



January 29, 2020

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Public Works Committee Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on Tuesday, January 28, 2020, at DPW Headquarters, 301 Broad Street, at 5:00 PM.

Committee Members Present: Councilors Marissa Fleming (chair), Paul Beauchemin, Andrew Couture, Bernard Shultz, Andrew Van Hazinga, Commissioner Nicholas Bosonetto, Superintendent Gary Withington

Committee Members Absent: none

Other Participants: Councilor Samantha Squailia

1) **Minutes** from 10/29/2019 meeting were approved.

Committee members discussed the process for requesting berms and the benefits and costs of berm installations. Commissioner Bosonetto suggested a draft policy could be prepared for the Committee to review at a future meeting.

2) Meeting dates for calendar year 2020 were approved.

Remaining dates of the regular 2020 meetings are: February 25, March 31, April 28, May 26, June 30, July 28, September 29, and October 27

3) Action was taken as follows on petitions:

063-19. Councilors Michael Kushmerek and Amy Green, to install a crosswalk at Water Street, connecting the newly constructed Water Street Plaza with the Central Plaza (Market Basket), and if necessary, explore pedestrian crossing signalization. (REFERRED from Public Safety Committee during City Council on 11/19/2019)

Discussion: Councilor Van Hazinga commented that during the Planning Board permitting process for the Water Street Plaza a traffic study was conducted by the developer that showed a traffic signal at this location was unnecessary. Commissioner Bosonetto reported that as part of the Water Street bridges project, Mass DOT was planning to repave this section of Water Street in 2022 or 2023 and that pedestrian improvements could be made part of that project. Several Committee members agreed that pedestrian improvements are desirable at this location.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 5-0 that the petition be GRANTED.

110-19. Councilors Squailia, Fleming, & Walsh, to find remedy to alleviate traffic congestion on John Fitch Highway northbound by adding a right turn only lane as outlined in the petition. (REFERRED from Public Safety Committee during City Council on 11/19/2019)

Discussion: Commissioner Bosonetto reported that the intersection of Lunenburg Street and John Fitch Highway is under Mass DOT jurisdiction and that a proposed intersection improvement project is currently on-hold because Mass DOT wants the City to eliminate the back-up parking situation along John Fitch Highway. Committee commented that the intersection used to be striped with a right turning lane, a through lane and a left turning lane. Committee directed Commissioner Bosonetto to contact Mass DOT with the request to reinstitute the right turning lane.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 5-0 that the petition be GRANTED.

159-19. Councilor Marisa Fleming on behalf of John Belli of 190 Will Thompson Way, to have a crosswalk at the intersection of John Fitch Highway and Pearl Hill Rd. re-evaluated for the safety of students and drivers. (REFERRED from Public Safety Committee during City Council on 11/19/2019)

Discussion: Committee discussed the location of the crosswalk, which is positioned around a curve and makes sight distances difficult to see pedestrians. This petition was amended to include the elimination of some of the reflectors from petition #161-19.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 5-0 that the petition be GRANTED as AMENDED.

161-19. Councilor Marisa Fleming on behalf of John Belli of 190 Will Thompson Way, to eliminate some of the reflectors at the intersection of John Fitch highway and Pearl Hill Road. (Public Works Committee previously recommended a REFERRAL to Public Safety Committee on 6/25/2019 that was accepted by City Council on 7/2/2019 and is now REFERRED back to Public Works Committee from Public Safety Committee during City Council on 11/19/2019)

Discussion: Councilor Fleming commented that the reflectors are blinding at night as they are very bright and also there are so many of them. Councilor Van Hazinga commented that the reflectors were placed there as part of the median island project that narrows the travel lanes. The Committee decided that since this petition and 159-19 cover the same location and issues, they should be combined. Petition 159-19 was recommended to be granted as amended.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 5-0 that the petition be given LEAVE TO WITHDRAW.

209-19. Councillor Marisa Fleming, on behalf of John Godek, 321 Pearl Street to have a rotary installed at the intersection of Pearl Street and John Fitch Highway to slow down the traffic turning onto Pearl Street.. (REFERRED from Public Safety Committee during City Council on 11/19/2019)

Discussion: Councilor Fleming clarified that the request was for a modern roundabout instead of a rotary. The Committee discussed whether there was sufficient space at the intersection to fit a roundabout. Commissioner Bosonetto commented that typically at least 100-foot diameter is needed to fit a roundabout and at the intersection of Pearl Street and John Fitch Highway, there are two houses at the corners that would need to be demolished in order to make sufficient room for a roundabout.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 5-0 that the petition be given LEAVE TO WITHDRAW.

279-19. Councillors Squailia and Kushmerek, on behalf of Gary Ranno, to install a new driveway apron at 41 Fox Street to mitigate water flow and subsequent erosion damage to property, approx. 40 feet long as shown in the attached diagram. (REFERRED during City Council on 11/19/2019)

Discussion: Superintendent Withington commented that DPW Streets could install this apron to solve the drainage issues.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 5-0 that the petition be GRANTED.

290-19. Councillors Marcus DiNatale and Elizabeth Walsh, to request a review of the Mount Elam Road/Electric Avenue intersection with respect to pedestrian safety measures. Residents in the area are requesting, for example, a crosswalk from Mount Elam across Electric Avenue and signage.

(REFERRED from Public Safety Committee during City Council on 1/21/2020)

Discussion: Commissioner Bosonetto reported to the Committee that a \$78,849 Mass DOT Complete Street grant had just been received to make improvements to the sidewalks and crosswalks along Electric Avenue from Mount Elam to South Street. This petition would be part of the project.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 5-0 that the petition be GRANTED.

4) Previously HELD Petitions were reviewed:

209-18. Multiple citizens, to repair McTaggart's Dam to refill pond and restore wildlife population. (HELD during June & September 2019 meetings, pending completion of the ongoing alternatives analysis).

Discussion: The draft report from the consultant firm examining the dam is being reviewed and the final report will be available soon. The consultant's scope of work includes public outreach and presentations be given to explain the result of the study. It is recommended that the petition be held until the report can be released and public presentations can be given to explain the recommendations.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 5-0 to HOLD the petition.

126-19. Councilor Joel Kaddy, to correct water problem at 15 Thurston Place. (HELD during June & September 2019 meetings, and requested that DPW observe the problem during a rain event so that an appropriate remedy can be determined)

Discussion: On-site inspections did not reveal a drainage problem. However, DPW staff will revisit the issue during heavy rain-storms to try and determine the severity and cause of the problem.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 5-0 to HOLD the petition.

252-19. Councilor Paul Beauchemin, that Boulder Drive from Putnam Street be closed to traffic, for pedestrian use only. (HELD during October 2019 meeting because petitioner wants to make this a walking mall)

Discussion: Councilor Van Hazinga discussed the 2-way conversion project and mentioned that fire department will be using Boulder Drive for emergency response. Commissioner Bosonetto also commented that closing a section of Boulder Drive would funnel all traffic onto Main Street, creating congestion. Councilor Beauchemin explained he wants to create more green space to connect to the rail trail and provide space for outdoor dining and events.

Recommendation: The Committee voted 4-1 to HOLD the petition.