

**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
JULY 6, 2010**

ATTENDANCE: Andrew Conroy, Chair; Fred Bondi; Douglas Hempstead; Nora King; Laurel Lindstrom; Kelly Straniti; John Tobin

STAFF: Dick Linnartz, DPW

OTHERS: Larry Ruttenberg, Buckingham Place; Shannon Tchkotoua, Old Field Road; Karen Randmer, Buckingham Place; Elton Fowler, Old Field Road

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

PUBLIC INPUT

1. Public Input

Mr. Ruttenberg, Buckingham Place asked for an update and time frame for the work being done on Buckingham Place and Lockwood Lane.

Ms. Shannon Tchkotoua, Old Field Road said that she was here to speak about Old Field Road. She said that there is significant speeding on that street, which was confirmed by a traffic study. She said that a truck crashed into her yard at 7:30 in the morning last year and damaged her car.

Ms. Tchkotoua proposed that the City close off Old Field Road by constructing a grass curbed strip. She said that this was done successfully at Ohio Avenue.

Ms. King said that she runs in that area and is surprised at the number of service vehicles going through the street. She said that it is dangerous. Mr. Conroy said that he lives across the street from Ms. Tchkotoua.

Mr. Bondi noted that Ohio Avenue was dead ended due to site issues. Mr. Bondi asked if blocking Old Field Road would cause issues with emergency vehicles. Mr. Conroy said that the First Responders come up from the south.

Mr. Fowler, Old Field Road said that there is a similarity between Old Field Road and Ohio Avenue. He said that traffic shifted when the City installed speed bumps on Bouchard Lane and Memory Lane. He said that it is frightening and that they are requesting to have one end of Old Field Road closed.

Mr. Conroy asked Mr. Fowler about requesting making the street one way. Mr. Fowler said that he believes that Mr. Alvord told him that making the street one way would make people speed even more.

Ms. King asked about installing white gats and making the road one way. Mr. Hempstead said that when speed bumps are installed it shifts the traffic to another street.

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO TAKE THE AGENDA OUT OF ORDER
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

GENERAL INFORMATION

a. Old Field Road

Mr. Linnartz explained that the Traffic Authority asked to have this item placed on the agenda for discussion. He said that the Public Works Department does not recommend making any changes. Ms. Lindstrom said that installing speed bumps in some neighborhoods did an excellent job. Mr. Linnartz said that Old Field Road did not petition for speed bumps when the City was installing them.

Mr. Linnartz said that Ohio Avenue is not the same situation as Old Field Road. He said that the department understands what is going on but dead ending the road or making it one way is not a solution. He said that he is not convinced that Old Field Road is unsafe and said that they did not get Police reports regarding Old Field Road. Mr. Linnartz said that Planning and Zoning has specific regulations regarding dead ending roads.

Ms. Lindstrom said that according to the memo, the residents of Old Field Place were opposed to the closing of Old Field Road.

Mr. Fowler said that he takes this personally. The process started with his letter to Mr. Alvord in 2006 asking the City to take this action. He said that Old Field Place does not have the safety issues like Old Field Road; he said that safety trumps inconvenience.

Mr. Hempstead reiterated that speed bumps shift traffic from one street to another. He suggested either placing speed bumps on Old Field Road or removing them from Memory Lane.

Ms. Straniti said that she did not think adding speed bumps would push traffic onto other streets. Ms. King said that Greenwich and Stamford had good luck with closing or dead ending streets. Mr. Conroy asked about Mr. Alvord's feeling about this. Mr. Linnartz said that the speed bump program was suspended because of these issues. When the list got to 80 streets, it was closed. The new program may resurrect it.

Mr. Linnartz said that they can't close the street because it was designed as a public street; it is an alternative to Highland Avenue. Mr. Fowler said that he expects each elected official to vote for dead ending the street if it means the safety of the residents.

Ms. Lindstrom said that once the city-wide traffic management plan begins there will be other options. She said that a good rationale is needed as to why that street should be dead ended.

