

## **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

Regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on Thursday, February 15, 2007 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

The meeting was called to order at 6:22 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Council Member Maria A. Bucci, Chair  
Councilman Richard D. Santamaria, Jr., Vice-Chair  
Councilman John E. Lanni, Jr.  
Councilman Emilio L. Navarro  
Councilman Jeffrey P. Barone  
Council President Aram G. Garabedian

Also Present: Council Vice-President Paula McFarland  
Councilman Terence Livingston  
Councilman Anthony J. Lupino  
Vito Sciolto, City Solicitor  
Aubrey Lombardo, Assistant City Solicitor  
Charles Garganese, Jr., Assistant City Solicitor  
Marco Schiappa, Director of Public Works  
Maria Medeiros Wall, City Clerk  
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees  
Ron Ronzio, Stenographer

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

### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**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 12/7/2006.**

Councilman Barone motioned to approve this Ordinance. No one seconded the motion.

On motion by Councilman Navarro, seconded by Councilman Santamaria, it was voted to continue this Ordinance. Motion passed on a vote of 5-1. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Council Member Bucci, Councilmen Santamaria, Lanni, Navarro and Council President Garabedian -5. The following being recorded as voting "nay": Councilman Barone -1.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

### **Petition from National Grid for pole location at Dover St.**

**Ms. Wall** stated that according to Richard DeGrandpre of the Engineering Division, this petition has been withdrawn.

### **Request from Town of Johnston requesting approval for installation of sanitary sewer lateral at 1901 Plainfield Pike, Nicola Ricci of Victor Anthony Properties.**

No one appeared to speak in favor.

**Mr. Schiappa** appeared to speak and stated that this is a Johnston property owner, who would like to tie into the City's line. The Council needs to think about how much capacity we want to give to Johnston and remove from our taxpayers for the future.

Councilman Lanni stated that he does not feel the taxpayers in Cranston should help subsidize the businesses and residents of Johnston and take services away from our taxpayers.

On motion by Council President Garabedian, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to continue this item in order to give residents the opportunity to be heard. Motion passed unanimously.

**Ms. Wall** stated that notice of this hearing was sent to the Mayor of Johnston.

### **Sewer Adjustment Appeals**

- 1329 Narragansett Boulevard (from 10/12/2006 decision)

**Andrew Burhardt** appeared to speak and stated that the Public Works Director has approved his appeal for the current year 2006-07 year and denied the prior years in accordance with the Ordinance in place. All he is asking is for him to be charged for what he used.

**Mr. Schiappa** appeared to speak and stated that he cannot act on rebates prior to the year he granted. This Committee would have to act on that. The adjustment amount is for \$361.06.

On motion by Councilman Lanni, seconded by Councilman Navarro, it was voted to approve this adjustment. Motion passed unanimously.

- 358 Bay View Avenue (from 11/16/2006 decision)

**Mr. Schiappa** appeared to speak and stated that the owner is trying to get a rebate for the 2006 bill for January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005. This item was before this Committee on November 16, 2006 and was denied. The property owner was not present at that meeting. The property owner is not present this evening either.

On motion by Councilman Lanni, seconded by Councilman Santamaria, it was voted to deny this adjustment. Motion passed unanimously.

- 531 Pontiac Ave.

**Mr. Schiappa** appeared to speak and stated that the building was fully operational the whole year that the abatement is being requested for.

On motion by Council President Garabedian, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to deny this adjustment. Motion passed unanimously.

**Petition from Barbara Rubine for the proposed installation of curbing at 1438 Narragansett Blvd.**

**Mr. Schiappa** appeared to speak and stated that Ms. Rubine is in the process of renovating her home and she is the only one who has no sidewalk and her property is also a little elevated. She is requesting that a sidewalk be installed. In September, he presented a summary of the 50/50 program. It would be prudent to have a policy in place on how we deal with this issue, since there is nothing in place at this time.

Councilman Lanni agreed that there should be a policy in place.

Mr. Schiappa indicated that if this policy is implemented, the Council needs to establish how to deal with approximately 160 people who are on a list, who assumed there was or was going to be a 50/50 program. He will check with his staff, but he believes that he had told his staff not to accept any more names for this list as of January first.

Councilman Livingston stated that he believes that when this was discussed in the past, the Council gave authorization that the City would take care of as many of the people on this list as possible and the Solicitor, at that time, felt this could be a liability issue with the taxpayer paying 50% of the cost. He feels the City should pay 100%.

Council Vice-President McFarland stated that if there is bond money, we should use it and do as many sidewalks as possible. We should not be using bond money any longer to install sidewalks in the City because no one takes care of the sidewalks and people have to walk in the street and that is a disgrace.

Councilman Barone stated that we should focus on the repairs before any money is spent on installing new sidewalks.

Councilman Lupino asked that the Council members be provided with a copy of the list that is on record.

On motion by Councilman Lanni, seconded by Council President Garabedian, it was voted to place Ms. Rubine's name on the 50/50 program list. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

With no objections from the Committee members, the meeting reconvened at 6:55 P.M., since members of the public present requested to be permitted to speak.

#### **February 14, 1007 Sewage Backup on Amanda Court**

**Steve Callahan**, 135 Amanda Ct., appeared to speak and stated that he experienced a sewage backup again yesterday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. Veolia went to his home today to do the cleanup. The City's Public Works Director would not allow any one of the companies to go into his home for 24 hours to do the cleanup. The last time, the City blamed the backup on the flooding. This time, there was no flooding. There is something wrong with our sewer lines. He presented a handout to the Committee. He thanked the Mayor's Office for overriding the Public Works Director in getting Veolia to go in and clean his home. Right now, his wife and children are out of the house again.

**Emily Perrotta**, 126 Amanda St., appeared to speak and stated that she also experienced another sewer backup yesterday. She has lived at this address for forty years and when she moved here, she had cesspools and had no problems. Once the sewers went in, in 1978, they started to get sewer backups. This has happened to her eleven times. It is a liability and a health hazard and she does not know what to do. This is very frustrating and she would like something done about this.

Council Vice-President McFarland stated that she would like to know how much has been spent on sewer claims in this area since 1999. This area has been an on-going issue since she came on the Council and continues to be a problem. The City has to make some provisions. Either you put some type of liability in place or you continue to pay claims, because the City has been put on notice.

Council President Garabedian stated that he went to two homes in this area, which had sewer backups yesterday and he witnessed this. He recommended that the people who had backups yesterday place their claims in again and follow through on their claims.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni  
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees