

**SPECIAL MEETING  
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN  
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

**December 2, 2008**

**7:00 PM**

Mayor Guinta called the meeting to order.

Mayor Guinta called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Murphy.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen M. Roy, Gatsas, Sullivan, J. Roy, Osborne, Pinard,  
O'Neil, Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Ouellette, Murphy

**Mayor Guinta** advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to three minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

**Mayor Guinta** requested that any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments.

**Glenn Ouellette**, 12 Auburn Street, Manchester, stated:

The ten year plan to end homelessness...it would be nice if we could achieve it, but I'm holding my breath. After all, 10,000 elderly, disabled and veterans are presently on waiting lists to get into low income housing or the workforce...actually in this case it would be low income housing units. And 4,500 of those 10,000 are elderly, disabled and veterans. This year alone 71 homes have been found. That means we still have over 4,400 elderly, disabled and veterans that are still homeless. I remember last spring you were saying that if you were living on someone's couch for more than a week, and it's not your couch, you're homeless. If you were to count how many couches in this city provide a bed for people in this city, I dare say the homelessness will rise a lot.

There are too many elderly and disabled people homeless living in Manchester. And even worse, too many of them are living outside on our streets. That is not acceptable, and that's why I come here tonight. Lots of you say there are not two Manchesters, but there are. School buses and students who must walk to school...the rule says 1.4 miles. Fifty-one kids who have to walk on one side of the street at one point, one mile, do not get a bus. The kid who only has to cross the street gets special permission. I think it is time for the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and the School Board to stop giving special privileges. That's not democracy. Sewage in our neighborhoods...boy, the smell is rotten. It's cold out there. We even had slush this week and the smell persists; it's still there. We had a tenant who moved out of our apartment building this weekend who happened to buy a home in Hooksett. Why would they want to live in Manchester when for the past five years, the city has refused to fix the sewage problem? This is a woman who washes her floor still on her hands and knees. She gets home from work at night and finds sewage coming out of her sink and her bathtub. It's no longer to the point that the sewage is coming from the landlord's property. It's a city problem, backed up by the underground river. You fix that underground river and you're going to save a lot of flooding and sewage problems in this city. If you think that's not a health problem to the city, remember that according to the Health Department, the statistics say that asthma has gone up tremendously in this city. Thank you.

**Mayor Guinta** stated before we adjourn this special meeting, I just wanted to make note that both Chalifour's Flowers and Jutras Signs contributed a significant amount of money this year to City Hall. On behalf of the City, Matt Normand was working with some companies to reduce the cost to the City to decorate City Hall. They saved the City about \$1,100, due to the fact that they were providing wreaths and other decorations for City Hall, so we wanted to give them proper recognition and let the public know that both Chalifour's Flowers and Jutras Signs stepped up on behalf of the City. Thank you to both of those great companies.

**Alderman Lopez** stated I was going to say, if there is any possible way we can take item 3 and 4 and continue until 7:30.

**Mayor Guinta** stated without objection, I think we can. Item 3, I was actually going to ask if we could refer to the 16<sup>th</sup>. There is some new information that we do have. There is a letter that was presented this evening by Jack Ferns, who is the director of Aeronautics Rail and Transit from DOT. He sent a letter dated

today to Senator Gatsas regarding a potential new opportunity for the current and existing transportation site. There is discussion now with City staff. Jay Minkarah and Senator Gatsas in his capacity as a senator, as well as DOT, are discussing bringing some CMAQ funding to improve that site, and we're working on trying to bring an operator back to that site. We should be able to have it resolved, hopefully by Friday. At that point we could take a recommendation regarding the existing funds that are being spent at that current location, but I'd like to do that all, if we can, on one day, on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Alderman O'Neil** stated Your Honor, I have no problem with that other than, will they need to know on Friday that there is some kind of local match? Will they need to have a commitment from us on that match for Friday? I only read the letter quickly.

**Mayor Guinta** responded they will not need to...we need to file an application, which I would ask and instruct City staff to do. At some point we were going to have to make a commitment to a local match. If you read the letter, it will be \$40,000. But it is not required for the meeting on Friday. I do plan on issuing a letter saying it is something I would support and that I would ask this Board to support. If you just look at the numbers, obviously it is in our favor to spend the dollars there rather than in the current way that we're spending. I think it even would make Alderman Shea very happy in how we proceed with this location.

**Alderman Shea** stated we would have the cost of utilities and other things available for them as well, because I think in the letter they indicate that the cost of utilities to keep the building open...so those are the kinds of things that, unless we get a firm hand on this, this cost of utilities, which would include whatever else we're paying, a substantial amount. In other words, are they dictating to us in terms of how long we should keep it open or are we kind of working with them? There are a lot of unanswered questions here.

**Mayor Guinta** responded we're working with them right now to try to have them operate this location, utilizing CMAQ funds to improve it. We would be asked to contribute a 40% match for the CMAQ, and we'd be likely asked to contribute a nominal fee for electricity and other items we'd be responsible for as owners of the building.

**Alderman Shea** stated one of the phrases here is 'if we are able to work out the details'. That's in the second line of the second page.

**Mayor Guinta** stated that's why I want to wait until the 16<sup>th</sup>. This just happened yesterday. The meeting was late yesterday afternoon. Alderman Gatsas did get something from DOT in writing, but we need to continue this process over the next few days. We really have to get something done by Friday. I would suggest that we let staff work on it and get the application filed. We can then come back on the 16<sup>th</sup> and take a vote as to how we want to proceed, knowing that that is moving forward.

**Alderman Shea** asked are they aware of the fact that there are about 60 people boarding the bus daily now, and about 25 or 30 on weekends?

**Mayor Guinta** responded they are aware of that.

**Alderman Gatsas** stated just for clarification, the discussions revolved around what would bring the company back that was managing the site. Some of the question was a bigger police presence. I don't think that that's a problem. And, there was the payment of the utilities, which is about \$10,000 to \$12,000 per year. That being in place and the lighting changed on that side so it was a much brighter location, repairing the bathrooms within the building...that was an important discussion. Restoration of the 12 bus routes that were leaving the area on a daily basis was again another large discussion. So, I can tell you that I think that this is a better alternative than looking at the convention center on Elm Street and a better scenario than closing down the building, but it is absolutely imperative that the application be completed tomorrow by City staff and delivered to DOT so that they can move on this thing by Friday. Certainly if it's not there by Thursday, Your Honor, I will call you and make sure I let you know that it's not up there, and I will certainly call the departments down here and let them understand that it's imperative that it's there. They are going beyond the call of duty to make this available to us at the Friday meeting. So with that, hopefully we can move forward in the right direction with this.

**Alderman M. Roy** stated I'd like to thank Alderman and Senator Gatsas for his work on this. There is one question I have. The third line of the third paragraph says the City may want to attend to answer questions. Will you be attending that meeting, Your Honor? Or, who of City staff will be attending?

**Mayor Guinta** responded I know Jay Minkarah is attending. If my schedule permits, I'll make every effort to be there.

**Alderman M. Roy** stated I think it would send a very good message. I know Alderman Gatsas has done considerable work, but if you do need people to be there, please...

**Alderman Lopez** asked before we move this to the 16<sup>th</sup>, when you say City staff, does that mean Jay Minkarah is going to be responsible?

**Mayor Guinta** responded Jay is going to be responsible for filing the application.

*On motion of Alderman Lopez, duly seconded by Alderman J. Roy, it was voted to table this item until December 16, 2008.*

**Mayor Guinta** stated we can do one of two things with this item. We can discuss it now, unless you would like to have Pam Goucher and Jay Minkarah make some remarks. I can give you a brief synopsis of what the situation is. Earlier this year I had stated that I would have liked to see a decision by this Board relative to a multi-modal facility site voted on, at least approved by this body, prior to the end of the calendar year, so we could have a Commission of Transportation move forward as expeditiously as possible in his quest to try to move up the Highway plan funds associated with that project. As everybody knows, there's about \$1.3 million that is allocated in order to expedite this process. We would like to get this site built quicker than what the original timeline was. The Commissioner asked if we could identify a site that we could all agree on. We convened the Transportation Advisory Committee, and on October 31<sup>st</sup> they unanimously supported the location of 460 Elm Street to be designated as the preferred site. That is the Rockwell site. I did meet with the Department of Transportation last week. We had a meeting about this process, including what the challenges will be. There remains to be confidence expressed to me by that department that they are going to do everything they can to move these funds up. They feel confident that they can move the funds up. Obviously there is a process which they have to adhere to in order to make that happen, but the first step is for us to make a site location determination. The owner of the property is also aware of this and is in favor of this location being considered and being voted on by this Board. We could either take a vote now, or if you have questions I'd be happy to answer them, or if you want to wait for Pam and Jay for any other questions that people may have, it's up to the Board.

**Alderman Lopez** stated I think we're well aware that we have to provide a location. I cannot think of a better location or another location within the City other than South Elm Street. We need to have division to make that in years to come to a beautiful place for the entire Elm Street.

**Alderman J. Roy** asked have we committed any funds for this yet? Would this action tonight commit any funds?

**Mayor Guinta** responded no, it just identifies a site. We have not committed any funds, nor does this action commit any funds.

**Alderman O'Neil** stated before we can make a motion to select a site, don't you think we need to...I believe the owner would be supportive...but it's probably going to take some sort of public/private partnership to make it work. Are we stepping over our boundary or jurisdiction at this point? Shouldn't it be a joint recommendation from us and the property owner? I don't know how we can take a vote to do something on a piece of private property. My understanding in casual past conversations with the owners is that it probably makes sense there, but I don't know how we can take a vote on property we don't own.

**Alderman Lopez** stated I think the owner has indicated that that would be the perfect site, and in some conversation with the Manchester Development Corporation to a degree, not a formal conversation...the Rockwell people are leaving, and he has to do something with that site. I know that there is great interest in it. If it please the Aldermen, we would move forward with the understanding that the owner does agree. If the owner is not here tonight, and I don't think it's necessary, because we are just designating a site that the City wants to move forward on.

**Alderman O'Neil** stated it's a suggested recommendation from us, right?

**Mayor Guinta** responded correct.

*On motion of Alderman J. Roy, duly seconded by Alderman Osborne, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.*

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Shea**, duly seconded by **Alderman Murphy**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk