

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
JULY 31, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: M. Lyons, Co-Chair; L. Colon, Co-Chair (6:15 pm); D. Taylor-Moye; A. dePara; J. Olson; R. Paoletto; T. McCarthy, City Council President

STAFF: D. Kooris, OPED; M. Nidoh, OPED; R. Pacacha, City Attorney's Office

ALSO: M. LoSasso, Antinozzi Assoc.; C.B. Bevers, Bpt. Hospital; M. Galante, F.P. Clark Assoc.; L. Salsgiver, Bpt. Hospital; J. Stafstrom, Pullman & Comley; J. White, Pullman & Comley; J. Wilcox, Bpt. Hospital.

Special meeting was called to order at 6:11 p.m. by Chair M. Lyons

100-11 Request for the Discontinuance of a portion of Shell Street between St. Stephens Road and Ocean Terrace.

M. Nidoh, Director of Planning, OPED, came forward to present and answer three questions posed at last month's meeting relative to this project.

He stated that the Council Members for this particular district were notified by e-mail of this pending change. Council member S. Brannelly responded in favor of this proposal. He did not hear back from Council member M. McCarthy.

Council President T. McCarthy confirmed that Mr. M. McCarthy is in favor.

Second question was relative to city funding for this project. Mr. Nidoh said he contacted Mr. Tom Sherwood who said money was in the Capital Budget in the Land Management & Acquisition account.

The last question was how much this was going to cost. Mr. Nidoh indicated he does not have an amount as of yet. There is no design at this time. This is an extension of the Cal Ripken Park Project. There is a letter going out to the property owners of Bridgeport Towers about their half of the street. The City owns to the center line of the street, the Bridgeport Towers owns the other half. He has not heard back from them yet.

Co-Chair L. Colon joined the meeting at 6:15 pm.

Atty. Pacacha said he understand that the committee is very interested about what happens after the street abandonment takes place but these questions are not relevant to the street abandonment process.

Mr. McCarthy said he felt it was important for the Council to consider the future use vs. the value of keeping it as a street.

Mr. Pacacha said the Charter Section that provides for street abandonment does not consider these questions. It is there to provide rights for the adjoining property owners, not deciding values, benefits, etc.

Mr. McCarthy stated the Council should consider what it is an appropriate future use – street or park, and it is appropriate to be having this conversation.

Mr. Pacacha said asking about the design, where the money is coming from and cautioned them against going far afield of the street abandonment issue.

Mr. McCarthy said they would not want to abandon a street and then have nothing happen, and it is appropriate that they should know what the future plans are and how it will be accomplished.

Mr. Paoletto said he felt Mr. McCarthy eloquently explained his feelings as well.

Mr. Olson said as a member of the legislative body they should ask any questions they want to ask. Ms. Lyons agreed.

Mr. Nidoh said the Zoning Commission approved this the previous evening and provided a copy of the Decision Notice from the Zoning Department.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MADE A MOTION TO ENTER DECISION NOTICE FROM THE ZONING DEPT. AS EXHIBIT 1-7.31.12 UNDER ITEM #100-11.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**

**** VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE ITEM 100-11**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. MCCARTHY SECONDED**

**** VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR**

82-11 Request regarding the Discontinuance of a portion of Grant Street between Mill Hill Avenue and Central Avenue

Mr. Kooris, Director of OPED, came forward to present the project. He said his Department is in support of this project. It allows for the discontinuance of vehicular traffic on a portion of Grant Street between Central and Mill Hill Avenues.

This enables the city's largest private employer to create a new entranceway while maintaining public pedestrian access. It creates a new public green space with enhanced bus stop amenities, and it is supported by the Police Dept., Fire Dept., Engineering Dept., the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBTA).

They are confident, based on traffic studies conducted, it will not create any adverse conditions on traffic in the neighborhood. It represents a significant private sector investment in the community, much of which will be available to public for their enjoyment, and enables Bridgeport Hospital to continue to anchor this neighborhood.

Mr. McCarthy said he is in favor of this project that will help the hospital and the community, thanked them for the multiple bus stops and asked if they were going to be enclosed.

Mr. Stafstrom confirmed that they will be enclosed, 3 sides and a roof, and they are waiting for a letter from GBTA confirming these plans.

Mr. McCarthy asked about increased traffic flow on Ford Place. Mr. Kooris said they looked at this and determined this would be minimal impact.

Mr. Stafstrom said that after the previous meeting they met with the City's Engineering Dept. and other City Departments and discussed a number of issues including traffic questions. In addition, the hospital has met with folks from the community and there was no opposition from the neighborhood.

Ms. Lyons asked that someone be at the meeting next Monday evening to answer traffic questions from other Council members.

Mr. Stafstrom said they have letters from the Fire and Police Departments approving the project. He also said there is a combined sewer pipe under that portion of the street and the hospital has agreed to take over maintenance of the sewer, with support from the WPCA.

Mr. Stafstrom submitted a copy of the latest letter from the COB Engineering Department.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER dePara MADE A MOTION TO ENTER LETTER DATED 7/30/2012 FROM THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT AS EXHIBIT 2-7/31/12**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**

**** VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER dePara MADE A MOTION RESCIND PREVIOUS MOTION**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**

**** VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER dePara MADE A MOTION TO ENTER LETTER DATED 7/30/2012 FROM THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT AS EXHIBIT 2-7/31/12 UNDER ITEM #82-11.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**

**** VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR**

Ms. Taylor-Moye asked what changes will be made to access to the hospital during construction or after.

Mr. LoSasso, Architect from Antinozzi Associates responded that the project will be phased according to the season of the year, but will continue, if possible, during the winter months. He said the Main Entrance will remain open, and access to the Emergency Department will not be affected by this project. Ms. Wilcox said the walk for the employees might be a little longer, and Mr. Bevon said the Emergency Room entrance is at level 3 on Mill Hill Avenue. The Main Entrance is at level 1 on Grant Street.

Ms. Colon asked that the bus enclosures be made of clear, and not dark, plastic to allow for a clear view for safety purposes.

Mr. LoSasso said they met with GBTA and said they have 2 or 3 standard designs for bus enclosures. They would provide the foundation and the GBTA provides the enclosures.

Mr. White said they will make sure that GBTA understands this issue.

Mr. dePara said he understands that they are trying to create a campus feel, and that GBTA has some control over the design standards. He suggested using special lighting, especially in the winter months, to provide an additional element of safety.

Mr. Olson suggested adding Emergency Buttons, similar to those on UB Campus.

Mr. dePara also said possibly there could be Call Towers with direct access to hospital security, and possibly down the road, video surveillance of these areas.

Mr. Stafstrom said the hospital can make suggestions to GBTA relative to design, but has no control over GBTA. He suggested the City Council address GBTA with their overall safety concerns.

Ms. Lyons said she will speak with the Council Members representing this district and suggest they investigate further.

Ms. Taylor-Moye said all the Council Members have great concern over the safety of all residents of the city and said the change to this area is a benefit to everyone in the city. She asked when this project will start and how long will it take.

Mr. LoSasso said it will start as soon as the City gives approval, it is essentially 1 phase, and the hospital will try to keep it going through the winter months.

Mr. DePara asked if there was any communication with the council persons from this district.

Ms. Lyons noted that Council Member Baker was at the last meeting and was on board with the project.

Ms. Salsgiver said she had attended the initial meeting of the Mill Hill NRZ where she presented this project. Mr. Baker was in attendance and was fully in support of the project.

Mr. Stafstrom said Mr. Baker spoke in support of the project the previous evening at Planning & Zoning Commission. His one area of concern was assurance of full public access to the pedestrian area. Mr. Stafstrom restated the hospital is committed to full public access.

Mr. Stafstrom also said he had some communication from Council Member Holloway whose only concern was access to bus routes and transit routes. Mr. Stafstrom told him they had extended discussions with GBTA and they were comfortable with the changes, and that the neighbors would have two covered bus stops. He said he is trying to get the letter from GBTA and give a copy to Mr. Holloway.

Ms. Lyons asked Mr. Stafstrom to see if they could have the letter by Monday evening.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. MCCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
ITEM 82-11**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**

**** VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. MCCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**

**** VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR.**

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Kuzmich
Telesco Secretarial Services