

CITY OF NORWALK
Norwalk City Hall
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Room 225
Norwalk, CT 06856-5125
P: 203-854-7791 / F: 203-857-0143

**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 2, 2021**

- ATTENDANCE:** George Tsiranides, Chairman; Barbara Smyth; Tom Keegan; Tom Livingston; Darlene Young; George Theodoridis
- STAFF:** Anthony Carr, Chief of Operations and Public Works; Vanessa Valadares, Principal Engineer; Darin Callahan, Assistant Corporation Counsel, Paul Sotnik, Senior Civil Engineer
- OTHERS:** David Heuvelman, Common Council Member; Kadeem Roberts, Common Council Member

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

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Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Monique Cipriano at to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

Mr. Tsiranides called to order the Public Works Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 2, 2021. He stated that the meeting is being done by video conference. He announced all of the Committee Members by name and each member responded for attendance. A quorum was present. Mr. Tsiranides gave instructions on how the public comment will be addressed. Public

comments via email or zoom video conferencing. Mr. Tsiranides began the meeting with the Public Input.

PUBLIC INPUT

Public input (Guests at Committee meetings may speak to any item on the agenda. Comments shall be limited to no more than three (3) minutes per speaker.)

Mr. Tsiranides opened public input and went over the public input item on the agenda. He informed all of those signed up to speak to keep their comments to three (3) minutes or under. He asked if there was anyone that wanted to speak.

Mr. Manzi replied no. There were no inquiries from the Department of Public Works.

NEW BUSINESS

1. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2021.

There was no report on this item.

****MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED THE ITEM
**MR. THEODORIDIS ABSTAINED
**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY WITH ONE (1)
ABSTENTION**

2. APPROVE THE TITLE VI - COMPLAINT PROCEDURE AS THE OFFICIAL POLICY FOR THE CITY OF NORWALK.

Chairman Tsiranides asked Mr. Carr if it should be complaint procedure or complaint policy.

Mr. Carr responded that procedure is okay and that it is a procedure that will be incorporated into policy. Mr. Carr explained that a Title VI Complaint is a complaint that a person who believes they are discriminated against on the basis of race, color or national origin, can facilitate a complaint, specifically in programs and activities that include federal funding. The Title VI complaint procedure allows an individual to basically submit a complaint formally to the City of Norwalk of any projects that they administer or procure where a person feels like they are treated unfairly. In 2019, Conn DOT initiated a Title VI DBE (Diverse Business Enterprise) Review because the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) began an audit of all the State Agencies that they delegate the federal authority to oversee federally funded projects that are state administered. Since Conn Dot was being audited, they began to audit all the municipalities and stakeholders that would have some kind of Title VI DBE. Now that Conn DOT began audits, the City of Norwalk had to adopt a procedure that provides an avenue for those who feel they have been discriminated against for projects that involve federal aid.

Ms. Valadares added that every federal highway project that receives funding from FHWA, is required by federal law that they have to engage DBE companies. She said that DPW

already does that with all of their federally funded and state funded projects. However, some departments, it is not always clear where some of the funding comes from especially if it comes from a grant which can be federally funded. They would like to implement this policy city-wide so if they have any kind of bid that would involve any federal money from FHWA, there would be procedures to follow. She said DPW has been going through this for a long time and they are helping the Legal and Purchasing Department to put everything together that will be necessary to follow those rules. Ms. Valadares explained how DPW advertises a bid and informs the bidder that x percent will have to be DBE. Also, throughout the project, they have to make sure that the company that was listed before when they accepted the bid, is performing and doing that kind of work.

Ms. Young asked where they are with this and wanted to know about the numbers and how they have been doing with DBE.

Ms. Valadares answered that they, as the City, if they just have a City project, they are not required under their statute to work with DBE. She said that is a federal law and usually when they receive any federal grant that is when they will follow those procedures. She assured the Committee that any projects coming through DPW are in compliance and if they are not they will not be reimbursed by the State. She said this is to ensure that other departments are aware of this law and follow the procedures.

Mr. Carr said that each project typically has a MBE (Minority Business Enterprise), WBE (Women's Business Enterprise) or a DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) and they usually have a goal for that project, which could be 5% WBE, and you would have to make every attempt to meet that goal. If the goal is not met by the contractor, they will have to document good faith efforts to show they have tried to meet the five percent if they fell short. The goal will vary between projects and grants.

Mr. Livingston asked if that is the federally mandated language.

Ms. Valadares answered yes it is. She said that the Legal Department asked them to put it on for approval and Mr. Callahan put that language together.

Mr. Carr stated that they worked with Darin Callahan on this task. He said there may be more work to do for the Title VI.

Ms. Young asked for more clarification.

Ms. Valadares stated that this would be for everyone in the City. If a department receives any grants, they will have to be sure that those funds are not coming from the FHWA and if they are the department must follow the Title VI.

****MS. SMYTH MOVED THE ITEM
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

CHAIRMAN TSIRANIDES READ ITEM #3, ITEM #4 AND ITEM #5 TOGETHER AS THEY RELATE TO EACH OTHER.

- 3. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND AI ENGINEERS, INC. FOR PROJECT D.P.W. 2021-1 ON-CALL ENGINEERING SERVICES. THE AGREEMENT IS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR, BILLABLE ON AN HOURLY BASIS, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000.00, WITH AN OPTION TO EXTEND FOR TWO (2) ADDITIONAL TERMS OF ONE (1) YEAR EACH.**

ACCOUNT NO. 01 40 30 5258

09 21 4021 5777 C0021	09 21 4021 5777 C0617
09 21 4021 5777 C0234	09 20 4027 5777 C0643
09 21 4021 5777 C0315	09 21 4027 5777 C0643
09 21 4021 5777 C0440	09 21 6030 5777 C0365
09 19 4021 5777 C0471	09 19 6030 5777 C0367
09 20 4021 5777 C0471	09 15 6030 5777 C0546
09 21 4021 5777 C0471	09 20 6030 5777 C0657
09 17 4021 5777 C0526	09 21 6030 5777 C0321
09 19 4021 5777 C0617	
09 20 4021 5777 C0617	

- 4. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND WESTON & SAMPSON ENGINEERS, INC. FOR PROJECT D.P.W. 2021-1 ON-CALL ENGINEERING SERVICES. THE AGREEMENT IS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR, BILLABLE ON AN HOURLY BASIS, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000.00, WITH AN OPTION TO EXTEND FOR TWO (2) ADDITIONAL TERMS OF ONE (1) YEAR EACH.**

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09 17 4021 5777 C0526	09 21 6030 5777 C0321
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5. **AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND TIGHE & BOND, INC. FOR PROJECT D.P.W. 2021-1 ON-CALL ENGINEERING SERVICES. THE AGREEMENT IS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR, BILLABLE ON AN HOURLY BASIS, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000.00, WITH AN OPTION TO EXTEND FOR TWO (2) ADDITIONAL TERMS OF ONE (1) YEAR EACH.**

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09 17 4021 5777 C0526	09 21 6030 5777 C0321
09 19 4021 5777 C0617	
09 20 4021 5777 C0617	

Mr. Carr reported on this. He said that those three (3) contracts are for on-call engineering services which is basically to assist DPW Engineering with construction oversight of select and specialized capital projects and also to assist with a land use or site plan review. This is the first time they are doing something like this but since they are short staffed, they are working with Purchasing and the Law Department on this. They have agreed on the number of consultants that should be ultimately selected which is three (3) which allows versatility because each consultant tends to have a stronger background discipline than the other and to keep each other honest. He explained how they were selected and the process.

Chairman Tsiranides stated he is familiar with Tighe & Bond but not so much with the other two (2) so he asked about AI Engineers and Weston & Sampson.

Ms. Valadares responded that they are trying to find a few companies that would help them with some of the work as they are short staffed. She emphasized that this work is not for big task. They selected three (3) companies that had very broad base to help out with small tasks. She said there were 13 companies that applied and they short listed to six (6) and they selected three (3). These companies could also assist with obtaining permits when needed. AI was one (1) of the top companies they selected because they have a wide subjects they could cover for them particularly like structural and bridge. Tighe & Bond are very familiar with the City Standards and they actually helped putting them together back in the 80's. They are also very experienced with grants that could benefit the City in the future. She said these companies would be able to service the City in a bunch of different areas.

Mr. Sotnik stated that the overall process was very competitive. They asked each company to bring along all the people that would potentially be working on the projects so they could be interviewed as well. That enable them to get a bigger picture of what they can bring to the table.

Mr. Livingston asked about staffing and open positions.

Ms. Valadares stated there are six (6) vacant positions, senior engineer and five (5) junior engineers. They have advertised the senior engineer position and two (2) junior engineer positions. The other three (3) junior engineer positions job description will be changed to

adapt to their needs. One (1) position is construction inspection which will be a transfer from TMP. The official transfer will take place mid-February and that position will be for Frank Mauro. One (1) will be a drafter. They currently only have one (1) drafter in-house and he is kept busy all day. This new position could assist the drafter that is in-house. The last junior engineer position is being discussed whether it should stay a junior engineer position or not.

Mr. Livingston asked about the hiring market for junior engineers since in the past it had been difficult to find.

Ms. Valadares responded that she would be able to answer that question next month. She has been advertising everywhere and they have been calling a lot of interns that worked for them. They are also advertising through UCONN looking for a soon to be graduate. The senior engineer position is going out for the second time. They found someone but unfortunately it didn't work out at the last minute. The RFQ is needed because they will help out with the small things that are just as important and take as much time as the big things.

Mr. Sotnik said that the civil engineering right now is a very competitive field in a variety of places.

Ms. Smyth asked if salaries are the issue for finding civil engineers.

Ms. Valadares answered that the market now is still very good for construction particularly during COVID construction was essential with people moving out of the cities and into the suburbs. She began to discuss the package and since there is no longer a pension, it is not as attractive.

Ms. Smyth asked if all the positions were filled, would they not need to go to the consultants or do they foresee that they might need on occasion.

Ms. Valadares replied that they would still need them because their work is increasing in a good way. She said they also give support to other departments like TMP and Recreation and Parks. If there is anything that is a big project, they will put out a RFP.

Mr. Sotnik said that some of those items that the firms would complete are very specialty structural engineering items that they would need someone to do anyway.

****MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED THE ITEM
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute any and all documents necessary to acquire an easement at 473 Connecticut Avenue for purposes of constructing, operating, maintaining, repairing and replacing a pump station.

Mr. Chairman asked if this was the property they spoke about in the past, an Eversource property that they are looking to construct a whole new pump station.

Mr. Carr replied yes.

Mr. Chairman asked if this was for a permanent easement.

Mr. Carr responded yes. He said it is not a temporary easement or a construction access easement, this is permanent easement to construct, operate, maintain, repair and replace components of the new pump station as needed. The current pump station was constructed in the 1970's and it's approximately 30 feet deep. There have been ongoing maintenance issues since 2003. The WPCA has done a good job providing the maintenance with the contract formerly OMI and now SUEZ. This pump station is also identified as one of the 15 pump stations in the City's Sanitary Sewer Pump Station Master Plan to be replaced in the very near future. This is the approval for a permanent easement on Eversource property to construct a new pump station on the other side of the parcel away from the existing pump station. They have been negotiating with Eversource for approximately one (1) year. They were difficult and challenging at times when it came to getting answers. Their requirements were stringent on how they would like to see the pump station demolished. Eversource wanted them to go 30 feet down and remove everything and fill with concrete which would have been very expensive. He said typically industry standard is you go 10 feet into the ground, leave everything else below it and fill it with concrete or sand or whatever approved material. This pump station is also located in the FEMA 100 year floodway, so you might hear the word floodplain or the word floodway. The floodway is basically the middle of the waterway where the velocity and the flow of the water is the fastest and most damaging and as the water level rises and it goes to the edges, the water is typically slower, that is called the flood fringe but when you hear the 100 year floodplain, that is the fringe which is the outer part and then there is the floodway which is the inner part. He said nothing can be approved or constructed within today's standards within the FEMA floodway. This project would get the existing pump station out of the 100 year floodway and completely out of the floodplain in its entirety. CTDEEP was very much in support of this and they pushed Eversource to work with the City. It was agreed to dig down to 10 feet. They have an easement right now around the existing pump station because in the past back in the 1970's they needed it. They are taking the same easement, same boundary and applying it now to the new pump station. He said this is about a 5 million dollar project, 3 million will go towards the pump station but another 2 million will be allocated toward improving about 2500 linear feet of the force main which is the pipe that leaves the pump station under pressure so it can get into the sanitary sewer system.

Mr. Livingston asked what portion is being paid by WPCA.

Mr. Carr responded the entire project is being funded by WPCA.

Mr. Livingston asked about the location.

Mr. Kolb responded that it is adjacent to Keeler Brook right next to Chic-A-Fila.

Mr. Chairman asked about the average life span of a pump station.

Mr. Kolb said that pumps and piping can last about 30 years, the building itself can last 50 years. He said that overtime components that fail are rehabilitated in effort to extend the useful life of the station and equipment.

Mr. Chairman asked if the location will run into any problems with high power voltage lines above with Eversource.

Mr. Kolb responded that where the new easement is there are restrictions due to the high power tension wires so they will only be allowed to have a one-story building within a two-story zone. He said they are going to ZBA for a variance later this month.

Mr. Livingston asked to be clear, they are looking for the approval of the easement and not for funding.

Mr. Kolb responded correct.

****MR. THEORODIS MOVED THE ITEM
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

7. Approve the East Norwalk Village District Standards as part of the City of Norwalk Department of Public Works Standard Detail Drawing.

Mr. Carr reported on this. He stated that Appendix E, which is the design guidelines for the East Norwalk Neighborhood TOD Plan Transit Oriented Development from June 2020, but in this plan there is language that references the protection enhancement of historic design character, maintaining the landscape historic structures density developments. He said engineering and DPW provides support to the plan. He said it is to maintain and preserve a certain aesthetic quality and a historical character in that area. They have been tasked to construct and include a set of standard construction details that would be incorporated into the DPW Standard Detail Drawings so that any future development in that area would follow this standardization.

Ms. Valadares stated that they have specific City standards that apply to a few areas in town. She said they are incorporating their designs and making sure that when it moves forward they already have it in their plans. She gave an example of South Norwalk and the red brick pavers on the sidewalks. Everyone will have to follow the standards for that area. They are trying to close the loop and DPW will be able to enforce the standards. She said they are cleaning up their drawings and standards to hopefully bring them before the Committee by March or April to adopt the latest revision. They are creating separate pages for each historic or village area that they have in town. She said she is bringing for approval the standard that would apply to the East Norwalk Village.

Mr. Livingston asked if the Department was doing the actual design or if that would be coming out of Steve Kleppin's group with the outside architects.

Ms. Valadares answered East Avenue TOD already had the design guidelines approved under that study. She said they are using the accepted pictures from their design into the Departments details.

Ms. Smyth said her question is for Steve Kleppin, the drawings are beautiful but she is not really getting the picture of what it would be so if she goes back into those approved plans, would she be able to get a visual of what it would look like.

Mr. Kleppin answered yes one (1) of the appendices to the TOD plan was the design guidelines. The design guidelines encompassed everything from architectural to signage to crosswalks to sidewalks and roadway standards. He said that Ms. Valadares is more diligent in this area and has moved ahead with the streetscape part of that due to where they are with DOT on the East Avenue Improvements overall. He said that is one (1) of the components that was approved as part of the plan.

Ms. Young asked where would any green infrastructure guidelines or standards be presented that would be well past this stage of rendering.

Mr. Kleppin said he will let Mr. Carr and Ms. Valadares speak to anything within the right-of-way to that regard, then asked if she was referring to a presentation that he gave to the Planning Committee and Council about the need for more mandating and requiring more green infrastructure and more sustainability measures into the requirements for any of the programs or any of the projects going forward so he has a consultant that's reviewing some of that language and he should be done probably in about a week or two. He will start working on the actual zoning text just revising what was drafted then come back to the Planning Committee and review that before that advances too far with the Zoning Commission.

Ms. Young asked if the renderings or the drawings would complement that now or would they look different.

Ms. Valadares said that on this particular one (1) they are not addressing any green infrastructure because they are just transforming the pictures into drawings. She said in the future if anything else is included in that, they can also revise the drawings and include that. Under the DPW Drainage Manual, they emphasize the use of some green infrastructure as one way of improving the water quality control. They always look at the drainage when anything comes in for approval and now it is not allowed to let any runoff to a 25 year storm to our system and they would have to keep all that water within the parcel. She said a way to improve that number is to add some green infrastructure in place. They are trying to make that happen more often in their projects. She said if Planning and Zoning comes up with something to make it some kind of mandatory then they will do the same thing. They will revise their standards and implement and then bring it forward for final approval.

Ms. Young thanked her.

****MS. SMYTH MOVED THE ITEM**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Chairman motioned to table the Information/Discussion Items to the March 2021 meeting due to the Public Works Department working long hard hours with the snow. Motioned passed unanimously.

The Committee thanked Mr. Carr and his team for doing such a great job.

INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

A. DISCUSSION

1. PROJECT STATUS

a. SEDIMENT REMOVAL CONTRACT UPDATE

**b. DREAMY HOLLOW DRAINAGE SYSTEM
IMPROVEMENTS UPDATE**

There was no report on Discussion Items. Tabled until next meeting

B. MONTHLY SOLID WASTE REPORT – DECEMBER 2020

There was no report on the Monthly Solid Waste. Tabled until next meeting

UPCOMING PROJECTS

**ADJOURNMENT MR. THEODORIDIS MOTIONED TO ADJOURN.
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:53P.M.**

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
7:00 P.M. LOCATION TBD**