

CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 3, 2010

ATTENDANCE: Andrew Conroy, Chair; Nora King; Kelly Straniti;
John Tobin;
Fred Bondi (7:37 p.m.); Douglas Hempstead (7:37 p.m.)

STAFF: Hal Alvord, Public Works Director

OTHERS: Elton Fowler, Old Field Road

Mr. Conroy called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. Fowler talked about the request to close off one portion of Old Field Road.

Mr. Bondi and Mr. Hempstead joined the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Mr. Fowler read a written statement requesting that speed bumps be installed on Old Field Road. He asked if it was within the responsibility of the DPW to determine the opinions of the adjacent neighbors. He said that he and his neighbors were concerned about safety on their streets and will continue to beg and plead for the City to approve their petition to close the street.

Mr. Conroy said that a number of committee members suggested looking at installing speed bumps, but that would need more information from the department. He added that there was no support for closing the road. Mr. Alvord said that this would go to the Traffic Authority. This came to the department when the neighbors wanted to dead end the street.

Mr. Conroy explained to Mr. Fowler that Mr. Alvord is the director and has the necessary qualifications and works for the Mayor. The Committee does not direct him or the rest of the staff. Safety on the streets is the purview of the Traffic Authority and the Director of Public Works. Mr. Conroy said that he did not believe they will get enough Council votes to close the street.

Mr. Tobin said that when he looked at the area, it did not make sense that speed bumps were not installed. Mr. Conroy said that he thought the same thing. Mr. Tobin said that he does not like speed bumps, but there is a disconnect there. Mr. Conroy said that he wants to solve this problem, but does not want to pursue road closure.

Mr. Bondi said that he agreed with Mr. Conroy. He said that the closure at Ohio Avenue was due to poor site lines. He said that when the speed bumps were being installed, whoever was the more vocal got the speed bumps. He said that he voted against a few of them.

Mr. Conroy asked for a consensus. Mr. Bondi said that he was opposed to installing speed bumps. Ms. Straniti suggested removing the speed bumps from the surrounding roads. She said that she was more in favor of re-striping the road, planting trees closer to the road or having the Police park the speed sign on the road.

Ms. King said that she was in favor of closing the road, but also feels that the speed bumps should go down immediately. Mr. Bondi asked if they could create bicycle lanes. Mr. Alvord said that he is meeting with the consultants who can determine the best location for speed bumps. Ms. King asked about installing white gates on the road. Mr. Alvord said that they are unsafe and only used on private roads.

Mr. Conroy asked Mr. Alvord to have the consultants come to the next Committee meeting. Mr. Alvord said that he is meeting with them tomorrow to finalize the scope of the traffic calming project. Mr. Hempstead suggested removing all of the speed bumps, so that it is a level playing field.

Mr. Tobin said that although he does not like speed bumps, basically the entire neighborhood had them so this road should have gotten them too. Mr. Conroy said that he wants the consultants to discuss speed bumps with the Committee.

Mr. Fowler asked if there was an estimated time for a decision on the petition put forth to the City. Mr. Alvord said that the action to either approve or disapprove will be taken by the Traffic Authority. He said that it would take 12-18 months for the traffic study to be completed. Ms. King

suggested recommending to the Traffic Authority that they approve speed bumps right away to help them out.

Mr. Hempstead asked Mr. Alvord to put traffic counters on Old Field Road. Mr. Alvord said that he has done that four times already and at various time. Mr. Tobin asked why they would need traffic counts if they already have the data. Mr. Alvord said that the volume of traffic has grown on Old Field Road, the same as everywhere else in the City. The speeds were 85% within the speed limit.

Ms. King said that she was all for studies, but everything takes forever. Mr. Fowler and his group started this in 2006 and it is now 2010. Mr. Conroy asked that the consultant to establish this as a test case.

Mr. Hempstead asked Mr. Fowler whose house would get the speed bump. He said that this was a problem when they were first installed. Mr. Fowler said that they discussed this and closing the street was the top solution. He said that he will see about re-opening the discussion about speed bumps and where to place them in the neighborhood.

Mr. Conroy requested that the Public Works department take this item and add it as a piece of the traffic calming study. He said that the department recommended against closing the street, but he wants to revisit the speed bumps. Ms. King said that she is not opposed to closing the road. She said that she wants to see the neighbors get a solution that is not two years away.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Project Updates

Bridges:

Old Tokeneke Bridge – Mr. Alvord said that he has all of the permits and approvals. The bids are due back on August 26th. He said that he offered Mr. Steeger, Darien Public Works information, but he refused. Mr. Alvord said that he also offered Mr. Steeger stones from the bridge that he could use for landscaping and he refused. Mr. Steeger requested a copy of the bids.

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Mr. Alvord said that a full DEP permit is necessary and it will take a year to get the permit. Ms. King asked for a update on the clean up at Rowayton Fuel. Mr. Conroy said that after the job is done, the curb will be moved out to make it a standard street. Mr. Alvord said that they hope to begin work in September. Mayor Moccia is talking to Mr. Campbell, the First Selectman in Darien about funding.

Building Management:

City Hall Cupola Repair and Painting – Mr. Alvord said that the job has been completed. The company was good to work with.

Bridges: (continued)

DOT Coordination Rte. 123 Bridge Replacement – Mr. Alvord said that the steel is being held up due to the utilities. He said that there is a tattered American flag on one of the two red beams. He contacted the project manager to ask him to remove or replace the flag. He has not yet had a response from him.

Drainage/Sewer Extension:

Watercourse Maintenance & Stormwater Management Plan – Mr. Alvord said that he does not have the resources for this project. He said that every year he asks for funding and is denied every year.

Meadow Street Channel Dredging – Mr. Alvord reported that they are working on Meadow Street and the levy on the Norwalk River. He said that he had to drop some projects to focus on others that were not anticipated. The only way to do simultaneous projects is to have more engineers. Mr. Conroy asked Mr. Alvord to begin looking at capital items.

Ms. King suggested leveraging outside consultants. Mr. Alvord said that it takes professional staff to oversee the consultants. Ms. King said that he could hire an independent contractor. Mr. Conroy asked how many staff are represented by the union. Mr. Alvord said that he is the only one not represented by the union. Mr. Conroy asked Mr. Alvord to come up with a plan.

Mr. Conroy asked Mr. Alvord if he has gotten a copy of the New Canaan study. Mr. Alvord said that he has not seen it. Ms. King said that the Mayor has a copy of the entire study.

Traffic:

Strawberry Hill Traffic Calming – Mr. Alvord said that he had to pull a person off of this project to work on the levy project.

Roads:

Ms. Straniti told Mr. Alvord that the paving projects look great.

Ms. King said that areas on Martin Luther King Drive are overgrown. She asked who is responsible for clearing that. Mr. Alvord said that it depended upon the location. Different people are responsible for different areas. Ms. King asked how to get the area cleaned. Mr. Alvord said that if it is the responsibility of the City, he has to prioritize the projects. Ms. Straniti said that the City approved hiring a part time constable. Mr. Alvord explained that the initial focus of this position is to provide education to the residents. The first visit will be a courtesy visit, if the constable goes back a second time, they will issue a warning and the third time they will issue a fine. This will be a 20 hour a week position.

Norwalk Transfer Station

Mr. Alvord distributed the July 2010 report. He said that garbage and recycling are down significantly.

Additional Information Items

Yard Waste Collection

Mr. Tobin said that he has been getting calls from seniors who are concerned about the number of yard waste pick ups. Ms. King said that she has also gotten calls about the lack of pick ups. Mr. Alvord said that in previous years they were able to schedule more pickups. Ms. King said that the pick ups are scheduled to end too early in the season.

Mr. Bondi asked about using a vacuum truck to pick up the leaves. Mr. Alvord said that he does not have vacuum trucks. This year he purchased a leaf truck, but that can only be used in unique situations.

Mr. Tobin asked Mr. Alvord what he could say to the seniors who are calling him. Mr. Alvord told him to tell them that they are focusing on public safety first. They do not have the additional staff to do yard waste collection. He said that people can take their leaves to the yard debris site. Mr. Bondi said that he composts his yard waste. Mr. Hempstead said that until the 1980's the City did not have yard waste pick up.

Mr. Alvord said that there will be four pick ups during this calendar year; last year there were eight. Ms. King said that she was totally opposed to this. Mr. Alvord said that he could shift the dates, depending upon the weather. Mr. Conroy suggested scheduling three dates in the fall, with two pick ups in November. Mr. Alvord explained that safety and or liability issues to the City are their priority.

BUSINESS PORTION

** MR. BONDI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF TUESDAY, JULY 6, 2010

The following corrections were made to the minutes:

Page 2 last paragraph, first sentence should read: Ms. Straniti said that she thought that adding speed bumps would push the traffic onto other streets.

Page 3: third paragraph, last sentence should read: He said that if something is going to be done, it has to be done at the intersection of Highland Avenue and Witch Lane as well.

Eighth paragraph, first sentence should read: Mr. Conroy asked Mr. Linnartz to construct a test case on this road within the framework of the traffic study

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT TO ISSUE PURCHASE ORDERS TO INTERNATIONAL SALT COMPANY, LLC FOR ROAD SALT FOR SNOW AND ICE CONTROL, PRICING NOT TO EXCEED \$71.24 PER TON FOR NORMAL DELIVERY AND \$74.24 PER TON FOR AFTER-HOUR DELIVERY EFFECTIVE FOR THE 2010-2011 WINTER SEASON
ACCOUNT NO. 0140 25 5322

AND TO AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT TO ISSUE PURCHASE ORDERS TO WECARE ORGANICS, LLC FOR TREATED ROAD SALT FOR SNOW AND ICE CONTROL, PRICING NOT TO EXCEED \$88.33 PER TON FOR NORMAL AND AFTER-HOUR DELIVERY EFFECTIVE FOR THE 2010-2011 WINTER SEASON
ACCOUNT NO. 0140 25 5322

Mr. Alvord explained that these are competitive bids. The prices are better than last year. He said that this is going to be a major expense. If they exceed the budget, he will need to request a special appropriation.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

** MS. STRANITI MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH MALCOLM PIRNIE, INC. TO PROVIDE ENGINEERING AND TESTING SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE DREDGING PORTIONS OF THE MEADOW STREET SALT MARSH AND FOR DREDGING AT THE CITY OUTFILL PIPE LOCATED AT NORWEST MARINE, FOR A TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED \$9,500
ACCOUNT NO. 09094027-5777-C0440

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

** MR. BONDI MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT WITH EMPIRE PAVING, INC. FOR PROPOSED PAVEMENT PRESERVATION PROJECT, STATE PROJECT 102-335, FEDERAL AID PROJECT 1102 (109), FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$45,000
ACCOUNT NO. 0910 4021 5777 C0493

Mr. Alvord explained that they exceeded their contract bonus amount. Ms. King asked if they were being paid to do a good job. Mr. Alvord said that there are a number of contracts with incentive clauses.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2010

** MR. BONDI MOVED TO ADJOURN

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services