

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on Thursday, August 17, 2006 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Councilman John E. Lanni, Jr., Chair
Council Member Maria A. Bucci, Vice-Chair
Councilman Terence Livingston
Councilman Michael S. Pisaturo
Councilman Jeffrey P. Barone
Council President Aram G. Garabedian

Also Present: Councilman Allan W. Fung
Council Member Cynthia M. Fogarty
Council Vice-President Paula McFarland
Paul Grimes, Director of Administration
Robin Muksian-Schutt, Deputy Director of Administration
Evan Kirshenbaum, Assistant City Solicitor
Marco Schiappa, Director of Public Works
Dave Ferguson, Public Safety Manager
Maria Medeiros Wall, City Clerk
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

On motion by Councilman Livingston, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and they stand approved as recorded.

CORRESPONDENCE:

OLD BUSINESS:

Pond View Rd. – DEM Violations (Cont. from 6/15/2006). (Director of Public Works – report and recommendations)

Mr. Schiappa stated that he did a review of the drainage issue of the development in this area and he also met with the consultant. He presented a copy of his conclusions. The developer installed a chain link fence, which would protect debris from getting into the pipe. As to a remedy for the flooding, the chain link fence will alleviate some of the flooding. The pipe in place there is 18” and when there is heavy rains, it cannot handle the water and this is why the flooding occurs. Replacing this pipe is very expensive. Councilman Lanni asked if there is a remedy to this situation. Mr. Schiappa stated that a full analysis of the whole watershed should be done.

Enforcement of Signage Ordinance – pertaining to Commercial signs

Referred from 6/22/2006 City Council. – Building Inspector request to appear.

Kerry Anderson, Building Inspector, appeared to speak. Councilman Lanni stated that the Council has received numerous complaints regarding size of signs and signs on poles, especially in the Rolfe St. area. Mr. Anderson stated that the way his office is handling this issue is approaching it by complaint, but his office is very short staffed. The City has advertised for the position of “Code Compliance Officer”, which this person would handle this issue. He does not know what the status is on hiring for this position.

11S-05-1 Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 12 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places” (Snow and Ice Removal). Continued from 3/16/2006, 7/13/2006.

Council Vice-President McFarland stated that she met with the Director of Public Works and it appears that General Assembly approval would have to be obtained and due to this, she asked that this Ordinance be continued to January, 2007.

On motion by Councilman Livingston, seconded by Councilman Pisaturo, it was voted to continue this Ordinance to January, 2007 Public Works Committee meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

6-06-5 Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 9.08 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Public Peace, Morals and Welfare” (50/50 Tree Program). (Tabled 7/13/2006).

No action. This Ordinance will remain tabled.

Mr. Schiappa stated that there is money budgeted for this and at some point, we are going to lose the season to address this issue.

6-06-6 Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 12 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places” (Sidewalk 50/50 Program). (Tabled 7/13/2006).

No action. This Ordinance will remain tabled.

Mr. Schiappa stated that there is money budgeted for this and at some point, we are going to lose the season to address this issue.

Petition from National Grid for pole location at Marine Drive (Tabled 7/13/2006).

No action. Request remains tabled.

Petition from National Grid for pole location at Pontiac Avenue (Tabled 7/13/2006).

On motion by Councilman Livingston, seconded by Council Member Bucci, it was voted to remove this petition from the table. Motion passed unanimously.

On motion by Council Member Bucci, seconded by Council President Garabedian, it was voted to approve this petition. Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Macklin St. and Palmer Ave.: RIPTA Bus Use.

Mark Therrien, representing RIPTA, appeared to speak. Councilman Lanni stated that this issue was discussed last year and RIPTA was asked to look at finding another location for their turn around. He asked what, if any, progress has been made with this request. Mr. Therrien stated that RIPTA has looked into finding another location, but cannot come up with one. He did state that they have reduced the amount of buses traveling on this street to 13 per day.

Robert Panarello, 1414 Park Ave., appeared to speak and stated that RIPTA does not just use the area to park, they use it to rendezvous with the diesel motors running. He has spoken to RIPTA numerous times and has been told that this is going to stop and it has not. This is a noise and pollution problem.

Councilman Barone questioned why a bus route goes through a residential area. Mr. Therrien stated that what this bus is doing is coming to the end of its line. Councilman Barone asked if there is a remedy for this. Mr. Therrien reiterated that RIPTA has looked all over and cannot find another remedy. He stated that approximately four years ago, RIPTA requested to move the bus to this location and the City Planner and City Engineer, both approved it. If the Council could find another location, RIPTA would be willing to move the location. Councilman Barone asked if City records could be researched as to the process this approval went through. Mr. Ferguson appeared to speak. Councilman Barone questioned who authorized this location. Mr. Ferguson stated that he and the former Planner, Kevin Flynn, did after being petitioned by RIPTA. There are tractor trailers in this area, as well, and this was taken into consideration when approving this request and there is also a fuel depot in that area, which receives truck traffic. Councilman Lanni asked if the residents were notified or if there was a public hearing when this request was approved. Mr. Ferguson stated, not that he is aware of.

