



Zoning & Planning Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Monday, April 24, 2017

Present: Councilors Hess-Mahan (Chair), Danberg, Albright, Yates, Baker, Sangiolo, Kalis and Leary

City Staff Present: Dori Zaleznik (Chief Administrative Officer), Barney Heath (Director, Planning Dept.), James Freas (Deputy Director, Planning Dept.), Lily Reynolds (Community Engagement Director), Rachel Blatt (Long Range Planner), Jennifer Steele (Conservation Planner), Katy Hax Holmes (Historic Preservation Planner), Rachel Powers (Community Development Programs Manager), John Lojek (Commissioner, Inspectional Services), Alice Ingerson (Community Preservation Manager), Karyn Dean (Committee Clerk)

Zoning & Planning and Finance Committees

#90-17

Transfer of \$75,000 to develop a Complete Streets Guidebook

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) from the Planning Department Full-time Salaries Account to the Planning Department Consulting Services Account for the purpose of developing a Complete Streets Guidebook. [03/27/17 @ 2:20 PM]

Action:

Zoning & Planning Approved 8-0

Note: Barney Heath, Director of Planning, explained that funds were being requested to hire a consultant to assist in the development of a Complete Streets Guidebook. A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been drafted. Rachel Blatt, Long Range Planner, said this is meant to be a street design and engineering guide/manual. The target audience will be the City Council, City staff and contractors who will be doing private development in the City to assist in making decisions about standards in street design. This will be a framework that will highlight the areas that are most critical. Many other cities have undertaken this kind of guidebook so they have many examples they can pull from to develop the document.

An example of what would be included in the guidebook is standards for crosswalks. Decisions relative to placement, curbing, accessible ramps, style, etc., will be included with guiding principles for construction and uniformity across the City. As the City is working on projects like West Newton Square and Walnut Street, staff is realizing how important it is to develop a palette of choices for consistency throughout the City in all areas of street design.

A Committee member said that some things have been placed in historic districts that were not proper. He would like staff to keep historic districts in mind and the role they play in design. Also, the road lines are not adequate throughout the City. He felt the Planning Department could work with Public Works on uniform best practices on crosswalks and other road lines. Another

Committee member asked that the group look at using raised crosswalks and reviewing turning radiuses as sharper turns slows down cars.

It was noted that others in the City who have done good work on these issues such as Safe Routes to School and they should be consulted. Dori Zaleznik noted that the Complete Streets Group includes input on transportation, trees, DPW and Planning issues and tries to codify best practices.

Councilor Danberg moved approval and the Committee voted in favor unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ted Hess-Mahan, Chair