

**CITY OF NORWALK  
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
DECEMBER 1, 2009**

**ATTENDANCE:** Andrew Conroy, Chairman, Fred Bondi (7:45 p.m.); Douglas Hempstead; Nora King; Laurel Lindstrom; John Tobin; Kelly Straniti (8:15 p.m.).

**STAFF:** Hal Alvord, Director of Public Works

**OTHERS:** Diane Cece, Carmen DiElsi, Larry Ruttenberg

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Conroy called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and introduced the new members of the committee and welcomed all to the first Public Works Committee meeting with the City's newly elected officials. He stated that there would be a change in order of agenda items versus previous meetings to allow members of the public the opportunity to hear project updates prior to the public participation portion of the meeting.

General Information

1. Project updates –

Mr. Alvord distributed the DPW Project Review report and he outlined the status of the various projects.

Mr. Alvord stated that regarding the Buckingham/Lockwood pipe replacement, Mr. Alvord said that on Buckingham, Yankee Gas has moved forward on the project.

Regarding Olmstead Place drainage improvements, Mr. Alvord said that all budgeted amounts had been expended without lowering the structure but installed shrubs that will hide the unsightly areas as they mature. He added that the filters were being shipped and the shed had been replaced and restored and would be reinstalled. He stated that he was at the site recently, the maintenance had been done, including mowing, and his crew had to tag the small plants that had recently been planted in the area to avoid them being damaged by the weed-wacker. He stated that there was a tree with broken branches that had been damaged by a crane and would be evaluated by his engineers, and would be well taken care of. He added that the trash should have been hauled away by Penna.

Mr. Conroy asked about the East Avenue improvements and Mr. Alvord stated that there were delays with the DOT on I-95-Winfield bridge repairs.

Regarding the James Street Bridge and Perry Avenue, Mr. Alvord added that the public information meeting was recently scheduled for December 16 at 7 pm. He added that he

would be contacting the Silvermine Neighborhood Associations and Broad River Homeowners Associations to be sure they were aware of the meeting.

Mr. Hempstead mentioned Items 30-31, Noah's Lane and Mary Austin drainage, and asked why they were not paved, and Mr. Alvord stated that it is scheduled within the next one to two weeks.

Ms. King asked to discuss Item 40, Five Mile River, and questioned the reliance on the New Canaan and Darien reports due to the lack of a City of Norwalk study. Mr. Alvord responded that the New Canaan study was not a watercourse study done by the Corps of Engineers or a DEP endorsed study but was only a very limited study based upon a short section of the river. He added that the Norwalk Grants office had instituted a program through the EPA, and Ms. King responded that she disagreed with that statement because she had been involved with many meetings regarding this issue. She clarified that the program was actually done by the homeowner who procured a grant to raise the house, then sold when it became unaffordable.

Mr. Alvord reiterated that there was more to the issue and provided a background overview of a long-standing program. He stated that the EPA and FEMA had visited the site and put a package together based upon a 25/75 cost share, which after FEMA funds were exhausted, actually resulted in a much larger cost and a 60/40 share ratio. He summarized that the benefit cost ratio needs to be greater than the cost of the damages in order to secure federal funding.

Ms. King asked if the City's plan was to do nothing, and again asked what she should be prepared to inform the residents of the area. Mr. Conroy suggested the discussion of the item be added to next month's agenda, as the purpose of this was an update not a detailed review. Mr. Alvord agreed to provide more information and review for the next meeting.

Mr. Hempstead asked for an update on Item No. 59 – Crack Sealing/Micro-Surfacing Contract, and Mr. Alvord stated all was going well with Fallow Street, Hunter's Lane, Douglas Drive and Fox Run Road. Mr. Tobin asked about the reason for the new sealing and Mr. Alvord explained that the material is designed to extend the life of the city streets. Mr. Hempstead stated he was not thrilled with the resurfacing texture, and Mr. Alvord said the rough surface will smooth out over time, but his department would continue to monitor the Asphalt Paving Systems punch list and test the micro-surfacing program.

Ms. King asked about Item No. 3-Westmere Bridge over Farm Creek, and Mr. Alvord stated that they had met with Bell Island Association fourteen months ago, and is looking to schedule another meeting to update the project in January or February.

