

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ZONING & PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2007

Present: Ald. Yates (Chairman), Ald. Lappin, Danberg, Weisbuch, Burg, and Baker; absent: Ald. Johnson and Sangiolo

City Staff: Michael Kruse, Director of Planning & Development; Marie Lawlor, Assistant City Solicitor; Linda Finucane, Chief Committee Clerk

Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#467-06 HARVEY CREEM, 110 Huntington Road, Newton, appointed as a *full* member of the ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS for a term of office (filling the full member position vacated by Anthony Summers) to expire on February 1, 2010. (Board action 2-9-07) [12-1-06@2:49PM]

ACTION: APPROVED 6-0

NOTE: Mr. Creem is a retired CPA who has participated in five ZBA meetings over the past year as an Associate Member. He finds petitions from property owners who have just violated the Zoning in new construction to be troubling and believes if granted at all, they should have strict restrictions to protect the neighborhood. The Committee thanked him for his continued willingness to serve and approved his appointment unanimously.

Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#468-06 EVE TAPPER, 24 Nathan Road, Newton Centre, appointed as a member of the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION for a term of office to expire on November 28, 2009. (Board action 2-9-07) [12-1-06@2:49PM]

ACTION: APPROVED 6-0

NOTE: Ms. Tapper is a part-time planner in the Town of Lexington who has been active in the work of the Newton Centre Task force. She finds much similarity between the issues in Lexington and those in Newton Centre. As Chair of the NCTF subcommittee on Design, she had been involved in developing proposed streetscape changes. She is a member of the "Better, Not Bigger" Subcommittee and has been surprised to find that even this group favors the elimination of the central parking lot and various street changes to accommodate the displaced parking. She and Alderman Danberg were urged to have the Task Force report out items on which they had consensus and continue working on the others. The Committee thanked her for her willingness to serve and approved her re-appointment unanimously.

Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#469-06 JAMES H. MITCHELL, 83 Countryside Road, Newton Centre, appointed as an *associate* member of the ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS (filling the associate member position vacated by Catherine Clement) for a term of office to expire on February 1, 2008. (Board action 2-9-07) [12-6-06@3:03PM]

ACTION: HELD 6-0

NOTE: Since Mr. Mitchell is a new appointee to the ZBA and was not present, his appointment was held unanimously.

Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#470-06 CAROLINE O'LEARY, 29 Glenwood Avenue, Newton Centre, appointed as a member of the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION for a term of office to expire on December 4, 2009. (Board action 2-9-07) [12-6-06@3:03PM]

ACTION: APPROVED 6-0

NOTE: Ms. O'Leary is an attorney who has been to EDC meetings and finds the type of issues the Commission handles to be of great interest. The Committee thanked her for her willingness to serve, noting that she will be particularly valuable since there are currently no attorneys on the EDC and voted unanimously to approve her appointment.

#316-06 ALD. YATES requesting a report from the Economic Development Commission on the reasons that the City of Newton was rated much lower as a possible site for technology companies than several surrounding communities by the Mass Track Project of the Mass. High Technology Council and to make recommendations as to how the city can increase the feasibility of such economic development in the city.

ACTION: NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0

NOTE: EDC Chair Gerard Adams presented the attached memo stating that Newton is actually comparable to the more developed communities around the state, but less highly ranked than Wellesley and Weston with their larger amounts of developable space. Neither Mr. Adams nor Mr. Kruse was familiar with the exact sources of the statistics on each community. There is little Newton can do to improve its ranking. Since the requested report had been made, the Sponsor moved No Action Necessary. The Motion passed 6-0.

#376-04 ALD. YATES requesting an amendment to Sec. 22-75 to allow the Economic Development Commission to exercise all the powers of an economic development and industrial corporation under Chapter 121 C of the General Laws upon a finding by the Board of Aldermen that there exists in the city conditions of unemployment or threat of future unemployment.

ACTION: HELD 6-0

NOTE: The Commission is uncertain if they want to be granted the powers to acquire, redevelop, and sell property allowed under Chapter 121C. They will focus on the possible use of this tool to make the Riverside development feasible and report to the Committee by the fall of this year. Since there was a possible use of the increased powers, the Committee voted to hold the item 6-0.

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After some discussion of future scheduling, all other items were held, and the Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Yates, Chairman