

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

REAL PROPERTY REUSE COMMITTEE REPORT
SPECIAL MEETING

MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2011

Present: Ald. Danberg (Chairman, Ald. Merrill, Salvucci, Linsky, Fischman, Crossley, and Baker; absent: Ald. Gentile

Also present: Ald. Lennon, Albright, Johnson, and Rice

City staff: Linda Finucane (Assistant Clerk of the Board), Eve Tapper (Chief Planner, Current Planning)

Also present: John Sisson, Newton Villages

#150-09(4) PRESIDENT LENNON submitting pursuant to §2-7(2)b) of the City of Newton Revised Ordinances, 2007 the following list of Aldermanic appointees to serve on a Joint Advisory Planning Group (JAPG) to make recommendations on the future use of the Austin Street municipal parking lot, which was declared surplus on December 1, 2010:

John Wilson, 30 Foster Street, Newtonville

Philip Herr, 20 Marlboro Street, Newton

Catherine Farrell, 67 Oak Cliff Road, Newtonville

Judy Jacobson, 289 Cypress Street, Newton Centre

Carol Ann Shea, 22-24 Milo Street, West Newton

Ken Wong, 25 Highland Avenue, #4, Newtonville

Giles Taylor, 10 Lowell Avenue, Newtonville

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

#150-09(5) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting pursuant to §2-7(2)b) of the City of Newton Revised Ordinances, 2007 the following list of Mayoral appointees to serve on a Joint Advisory Planning Group (JAPG) to make recommendations on the future use of the Austin Street municipal parking lot, which was declared surplus on December 1, 2010:

Jane Shoplick, 602 Centre Street, Newton

Rev. F. Robert Tafel, 29 Fisher Street, Needham (Board member of Swedenborgian Church of the Open Word, 11A Highland Avenue)

Barbara Smith-Bacon, 110 Waban Avenue, Waban

Rob Caruso, 237C Watertown Street, Nonantum

David Morton, 148 Edinboro Street, Newtonville

Jack Leader, 613 California Street, Newtonville

Adel Foz, 16 Page Road, Newtonville

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: The concept of developing the Austin Street parking lot and reconfiguring the parking began in 2005. The Newton Housing Plan Initiative (HAPI), whose goal is to help the city

implement housing-related aims, particularly those articulated in the Comprehensive Plan, held a number of workshops. After exploring a number of potential uses, HAPI ultimately envisioned a mixed residential/commercial development that would retain a number of the current parking spaces for the existing businesses and the Senior Center. This would be an opportunity for Newtonville and the city as a whole. A successful public/private partnership could bring the city not only tax revenue but in-kind benefits as well. (In December of 2010, the Commissioner of Public Works declared the Austin Street municipal parking lot surplus, with the caveat that the city retain not less than 85 parking spaces.)

Sec. 2-7, which sets forth the reuse process, requires the JAPG to work with the Planning & Development Department to identify alternatives for the future use of the subject surplus property. When both the JAPG and the Planning & Development Department complete their work, they file separate written reports with the Real Property Reuse Committee, which then holds a public hearing on the recommendations. Ultimately, the Board of Aldermen through the recommendation of the Real Property Reuse Committee sets a minimum sale/lease price and submits via resolutions to the Mayor its other recommendations relative to the future use of the property.

Tonight's special meeting was scheduled because the Ward 2 Aldermen wish the JAPG to begin its work as soon as possible so that it can complete its charge within the time prescribed in Sec. 2-7 in order to schedule a public hearing prior to the summer break. Alderman Linsky commended the appointees for their abilities, professional backgrounds, and diversity. Membership includes a direct residential abutter, a representative from a church that is also a direct abutter, a former Alderman, members who are well-known for community involvement, members who have been involved in the potential project from its inception, and members who are relatively new to community participation. Alderman Linsky pointed out that there are no forgone conclusions; the process will define the ultimate recommendation.

Alderman Merrill moved approved of both items, which motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Danberg, Chairman

N. B. Resumes for the fourteen appointees were attached to this evening's agenda. The Committee discussed docket item #150-09 on November 24, 2009 and March 23, May 25, and September 23, 2010 and committee reports are on the aldermanic web page under Committees/Real Property Reuse.