Mr. Conroy suggested that Mr. Alvord provide an outline of the street paving process for the benefit of the new members. Mr. Alvord explained that there is a procedure whereby streets are evaluated on a PCI measure of paving index based on every four years using a model that determines the benefit index weighing factors of traffic and asphalt conditions.

He added that they work closely with utility companies to coordinate projects that affect certain streets and then adjust the priorities to avoid delays and update their five-year plan for Norwalk streets.

Mr. Hempstead asked about Reed Street and Mr. Alvord answered that it would be open in the Spring from Crescent, Butler to the transfer station.

## **2. Norwalk Transfer Station.**

Mr. Alvord stated that the October report was distributed at the November meeting and added that the operation runs efficiently along with the recycling center. He added that the November report would be available for the January.

## **3. Additional Information Items.**

Mr. Alvord stated that they were in receipt of the \$8,000 Urban Forestry grant, which was based on the restoration project along Calf Pasture Beach Road.

He stated that applications have been submitted for re-certification as Tree City USA and Tree City USA Growth award, and they are hoping to qualify for both.

He stated that proposals were being evaluated for successor contract for parking operation and management and official RFPs had gone out to seven vendors, which has been evaluated down to interview two firms:  
Haze Parking and Pro-Park.

Mr. Alvord stated that the eight SWRPA municipalities continue working together on Household Hazardous Waste collection Days. He stated that construction was beginning soon on wastewater treatment plant upgrade, Phase I, and contract negotiations on AFSME Local 2405 were in progress.

Mr. Alvord stated that there was a check in the amount of \$192,932.07 received from CRRA in closeout of 25-year solid waste contract, but that the Finance Department was not satisfied with the amount. He stated that other towns had received lower amounts, based on tonnage, but Mr. Hamilton has requested an audit the CRRA books in an attempt to claim an amount much larger, and perhaps in the millions. He added that there is a claim that CRRA kept too much in reserve for property claims due to land fill issues, and the Finance Department is hoping to place a claim on the money that is due to the City.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*The remarks by all speakers have been summarized and are not necessarily verbatim.*

Mr. Conroy asked those members of the public who had signed up to speak to state their name, address, affiliation and he requested that remarks be concise and germane to agenda items, and kept to a maximum length of five minutes.

Ms. Carmen Dielsi of 45 Olmstead Place said that she would like to speak to follow up on last month's meeting during which she and others spoke about the Pond. She wanted everyone to know that the site is in horrible condition with weeds and logs filled with still water, bugs, and rodents.

She stated she now looks out at mud where there used to be a pond with ducks, and she had hoped that the fill would be deeper and added that the area represents a danger with an open hole near the bunker, where a worker recently fell. She would like the committee to reconsider the change of status with the maintenance and upkeep of the pond and surrounding areas.

Mr. Alvord responded that he would follow up to ensure that the area is cleared of debris and that filters are in shipment. Mr. Hempstead asked about the open area, and Mr. Alvord replied that grates were covered.

Ms. Diane Cece, of 37 Olmstead Place, Norwalk, handed out a list of items that the residents felt could help mitigate the situation resulting from the pond being drained, and asked for a point of clarification about meeting with Penna about the punch list. She added that weeds were still there after the mowing, and the plants were so small they should have been container grown for a long period of time prior to being planted in the ground. Ms. Cece stated that her list was for fixing the issues, and not the contractor's punchlist. She added that nothing on the list was cost prohibitive.

Ms. King asked where the pond was located and Mr. Hempstead clarified that it was behind the Fitch School. Ms. Cece said that the pond debris was still there and along with a number of tree limbs that were broken when the cranes came in to remove the debris. Mr. Alvord said that he was at the site recently and that the trash should have been hauled away by Penna. Mr. Conroy stated that he would prefer to have to have a separate meeting about the issue, and agreed to meet with Ms. Cece on Friday, December 4 at 2:00 in the DPW conference room. Ms. Cece stated that relative to City Hall parking problems, it should not be up to Mr. Mocciae to reconfigure the park and based on deed restrictions the land was not intended to be used for parking. She added that this should come under the same constraints as Veteran's Park and Cranbury Park with public information sessions held to present any proposed changes.

Ms. Cece went on to question Item No. 22 on the project status list and asked why vinyl cupola was not being considered, as it would cost only \$5,000 not \$130,000 and would not cost the additional maintenance that wood would cost. Mr. Conroy stated that this was a good idea and should be discussed at the Land Use Committee meeting, and Mr. Bondi requested literature, and Ms. Cece stated that she would e-mail information to him.

Mr. Larry Ruttenberg, 38 Buckingham Place, Norwalk requested an update on Item No. 28, and Mr. Alvord stated that the easement had been secured.

Mr. Ruttenberg stated that the Yankee Gas had moved lines on Buckingham place but seems they have gone beyond the pipes and maybe something new is being done, and he would like an idea of the time frame of when work is being done. He added that he would like advance notice before the summer when residents plan picnics or neighborhood events. Mr. Alvord responded that he would get a schedule from Yankee Gas on what is being done.

Mr. Ruttenberg distributed a copy of an article from Harbor Watch/River Watch about the pollution along the Norwalk Harbor. He highlighted an article that reported on the potential source of pollution in the Moody's Lane storm drain system was a pipe along Lockwood Lane that was discharging high counts of CFU. Mr. Alvord responded that they did not concur with this report and they have discovered that much of the pollution was actually coming from animals and animal feces being dumped in the storm drains. Ms. King stated that she disagreed with Mr. Alvord and suggested the Committee pay closer attention to examining the sources of pollution and consider the Harbor Watch group as a valuable resource for the Norwalk Harbor.

Mr. Ruttenberg closed his comments with a statement that despite his frustrations over the last three years, he thanked the DPW for their response and support for these various City projects.

Ms. King asked why Penna is still being used by the City when he does an inadequate job with the final phase of projects, and Mr. Conroy responded that they do good work, but just take a while to clean up.

Mr. Conroy requested Mr. Alvord to address the points raised by the public participants and attend a special meeting with Ms. Cece to review her list on Friday, December 4, 2009.

With no further residents requesting to speak, Mr. Conroy closed the public participation portion of the meeting.

### **Business Portion**

1. Approve the minutes of meeting of Wednesday, November 4, 2009.

Ms. Cece requested changes to correct the spelling of the names of public participants as follows: Carmen Dielsi, Mr. Larry Ruttenberg not Byrd.

**\*\* MR. HEMPSTEAD MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF NOVEMBER 4, 2009 WITH CORRECTIONS NOTED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR VOTES IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, AND THREE ABSTENTIONS (TOBIN, KING, BONDI).**

2. Approve proposed schedule of committee meetings for CY 2010.

Mr. Bondi commented that there is a conflict with November 3 and suggested the second Wednesday. Mr. Conroy stated that he had a conflict with the second Wednesday, and Mr. Hempstead suggested the first Monday, November 1 for the November meeting.

**\*\* MR. BONDI MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE CALENDAR OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2010, AS AMENDED. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. \*\***

3. Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an amendment to the agreement with A. DiCesare Associates, PC, for Professional Engineering Services regarding the Reed Street Extension Project, to provide additional construction administration services and inspection services for a sum not to exceed \$50,000.00. Acct.No. 09020910-5777-C0241.

Mr. Alvord presented a letter from A. DiCesare Associates requesting extra work in connection with the provision of Resident Construction Engineering and Inspection services. Ms. King asked why this additional amount was requested and why it was not originally factored in. Mr. Alvord explained that the amount was part of the state contract and was a result in a downturn with the economy along with delays with 95-7. Ms. King asked what could be done to ensure that further delays in 95/7 would not impact the completion of the project with no further additional costs.

Mr. Hempstead suggested a breakdown of the contract costs be done to outline potential delays and the expected completion of the project. Mr. Alvord agreed to provide an e-mail to the committee members on the updated status, potential delays and the projected completion parameters.

**\*\* MR. HEMPSTEAD MOTIONED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA, TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT WITH A. DICESARE ASSOCIATES, PC, FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES REGARDING THE REED STREET EXTENSION PROJECT, TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION SERVICES AND INSPECTION SERVICES FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000.00 BASED ON THE PROVISION OF FURTHER INFORMATION REQUESTED TO OUTLINE THE COMPLETION PARAMETERS OF THE CONTRACT. ACCOUNT NO. 09020910-5777-C0241. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. \*\***

4. Schedule a public hearing regarding the elimination of the “Three Tons Free” policy at transfer station and yard debris site. Public hearing to be conducted on Tuesday, January 5, 2010 at 7:30 PM in Room 101, Norwalk City Hall.

Mr. Alvord presented the proposal to eliminate the “3 Tons Free” Policy and provided a comparison of other municipality Transfer Station fees and copies of the City Ordinance of Rules and Regulations governing collection, transportation and disposal of solid waste.

Mr. Conroy asked if there were any proponents of this change and Mr. Hempstead answered yes, because any commercial vehicle should be charged. Mr. Alvord stated he had concerns with next budget year and the impact on the DPW budget. Ms. Straniti stated her concern was the impact on residents to have to pay to dump yard waste and was willing to compromise to reduce the tonnage to 1.5 tons. Mr. Alvord stated that there is new computer software that can combine site drop offs at the transfer stations and total the tonnage for residents.

Ms. King stated that she had a hard time with adding any additional financial burden to the citizens of Norwalk and asked for the significance of keeping it as it is. Mr. Alvord commented that as the budget is being re-examined, next year will be even more difficult to maintain operating expenses, and this is one area that could generate a source of revenue.

Mr. Hempstead asked what the total dollar impact and how many people would be affected compared to those who do not have City garbage pick up, and what would happen if they merely reduced the tonnage limit. Mr. Alvord suggested that he go back and have an analysis done to examine the total dollar impact for the proposed change and or reduction from three tons to 1.5 or one ton limits.

**\*\* MS. LINDSTROM MOTIONED TO TABLE THE ELIMINATION OF THE  
“THREE TONS FREE” POLICY AT TRANSFER STATION AND YARD  
DEBRIS SITE AND DELAY SCHEDULING ANY PUBLIC HEARING  
UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING PENDING FURTHER INFORMATION.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. Discussion – the role of Malmquist Field in addressing parking changes at City Hall.

Mr. Alvord presented a letter from Diane Beltz-Jacobson with a copy of the dedication agreement pertaining to Malmquist Field. The letter stated that in the event that the land is used by the City for any purpose other than public recreation or open space, the City must provide comparable replacement land of equal or greater value and size/area to that which was converted. Also included was an opinion letter written by Corporation Counsel Walter Marcus to Jane Curville explaining the process for dedicating the property to park, recreational or open space purposes.

Mr. Alvord requested a discussion as to whether there was actually a problem during the day or just during special events and public information sessions at City Hall. Mr. Bondi stated that the size of the field is larger than high school size regulations and shortening the field or erecting a fence would accomplish the field size concerns along with providing the additional spaces for parking. Mr. Hempstead commented that making any changes to the field should go through the Parks & Recreation Department or Land Use Committee along with holding a public hearing.

Mr. Bondi stated that part of the problem is that the Board of Education should schedule meetings at the school locations rather than City Hall, because there is just not enough parking available. Ms. Lindstrom stated that perhaps a shuttle arrangement could be devised for employees to park at Veterans Park, and ride a van to and from City Hall. Mr. Alvord responded that would be another unbudgeted expense and would not care to pursue that idea.

Mr. Hempstead stated that employees should park at the Eversley building lot and visitor parking should be expanded for those residents who need to make a short trip to City Hall for permits, etc. Ms. King stated that there is a problem with parking as she has to come to City Hall for real estate records and many times she does have difficulty finding parking.

Ms. King asked about the possibility of acquiring a nearby building to convert into parking space, and Mr. Hempstead mentioned that this had been looked into over the past few years. He added that this something that could be re-visited, however not during these difficult budget times.

Mr. Conroy suggested the item be moved to the Land Use Committee for further review.

Mr. Conroy stated the next meeting would be Tuesday, January 5, 2010.

**Adjournment**

**\*\* MR. BONDI MOTIONED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox  
Telesco Secretarial Services