Mr. Bondi said that what was done on Raymond Terrace was a mistake because people cut in to other streets. It hasn't slowed down the traffic and it is an inconvenience to the people who live on the street. Mr. Conroy noted that this item is an information item and not a public hearing. He said that if something is going to be done, it has to be done at the intersection of Highland Avenue and Witch Lane.

Ms. Lindstrom said that she took absolute exception to what Mr. Bondi said. She said that resident on Raymond Terrace say that the traffic is slower and safer and to continually repeat those comments in inaccurate. She said that it does benefit the street to have traffic calming, but they have to look at the comprehensive plan. The residents of Old Field Road did not petition for speed bumps.

Ms. King explained that the reason the traffic is worse now is because it is not 1960; the traffic volume has increased and there has been a lot of development in Rowayton.

Ms. Straniti said that about 5-6 years ago when the speed bump program was eliminated, there were issues with emergency vehicles traveling over them. She said that although she is all in favor of eliminating the problem, she is not in favor of speed bumps.

Mr. Hempstead said that people did not want them place in front of their homes. He added that all it would do is put more traffic on Highland Avenue. Mr. Linnartz said that it would cost \$30,000 to install speed bumps on a typical street.

Mr. Conroy asked Mr. Linnartz to conduct a test case on this road by the next meeting. He said that he would rather not close off the road, because Rowayton was so closed off during a storm in the early 1990s. He said that if the street is blocked it will create a problem with emergency vehicle access.

Ms. Tchkotoua asked about the possibility of installing gates on the street. Mr. Linnartz said that objects could not be placed in the street because they would obstruct traffic, but if they wanted them, they could petition to make it a private road.

Mr. Conroy said that the Committee could revisit this issue at the next meeting. He said that they need more information about traffic calming.

1. **Project updates**

Drainage/Sewer Extension:

Buckingham/Lockwood Pipe Replacement – Mr. Linnartz explained that they are pursuing easements with the Law Department. Mr. Ruttenberg said that he was told by Mr. Alvord that he expected the bid to go out by the end of June. Mr. Linnartz said that he is not optimistic about completing the project this calendar year.

Mr. Bondi asked about the flooding since the culverts were cleared on Fitch Street. Mr. Ruttenberg said that it is not as severe as before; there were times he expected worse flooding.

Bridges:

James Street and Perry Avenue – Mr. Linnartz said that they are at DOT waiting for the preliminary design.

Old Tokeneke Bridge – the money is in the budget. Mr. Linnartz said that he has not heard from Darien. Ms. King said that she does not see that the footbridge has been added to the project plan. Mr. Linnartz explained that the footbridge is a separate project with the DEP.

Ms. King said that she has been asking Mr. Alvord to clean up that area for months. Mr. Bondi said that is a Zoning problem and a Zoning violation can be issued. Mr. Hempstead said that for the next meeting he would like to know where Darien is on this. Ms. King said that she is afraid that it will be taken down and that it will look like a dump. Mr. Linnartz explained that all of the land is on the State's right of way.

RT. 123 Bridge Replacement – Mr. Bondi said that he saw that the construction company was working for a few days and then disappeared. Mr. Linnartz said that the people at the State said that the steel will be coming in October. He added that the intersection will not exist the way it is today.

Building Management:

City Hall – cupola repair and painting – Mr. Hempstead said that it looks great.

Old Police Headquarters – Mr. Linnartz reported that the demolition is supposed to start this month.

Drainage/Sewer Extension: (continued)

Watercourse Maintenance – Mr. Linnartz said that the major projects are waiting for commitments of staff time. Mr. Hempstead asked if there is a reason they cannot get engineers. Mr. Linnartz explained that the intent is to identify priorities and get them approved before hiring consultants. He added that staff is becoming available as they get closer to the final stages of certain projects. He said that he believes they will make significant strides as the long term projects get finalized.

Five Mile River – Mr. Conroy said that federal funding was made available for water quality management. Mr. Conroy asked if New Canaan shared the results of the study. Ms. King said that she believes it was sent to the Mayor's office.

b. Levee Certification – Norwalk River LPP

Mr. Linnartz said that the memo explaining this item is in the package. Ms. Lindstrom asked about additional cost. Mr. Linnartz said that he believes it will cost between \$50 – 60,000.

Traffic:

Route 1 Improvements – Mr. Linnartz explained that the intent is to make it a 4-lane road. They also want to look at the intersection of East Avenue and Westport Avenue.

Safe Routes to School – Mr. Linnartz said that this has been submitted to the State and they expect the final designs.

Mr. Linnartz reviewed the paving program. Mr. Hempstead asked if someone would check Noah's Lane during a heavy rain.

East Avenue Improvements – Mr. Linnartz said that they had a meeting with the DOT on the right of way portion of the project. The green strips were re-created on the upper section where they currently exist. In addition, they had two utility meetings. He said that the right of way properties have to be mapped.

Sidewalks:

Mr. Linnartz reported that the money in the budget is being used to do curbs and sidewalks where they are needed. Ms. King asked about footpaths. Mr. Hempstead said that he wants to make Norwalk walkable. Mr. Linnartz explained that most of the footpaths are not adequate for pedestrians. Mr. Conroy said that he would like to see the existing ones maintained.

Ms. Lindstrom asked about the protocol for residents to repair their sidewalks. She said that a resident on the lower portion of East Avenue had concerns about various locations. Mr. Linnartz suggested that she call customer service because they can generate a work request.

2. Norwalk Transfer Station.

Mr. Conroy suggested that the Committee members read the report. He distributed the June 2010 report.

3. Additional Information Items.

Ms. King asked why the residents have to separate their recyclables when the people on the trucks don't do that. Mr. Bondi and Ms. Lindstrom said that they see paper and plastic separated on the trucks. They said that there is a divider on the trucks.

Levee Certification (continued)

Mr. Linnartz said that they have 12 months to get it recertified.

BUSINESS PORTION

- ** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF TUESDAY MAY 4, 2010 AS PRESENTED**
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MS. STRANITI)**

- ** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA, TO EXECUTE THE SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR FEDERAL LOCAL BRIDGE PROGRAM, STATE PROJECT NO. 102-315, REHABILITATION OF THE WESTMERE AVENUE BRIDGE**

Mr. Linnartz said that this item will be presented as a resolution at the next Common Council meeting.

- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA, TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT WITH DEERING CONSTRUCTION, INC. FOR PROJECT NO. PM 2010-1, PROPOSED PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$2,000,000.00**

AND TO AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS TO EXECUTE ORDERS ON CONTRACT TO DEERING CONSTRUCTION, INC. FOR PROJECT NO. PM 2010-1, PROPOSED PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$200,000.00

Mr. Linnartz distributed the 2010 schedule. He explained that the work is scheduled in specific geographical areas. He said that the total amount available is \$5 million. He said that West Avenue has issues with traffic control equipment and the ramps.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) VOTE IN OPPOSITION (MR. HEMPSTEAD)**

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO EXECUTE THE PERSONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR THE 2009 NORWALK GENERAL URBAN FORESTRY PROJECT GRANT (CALF PASTURE BEACH ROAD AND HIGHLAND AVENUE) GRANT AMOUNT OF \$8,000.00; 50% MATCHING GRANT ACCOUNT NUMBERS 0908 4021 5777 C0233 AND 0909 4021 5777 C0233**

Mr. Conroy asked the Committee to send any major road issues they have to Mr. Alvord by the next meeting.

Ms. King asked about pot hole repairs. Mr. Linnartz said that they are done by the highway crew.

Mr. Bondi said that a person is interested in selling the City 14 acres of wetland. He asked if the City is interested in something like that. Mr. Hempstead noted that Mr. Crossland donated his property to the City. Mr. Conroy suggested that they talk to the Conservation Commission.

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services

Respectfully submitted,
Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services