John Baldino, 37 Palmer Ave. appeared to speak and stated that he followed one of the buses and the buses are too big to make a turn without on the other side of the road or without going onto the property owners' property. The bus picks up one person. The dance studio that is there should never have been approved to go there, since he has proof from the State that dance studios are prohibited in this area.

Silvia Cambio, 226 Macklin St., appeared to read a statement to the Committee members regarding this issue.

Joe Baldino, 45 Palmer Ave., appeared to speak and asked why RIPTA does not buy the property behind the Fire Station on Dyer Ave. and this problem will be solved.

Raymond Cambio, 226 Macklin St., appeared to speak.

Jim Bruno, 56 Palmer Ave., appeared to speak and stated that this area is not big enough for bus to go through.

Lydia Hicks, East View Ave., appeared to speak and stated that empty trailers and tractor trailers are an eyesore. Tractor trailer trucks backup down East View Ave. Mr. Ferguson stated that there is another location that he looked at today as a potential alternate location, which is Industrial Dr. There are no residential homes in that area and he did mention this to Mr. Therrien.

Councilman Lanni asked if this new location is agreed upon by RIPTA, how long it would take to relocate. Mr. Therrien stated, probably a few weeks.

On motion by Councilman Barone, seconded by Councilman Livingston, it was voted to continue this item to next month in order for the Traffic Engineer and RIPTA to evaluate new location and come back for a decision. Motion passed unanimously.

Verizon Tree Trimming – Narragansett Boulevard.

John Kent, Vice-President Governor's Affairs for Verizo, appeared to speak. Councilman Livingston asked Mr. Kent to speak with Mr. Spirito after this meeting to address concerns of Mr. Spirito. Mr. Kent stated that Verizon is in the process of wiring through the State of Rhode Island for cable television. Because of this initiative, Verizon has hired a tree trimming company. Councilman Livingston asked that Verizon, in going forward, be more cognizant in the way the trees are being trimmed. Mr. Kent stated that he will be more than happy to meet with Mr. Spirito to hear his concerns and they will help them going forward in the trimming. Councilman Lanni asked when the project would be completed. Ms. Maher, of Verizon, appeared to speak and stated that the tree trimming will start in the fall of this year and the fiber placement should be started in February or March and the entire project should be completed by next year. Mr. Kent stated that if the Council wishes, he can come back before the Council as the project gets under way to advise the Council of what Wards will be done and how they are progressing.

Steve Spirito, 1286 Narragansett Blvd., appeared to speak and addressed his concerns of the way Verizon trimmed the trees near his home. The way they were trimmed was horrible. He asked that since this is going to go on throughout the City, the City keep an eye on other utility companies.

Petition for Abandonment of a portion of Mayberry St. – Institute Proceedings for a public hearing.

On motion by Councilman Barone, seconded by Councilman Livingston, it was voted to institute proceedings for a public hearing.

Under Discussion:

Council Vice-President McFarland stated that by abandoning this road, it would be taking the Council out of the process if the property is sold and the Council would not have a say in what is developed there.

Councilman Barone motioned to remove this motion and Councilman Livingston motion to remove his second.

On motion by Councilman Livingston, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to continue this item for one month. Motion passed unanimously.

Petition for Abandonment of a portion of Pettaconsett Ave. – Public Hearing

Continuance requested by applicant to September 14, 2006.

Providence Water – Objection received; perpetual and irrevocable easement requested.

On motion by Councilman Barone, seconded by Councilman Livingston, it was voted to continue this item to next month's meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Petition from National Grid for pole location at Phenix Ave.

James Silva of National Grid, appeared to speak and stated that this request is to install two stump poles.

On motion by Council Member Bucci, seconded by Councilman Livingston, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

Petition from National Grid for pole location at Burlingame Rd.

On motion by Council Member Bucci, seconded by Councilman Livingston, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

Petition from National Grid for pole location at Nina Ct. and Julianna Dr.

On motion by Council Member Bucci, seconded by Councilman Livingston, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Barone addressed the Park Cinema and stated that signs are being placed on the plywood covering the front entrances of the building. Councilman Lanni asked that Councilman Barone refer this to the Building Inspector.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees