added. Ald. Schnipper then asked the City Engineer to keep the Committee updated on the progress of the project. Ald. Salvucci moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

#347-05 BOSTON EDISON COMPANY petitioning for a grant of location to relocate pole 561/4 located 325' ± east of Park Avenue on the southerly side of BRACKETT ROAD approximately 15' east.

ACTION: **APPROVED 3-0-3(Albright, Stewarts and Yates abstaining)**

NOTE: Ms. McManus was present for discussion of this item. Mr. Taverna explained that the petition for the grant of location is a request to move a pole in front of 26 Brackett Road 15' easterly from its existing location. However, the petitioner would like to move the pole up to 22' westerly to the property line. Should it be determined that the pole should be moved 22' westerly, Boston Edison would need to petition the Board for a grant of location for that site.

The public hearing was opened and Mr. Howard Barnstone, 26 Brackett Road, stated that the pole is located on the side of his new driveway. There is also a tree located in the approximate center of the driveway and it would be his preference to remove the tree. However, when he and his wife started the process to remove the tree they were informed that there is a high level of uncertainty regarding whether they would be allowed to do the tree removal. Mr.

Barnstone indicated that he was told that utility poles are usually located at the property line. Mr. Barnstone also explained that he and his wife have decided to pursue the removal of the tree and there will be a tree removal hearing on November 4, 2005.

Ms. Marion Letvin, 36 Brackett Road, spoke on the petition. She provided the Committee with letters from four households on Brackett Road (attached) opposing the relocation of the pole at all but if it must happen that the pole be relocated no more than 15' in an easterly direction. She also stated that the public hearing notice she received indicated that the petition was to move the pole 15' east not 22' west. The poles along the street are set equally and most have trees that screen the poles. The access to the driveway at 26 Brackett Road is not truly affected by the location of the pole. Ms. Letvin does not feel the situation at that residence is any different from the other residences on the street. 26 Brackett Road has access on the easterly side of their driveway. The garage and driveway are a replacement of a detached garage that were positioned differently on the site.

Mr. Barnstone explained that all of the proper permits were obtained. However, he does not have a curb cut opening permit from the City. He will submit that it is a very tight fit between the pole and the tree. The Committee members asked Mr. Barnstone how he received approval from the city if it is an untenable situation. Mr. Barnstone responded that he is not sure. Mr. Taverna stated that Inspectional Services issued the building permit for the garage and driveway and unfortunately the Engineering Department did not see the plans.

Carol McManus stated that the homeowner requested the change in the location. Boston Edison has some concerns regarding the span distance if the pole is moved 22' in the westerly direction. They would prefer to move the pole in the easterly direction.

Committee members explained that if the homeowner is allowed to remove the tree the grant of location does not need to be exercised. However, if the homeowner wishes to pursue moving the pole, the Committee was willing to approve the grant of location as petitioned by Boston Edison. Ald. Schnipper moved approval which carried by a vote of three in favor and three abstentions.

#246-05 ALD. LINSKY, SCHNIPPER, JOHNSON AND ALBRIGHT requesting a discussion with representative(s) of NStar regarding why sections of Newtonville seem to be experiencing ongoing brownouts despite representations by NStar that service to the area has been improved.

ACTION: **HELD 6-0**

NOTE: Unfortunately, the Boston Edison Community Relations Representative, Joseph Walsh, was unable to attend the meeting. Therefore, the item was held until Mr. Walsh is able to attend the meeting.

#334-05 COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC WORKS requesting review of the reconfiguration of the curb line of Burdean Road at Greenwood Street to square off the intersection creating improved sight distance and channeling traffic flow.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: Lou Taverna was present for the discussion of this item. The Public Works Department is undertaking the reconstruction of Greenwood Street. When the reconstruction project reached Burdean Road, it was determined that there is a blind spot between Brandeis Road and Burdean Road on Greenwood Street. In order to rectify the problem the intersection of Burdean Road and Greenwood Street needs to be reduced by 17' and the intersection squared off. The Engineering Department would like to sand bag the proposed curb line, test the width for school buses and fire trucks over the next few weeks, and reconfigure the intersection permanently in the spring.

Mr. Taverna also informed the Committee curbing will be installed along Greenwood Street through the betterment process. The addition of curbing and catch basins should improve the drainage on the street. Ald. Mansfield asked if the entire length of Greenwood Street would be curbed. Mr. Taverna explained that granite curbing would only be installed where a betterment has been requested. The Committee questioned why Chapter 90 funds were not being used for curbing. Mr. Taverna responded that the Commissioner opted to use the betterment process for the curbing and use the Chapter 90 funds elsewhere. The Committee asked that the Commissioner send a memo to the Committee explaining his rationale for not doing the curbing through Chapter 90.

#175-05 ALD. YATES requesting the School Department, School Committee and Public Building Department to request information from other communities across the Commonwealth and the nation as to problems encountered with HVAC systems in schools to find possible commonalities that might lead to possible joint legal action against defective suppliers or contractors and to possible connections to defective systems that have been successful elsewhere.

ACTION: **HELD 6-0**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell was unavailable to discuss this item. Therefore, the Committee opted to old the item without discussion.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#160-05 ALD. HARNEY, SANGIOLO, PARKER AND HESS-MAHAN requesting an independent audit and possible appointment of an independent commission to investigate the Newton South construction project.

ACTION: **HELD 6-0**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell was unavailable to discuss this item. Therefore, the Committee opted to old the item without discussion.

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Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman