

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2003

Present: Ald. Schnipper (Chair), Gerst, Linsky, Salvucci, Stewart, Yates, Mansfield and Lappin

Also present: Ald. Coletti and Sangiolo

City Personnel: John Daghlian (Associate City Engineer), Lou Taverna (Utilities Director), Michael Rourke (Chief Administrative Officer) and Robert Rooney (Commissioner of Public Works)

Re-appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#105-03 ARTHUR COHEN, 79 Warren Street, Newton Centre re-appointed on February 3, 2003 as a member of the DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE for a term of office to expire on December 31, 2005. (60-day Board action date 05-02-03)

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: Mr. Cohen was present for the discussion regarding his reappointment. Mr. Cohen is a principal architect at ARC and has served on the Design Review Committee since 1998 and he serves on the Designer Selection Committee as one of the School Committee's appointees. The biggest concern for the Design Review Committee is the high school projects.

Ald. Yates asked what role the Design Review Committee served in the Newton North High School study and plans. Mr. Cohen explained that Design Review had nothing to do with the study but the Design Review Committee does the final site plan approval. Several Committee members would like Design Review to be more involved from the start of a project. The Committee will docket an item to review Design Review Committee's regulations. The sections of the City of Newton Ordinances, which pertain to the Design Review Committee, are attached. Mr. Cohen also told the Committee that there are several openings on the Design Review Committee that should be filled. Ald. Salvucci moved approval of the reappointment, which was approved unanimously. The Committee thanked Mr. Cohen for his service to the City.

#110-03 DEBRA SMALL, 572 Dedham Street, Newton Centre, requesting construction of a common sewer in MEADOWBROOK ROAD, from end manhole 130' ± to Dedham Street and then 500' ± southerly to 580 Dedham Street.

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: John Daghlian was present and provided the Committee with a cost breakdown (attached) of the project. Mr. Daghlian explained the project to the Committee. Two of the houses will have to be pumped to a holding chamber due to heavy ledge, which cannot be blasted due to the large number of utilities within the roadway. The Engineering Department decided to connect to the existing sewer in Meadowbrook, as the elevation is more conducive.

Ald. Salvucci was upset with the frontage charge to a property owner who is already on the city sewer. It was explained that the Board has the power to waive the fee. There was a brief discussion regarding placing the sewer through the back of the properties from Meadowbrook Road. It was decided that this was not an option because it was unlikely all of the property owners would agree to grant an easement to the City.

The public hearing was opened and Debra Small, 582 Dedham Street voiced her support of the project as she has a cesspool and would like to connect to the sewer. Ms. Wendy Goodrich, 556 Dedham Street will hook-up to the sewer immediately to meet the requirements of the ordinance. Dorothy Miller is purchasing 580 Dedham Street and would like the timeframe for the project. Mr. Daghlian expects the project to begin mid to late summer due to the bid process. The project will take about one month to complete. Ald. Lappin moved approval of the item, which was voted unanimously.

#111-03 DAVID S. DeLORIE, 153 Hancock Street, Auburndale requesting construction of a common sewer in GROVE STREET from existing end manhole at 191 Grove Street northerly 140'± to Hancock Street to cover 153 Hancock Street.

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: John Daghlian was also present for the discussion of this item and submitted a breakdown of costs for the project to the Committee (attached). He would like to see this sewer project and the Dedham Street sewer go out to bid jointly. The sewer line will service 153 Hancock Street, which is the one house in the area not on the City sewer.

The public hearing was opened and David DeLorie of 153 Hancock Street voiced his support of the project. He also asked about the plans to reconfigure the intersection of Grove Street and Hancock Street. The reconfiguration will not take place until the sewer line is in place. Ald. Stewart moved approval of the item, which was approved unanimously.

#261-02(2) PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE establishing a taskforce of Aldermen, departmental officials and citizens to monitor the sewer problems and storm water issues, prepare periodic reports for the public on the actions being considered by the City to address the problem, and serve as an initial clearinghouse for information for Board of Aldermen and for citizens.

ACTION: **APPROVED AS AMENDED 8-0 ADD STORM WATER ISSUES**

NOTE: Ald. Stewart feels that it is reasonable to form a taskforce to deal with sewer problems. The taskforce will distribute information through the webpage and possibly community meetings. The group would also prepare a public information plan. Ald. Linsky is supportive of forming the taskforce but would suggest broadening the scope to include storm drain and water issues. Lou Taverna would like the taskforce to include stormwater issues, as the Stormwater Phase II permitting process requires such a group. The Committee agreed to amend the item to include stormwater.

The taskforce would report to the Public Facilities Committee regularly. There was a brief discussion about voting within the taskforce but it was decided that it was a non-issue, as the taskforce would be reporting to the Committee. A motion was made for approval and the item was approved as amended unanimously.

#112-03 **ALD. STEWART** requesting a review of the City's procedures for responding to citizen inquiries about trash, street repairs and other matters handled by the Public Works Department.

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0 (Linsky Not Voting)**

NOTE: Brian Connolly and Commissioner were present for discussion of the item. Ald. Stewart docketed this item due to the snowstorm of February 17, when trash was not picked-up. Ald. Stewart called the City but could not locate a number to call regarding trash. When he called the City, he was told the trash would be picked up on Saturday but it was not picked up until Monday.

Mr. Connolly explained that there were several issues during that snowstorm. The website had the wrong information regarding trash pick-up due to the Presidents' Day holiday. The information on the website was corrected as soon as it was discovered. Waste Management was unable to get all of its trucks on the road due to the weather. The Public Works Department is in the process of installing automated answering software. The Public Works Department keeps a call log for any call that generates a work order but it does not capture transfers. Currently, Customer Service receives about 700 calls per day. 400 of these calls are dealt with but there are approximately 300 hang-ups.

Commissioner Rooney explained that the installation of the automated answering software should improve customer service immensely. The new system will queue calls in the order they come in allowing the caller to hold until the next available customer service representative is available. Several committee members suggested enclosing customer service information in the next tax bill. Commissioner Rooney also spoke about the new sticker program the Public Works Department has implemented. The stickers are given to Waste Management to place on various items that are not picked up by Waste

Management or are not bundled correctly for pick-up. The stickers direct people on the proper way to discard the item or package the item for pick-up. The Committee felt that the necessary improvements were being made and Ald. Stewart moved No Action Necessary, which was passed.

#140-03 ALD. YATES requesting the Department of Public Works and Parks and Recreation Department to prepare the Nahanton Street Woods for immediate use as a snow dump for the rest of the winter of 2003.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0-2 (Linsky and Lappin Abstaining)**

NOTE: Ald. Yates docketed this item in response to the use of the Braceland Playground as a snow dumpsite. He had been told previously that the site would only be used as a last resort. He was very surprised that the Commissioner did not mention the plan to use the park. Ald. Yates also called the Police Department for a detail as he felt that the operation was creating a dangerous situation and was told that it was not a requirement. He would like the Commissioner to use the Nahanton Street Woods for snow dumping in the future, to avoid further damage to the Braceland Playground.

Commissioner Rooney explained that the snow from the business districts needed to be removed as soon as possible. He is the first to admit it was a misstep in regards to where the snow was to go. The Commissioner had taken that Thursday off and did not realize that the playground had been used until Friday. It was a field change made by the Deputy Commissioner in the field, which was legitimate. Due to the size of the operation, not all the snow could be dumped at the Eliot Street yard.

Susan Sangiolo, Michael Fleming and Jack Neville, residents of Upper Falls, spoke about the affect of the dumping on the community. There is concern regarding the affect of the treated snow on the environment. Everyone is in support of using Nahanton Street Woods for a snow dumpsite. There is rubbish everywhere and children cannot use the park. They are very concerned that the soccer fields have been damaged and will not be ready for soccer season. There is also a sewer main, which cap has been broken off due to one of the trucks. They would all like to know what would be done to repair the park.

Commissioner Rooney explained that funds have been budgeted for the repair of the park. The reclamation of the park will begin immediately. Crews will go out everyday and remove trash as the snow melts. The Commissioner will deal with the sewer cap immediately. Conservation has assured Ald. Yates that everything is in compliance in regards to damage to the environment. The Committee felt that the Nahanton Street Woods was more appropriate for a snow site and approved the item.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#145-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$67,808 from Water Surplus for the purpose of funding the purchase of a Hydraulic Model for the city's water distribution system.

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: Commissioner Rooney and Lou Taverna were present for discussion of this item. The appropriation is for a computer model of the City's water distribution. The City will be able to update the system once the contractor completes the model. Ald. Stewart moved approval of the item, which was voted unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#144-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$27,987 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of removing the carpet in the City Clerk/Clerk of the Board office and replacing it with linoleum flooring.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0-1 (Mansfield Abstaining, Gerst Not Voting)**

NOTE: The appropriation is to remove the carpet in the City Clerk/Clerk of the Board Office and replace it with linoleum. The replacement is necessary because due to health issues within the office. Several members felt that this project would provide the opportunity to perform other much needed office renovations. As the Commissioner of Public Buildings was not present for this discussion, it was decided to approve the item and have the Commissioner come in for the Finance Committee meeting to answer questions. Ald. Salvucci moved approval, which was voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman