

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2001

Present: Ald. Schnipper (Chair), Gerst, Antonellis, Salvucci, Yates, Mansfield, and M. Lipof

Absent: Ald. McGrath

Also Present: Ald. Lipsitt

City Officials Present: Verne Vance (School Committee), Susan Heyman (School Committee), Anne Larner (School Committee), Andrew Vizulis (School Committee), Nancy Levine (School Committee), Jeffrey Young (Superintendent of Schools), James Marini (Superintendent of High Schools), Nick Parnell (Commissioner of Public Buildings), Jennifer Huntington (Principal of Newton North High School), and Sandy Pooler (Chief Budget Officer)

70-01 DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE petition pursuant to Sec 5-58 for site plan approval to create the Millennium Park at Newton City Hall.

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0**

NOTE: A letter was received from the Mayor requesting a vote of no action necessary. There is no 5-58 site plan approval necessary for this project, as the Millennium Park improvements do not involve new construction or a change in use. There will be a new docket item for discussion of the Millennium Park project. Ald. Yates moved no action necessary, which passed unanimously.

#268-00(4) DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE petition pursuant to Sec 5-58 for site plan approval on additions to the Newton South and Newton North High Schools.

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Carl Franceschi, Drummey, Rosane, Anderson, Inc., presented the plans for the high school projects. Mr. Franceschi presented the site plan for Newton South High School. He explained the uses of the new construction and the phasing for renovations and construction. The academic areas are at the edges of the campus, while the core facilities are located in the interior. When this construction is completed, there will be four academic houses. The administration offices will be relocated adjacent to the main entrance of the school. The placement of the administration offices throughout the buildings allows for better supervision of students. There have been several discussions regarding security and camera placements throughout the school. The new field house will serve as community resource as well as the athletic center of the school. Several areas of the school

will be renovated, such as the cafeteria and auditorium. The parking lots will be extended to serve the school and athletic building parking needs. Buses will drop students off at the new main entrance to the school. There will be landscaping and screening to improve the view. Mr. Franceschi presented the floor plans explaining the uses of each area of the school.

There is a limited amount of new construction where there have been renovations in the past five years. The auditorium will have a new fly space to improve the drama program of the school. The library, which was renovated five years ago, is being expanded.

The Housemaster's areas are to be expanded giving plenty of office space and storage space. The gym locker rooms are to be expanded and the trainer's room is to be moved so it is accessible from a public corridor.

Discussions are ongoing on the use of wireless technology in the buildings. There will be hardwire connections throughout the school. Every educational space in the building will be connected through a local area network. There will be telephones in all of these spaces as well as Internet access. There will be video distribution within the building.

The site plan also showed a swimming pool with locker rooms. This is not included in the cost estimate but the School Department is pursuing funding for the swimming pool complex.

The brook, which runs through Newton South, will be redirected in order to allow the new athletic building to be constructed. A new pipe will be used to redirect the water and it will continue to flow by gravity. A few new manholes will be added to give access to the pipe.

DRA is working with NStar and Massachusetts Renewable Trust Fund to determine what funds are available for installation of photovoltaic systems. The two primary locations for the photovoltaic systems are on the roof of the high school. DRA is planning to use several environmentally friendly systems during construction. The funding for the systems is not part of the package, which is to be submitted to the State. It would be funded through NStar and Massachusetts Renewable Trust Fund.

The architects have had extensive meetings with the administration at the school in an effort to address all of the concerns and suggestions. All of the facility issues that have been raised have been addressed by this project.

Mr. Franceschi presented the site plans for Newton North High School. The proposed renovations at Newton North are on a smaller scale due to the decrease

in enrollment. The two spaces, which will be expanded, are the cafeteria and the auditorium lobby of the high school. The expansion of the cafeteria is within the footprint of the building as the library overhang will be in-filled. The expansion will allow for additional meeting space within the existing cafeteria. The expansion of the front lobby will provide a larger space and restroom facilities. There is no other exterior work in this project. There may be an additional entrance, which allows for better traffic flow in this area.

There will be some areas of reconfiguration of existing space. The carpentry shop used by various departments within the City will be moved to Newton South freeing up that space to become the electrical shop. This allows for three additional classrooms on the first level to serve the vocational education area. There is some reconfiguration of the gym locker area for better team facilities. The science labs on the Main Street level will be renovated and upgraded. The architects and administration are currently working on the redesign of Main Street and the spaces surrounding it. Two new elevators will be added at each end of the building for improved access to the building. There will be some reorganization on the upper level to give the library back some of its space and a new aisle. All of the restrooms will be made handicapped accessible throughout the building. The building will be entirely within the American Disabilities Act's guidelines. There is a lot of focus on the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system, as well as the electrical, fire alarm, and sprinkler systems.

There has been some discussion regarding refurbishing of the stadium. There was a previous study done on the stadium so the architects are aware of what needs to be done to it. The refurbishing may be incorporated into the bid documents but that has not been decided.

It is the hope of Ald. Gerst that the architects will consider automobile access to the school and the parking. Traffic flow on the site is terrible. This has not been proposed yet but if it should be, it will need to go through site plan approval through both Design Review and Board of Aldermen.

The public hearing was opened and James Mahoney, 44 Grove Hill Park, spoke on the project. He is the Chair of the Citizens for the Future of Newton. The organization would like the project to stay on track and lend support to the Board of Aldermen during these projects. Beth Smith, 40 Foster Street, spoke in favor of the petition. She feels that the plans for both schools are very well thought out. She is very impressed with the way everyone is working on the projects. She would like the City to meet the State deadline, as the City will receive the greatest reimbursement if it does. The quicker the City begins these projects the faster they will be done and the students will benefit. Dori Zalexnik, 28 Heatherland Road, spoke in favor of the petition. She has two children within the Newton School System, who will benefit from these projects. Judi Hirshfield-Bartek, 32

Ferncroft Road, spoke on behalf of the Newton South School Council Committee. The Council is very anxious to see the projects move forward rapidly. Newton South needs to be updated. There is a lack of space for the teachers and technology is limited. She urged the Committee to move approval of the project. J. Douglas Leith, 162 Islington Road, would like the chemistry storeroom at Newton North updated by increasing the lighting and adding a telephone line. Ms. Jane Yoffe, 99 Littlefeild Road, has concerns about the noise pollution during construction and the hours that construction will take place. She has spoken with Commissioner Parnell about the hours of construction and was told that construction will begin at 7 AM. She would like to be assured that the construction would not begin before 7 AM. Ms. Yoffe also stated that construction on weekends should only be done if absolutely necessary and not begin before 9 AM. She would also like all outdoor lighting to be directed towards the ground or the school and not towards the abutters. Her other concern is traffic and parking during construction and realizes that a traffic plan has not been completed but is being addressed. She would also like the new bleachers to be the same shade as the existing ones.

Ald. Salvucci asked Superintendent Young if the completion of these projects would satisfy program needs of the schools. Superintendent Young responded that it would and he felt that it would satisfy the educational needs for years to come. Ald. Mansfield wondered how the unfinished aspects of the site plan will be addressed, such as the traffic and lighting. There are no details for any of the unfinished aspects. Commissioner Parnell explained that the oversight would come from several departments within the City, such as Engineering and the Conservation Commission. The projects will also be brought before the Committee several more times and will include all the unfinished aspects. Ald. Lipsitt suggested that a committee be established to oversee the construction phases and address questions regarding the project. Ald. Mansfield had some concerns about students attending school during the construction and would like to know if there is any alternative site for students during construction. There is no alternative site and that the construction will be done in phases in order to shift students during construction and renovation of sections of the schools.

Ald. Lipof moved approval of the item and the Committee approved it unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBFACILITIES, PROG&SERV, AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#268-00(B) **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$89,220,407 for the purpose of funding the construction and renovation of Newton North and South High Schools, which source of funding will be the issuance of long term debt.

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0 (SUBJECT TO SECOND)**

NOTE: Ald. Salvucci felt that the Committee should not act on this item because the requirements set forth in Section 5-58 subsection 6(b) of the Ordinances have not been met. Ald. Yates pointed out that it is the Board of Aldermen and not the committee, which cannot act. Ald. Schnipper will request that the City Solicitor render an opinion on this.

Ald. Gerst suggested voting the item subject to second call with the assumption that the City Solicitor will have responded by that time. Ald. Salvucci moved the item subject to second call, which was approved unanimously.

All other items were held without discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chair