

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

December 10, 1996

7:00 PM

Chairman Robert called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Alderman Robert, Wihby, Reiniger, Clancy, Domaingue

Chairman Robert advised that David Plante was present from Public Service to address item 14 and due to impending storm outages it was requested he be allowed to address the committee first. There being no objections from members, Chairman Robert addressed item 14.

14. Communication from David Plante, PSNH, requesting to acquire an additional piece of easement from the City to accommodate running more aerial fiber optic cables to the U.S. Sprint Facility on Candia Road.

(Note: communication from the Board of Assessors dated 11/8/96 enclosed - Tabled 11/26/96.)

On motion of Alderman Domaingue, duly seconded by Alderman Reiniger, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

Mr. Plante addressed the committee advising that he was a project engineer and that a 50 plus or minus easement area was being requested. In response to questions from Alderman Wihby and Alderman Domaingue, Mr. Plante noted that Public Service was entering into a contract with a communications company, there would be 48 fibers and public service would get 12. There would be no involvement of lines running over roads, though it crossed the railroad.

In response to comments from Alderman Reiniger, Mr. Plante noted that it could potentially involve business opportunities in Manchester because it would interconnect the Manchester/Nashua line. He could not speak to administrative issues directly, being his specialty was in the engineering side. The major thing he saw Public Service receiving were the 12 fibers.

Discussion ensued relative to the fair value for the city, where the Assessor's office reported that based on their review a value of \$500.00 was appropriate. It was explained how that number was arrived upon.

On motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Reiniger, it was voted to recommend approval of the easement for \$500.00, subject to the review and approval of the city solicitor.

CONSENT AGENDA

Alderman Robert advised you desire to remove any of the following items from the Consent Agenda, please so indicate. If none of the items are to be removed, one motion only will be taken at the conclusion of the presentation.

- D. Communication from the Director of Planning, requesting various CIP project extensions through June 30, 1997.
- E. Informational item submitted by the Director of Planning relative to the Downtown Facade Improvement Program.

HAVING READ THE CONSENT AGENDA, ON MOTION OF ALDERMAN WIHBY, DULY SECONDED BY ALDERMAN DOMAINGUE, IT WAS VOTED THAT THE CONSENT AGENDA BE APPROVED.

- A. An amending resolution and budget authorizations allowing for funding to carryout homeowner rehabilitation activities on a city-wide basis by decreasing the 1996 6.1000 HOME Fund - \$150,000 and increasing the 1996 6.10408 Housing Rehabilitation Loan Fund - \$150,000 HOME (changing the budget from \$125,000 to \$275,000).

In response to questions from Chairman Robert, Mr. MacKenzie advised that the HOME funds would be utilized to extend the Neighborhood Housing Services homeowner rehabilitation program. NHS had recently agreed to extend its service area. The program was designed to assist with one to four unit owner occupied housing.

On motion of Chairman Robert, duly seconded by Alderman Clancy, it was voted to approve this item. Alderman Reiniger was duly recorded as abstaining, being a member of NHS's board.

- B. An amending resolution and budget authorizations allowing for the decrease in various 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997 CIP programs and increasing the 1997 CIP 6.20550 Central Business District Improvement Project - \$700,000 increasing the budget from \$100,000 CDBG to \$800,000 (\$600,000 CDBG; \$200,000 HOME).

In response to question from Alderman Domaingue, Mr. MacKenzie advised that other CD projects would not suffer because of the transfer; that the project was to improve north Elm Street property.

On motion of Alderman Domaingue, duly seconded by Alderman Clancy, it was voted to approve this item.

- C. An amending resolution and budget authorization allowing for the acceptance and expenditure of grant funds by increasing the 1996 CIP 8.20401 Archival Record Retrieval Project - \$2,500 Other - increasing the budget to \$37,485 (\$5,000 cash, \$32,485 other).

In response to question from Alderman Domaingue, Clerk Johnson advised that this project was one of the grant projects Mr. Bergeron had been working on, the request being to allow for acceptance and expenditure of additional funds for the archival records project in the clerk's office.

On motion of Alderman Domaingue, duly seconded by Alderman Reiniger, it was voted to approve this item.

4. Copy of a communication from Chief Driscoll requesting the Committee's approval to solicit the use of three (3) vehicles from local auto dealerships for the purpose of working in conjunction with the School Department's three public high schools.

Alderman Wihby moved to refer this item to the Fleet Committee recently established. Alderman Clancy duly seconded the motion. A discussion ensued relative to what the request was for. Alderman Wihby noted that they were trying to decrease the fleet of the city and this would add three vehicles. Additionally he noted they had a DARE vehicle already and questioned what they were going to do with that. Alderman Domaingue noted disappointment that police was not represented and was concerned about the message they would send in terms of donations to the city by private contributors.

Mr. Thomas of the mayor's office advised that the Chief had been spoken with and had no objection to the matter being referred to the Fleet Committee, which was probably why he had not appeared this evening.

Following discussion Chairman Robert called for a vote on the motion to refer the matter to the Fleet Committee. The motion carried.

5. Communication from the Public Works Director regarding encroachment of a garage at 145 Larchmont Road onto Derryfield Park; submitting a proposed plan for sale of land subject to a sewer easement being given to the City and allowing termination of an existing easement held by the City.

Alderman Wihby moved for discussion. Alderman Clancy seconded the motion.

Mr. Thomas, Public Works Director, addressed the committee advising that they had reviewed the plans and the property in question was not being used by the city it had been left as a access. He noted that they had spoken with Parks and Recreation who had indicated no objection in relinquishing the parcel, though Highway wanted to reserve the utility/sewer easement.

Chairman Robert noted question with the request commenting that the parcel used to be utilized by children going to school and thought perhaps they would want to check it out with the school department prior to relinquishing. Alderman Wihby concurred that they did not want to get into a problem after the fact commenting on a prior action in his area which created confusion and much deliberation some time back. He also questioned if the abutter had been spoken with. Mr. Thomas believed they had but indicated he could check.

On motion of Alderman Clancy, duly seconded by Alderman Reiniger, it was voted to table this item and request Highway to go back and check with the School Department and the abutter for their positions on the request.

6. Communication from Alice Bellemare advising that neighbors in the vicinity of Candia Road suggest that a thru street from Mammoth Road to Lovering or Page Streets would cut down heavily on speeding and traffic on Candia Road.

Alderman Reiniger moved for discussion. Alderman Domaingue duly seconded the motion.

A discussion followed where Mr. MacKenzie described the area noting that there was a portion of state owned property (railway) going through this area which was intended as a trail development going all the way to the seacoast. Mr. Thomas noted that the it was probably not wide enough for a standard roadway it would need be a one way one lane road. It was questioned whether Alderman Soucy had been apprised of this request and what her opinion on the matter was.

On motion of Alderman Domaingue, seconded by Alderman Clancy, it was voted to table the item pending response from Alderman Soucy. Mr. Thomas was requested to discuss the matter with Alderman Soucy.

7. Copies of communications relative to a petition submitted by residents of Pine Avenue relative to the condition of the street.

Alderman Domaingue moved for discussion. Alderman Reiniger seconded the motion.

Alderman Domaingue noted that Mr. Thomas had been working with the town of Litchfield and requested he address the matter. Mr. Thomas noted that this street was on the Manchester/Litchfield line, they had done a portion of the road in Manchester and the request was actually for a portion of Litchfield, which Manchester residents also utilized because of the way the town lines were. Mr. Thomas noted that they had forwarded the petition and writing to the selectmen of Litchfield who have agreed to place a request to fund about \$5,600.00 to have the work done. Under this mutual agreement, Highway would do the work for Litchfield.

On motion of Alderman Domaingue, duly seconded by Alderman Reiniger, it was voted to approve having Highway do the work subject to Litchfield's funding contribution, and time and availability of Highway staff to conduct the work.

TABLED ITEMS

Item numbers 8 through 13 remained on the table.

8. Report from SPOT Team regarding:
397 Spruce Street, request of Beverly Fosher.
(Originally tabled 3/26/96 - remained on the table 9/30/96 in anticipation of taxes to be received.)
9. Communication from Al Lindquist, A & A Resource Mgt., Inc.,

- requesting the City's assistance to expedite a closing on property located at 241 Crosbie Street which the City held at public auction last year.
(Tabled 6/10/96)
10. Discussion with representatives from The Sargent Museum relative to their proposal to acquire and renovate City-owned property located at 88 Lowell Street.
(Originally tabled 7/9/96 - remained on the table 9/30/96 and requested Mr. Taylor to pursue going forward with the formation of an agreement for consideration by the Committee.)
 11. Communication from Jay Taylor regarding improvements to the corner of Bridge and Elm Streets property.
(Tabled 8/27/96)
 12. Sidewalk Program -
(Note: on 7/31/96) the Committee rescinded its previous action pending a report from the Planning Department.)
 13. Communication from Donald Tomilson requesting the Committee review the current ordinance relating to deduct water meters, and suggesting it be amended to provide the same relief from excessive sewer charges for commercial and industrial establishments, as now applies to residential irrigation systems.
(Tabled 10/22/96 pending further report.)
 15. Discussion relative to the School cleanliness report received by the Aldermen.
(Tabled 11/26/96 pending meeting of the Director of Public Buildings Services with the Building & Sites Committee of the School Board.

On motion of Alderman Domaingue, seconded by Alderman Reiniger, it was voted to remove this item from the table for discussion.

A handout was distributed to the committee by Mr. Houle. Mr. Houle noted this was his report on the schools; that basically they were talking about an

overall deficiency rate of 1.18 percent for September, .94 percent for October and 1.4 percent for November. Mr. Houle noted the matching fines for that period were \$8,415.00, \$6,111.00, and \$8,145.00 respectively. Mr. Houle noted that on a daily basis they receive deficiency notes from teachers through the principals that are faxed to the office, they also track the inspections done by his own people, they had two inspecting the work nights on a third shift.

Mr. Houle provided an overview of the report explaining the bottom reflected all school deficiency totals, which meant on one day if nothing was done in any of the schools there was a maximum of 2732 deficiencies, and for the 23 day period in September there was a maximum of 62,836 deficiencies that could have been generated and what was generated was 742.

Alderman Clancy requested he define a deficiency. Mr. Houle responded basically an area was not cleaned, a room, a part of a corridor, a stairwell or part of a stairwell, a toilet room, gymnasium, any area in a school, they had defined all of the areas in a school, the average penalty basically was about \$7.50. Alderman Clancy noted that a bathroom has more work than a hallway. Mr. Houle concurred and noted that a gymnasium was probably the highest penalty. Mr. Houle stated that when they looked at the maximum amount of deficiencies in a month and assume that nothing is done on the school days and they are fined for every item the amount would be \$3 million 600 thousand plus dollars, basically twice the value of the contract. Mr. Houle felt the fines worked out to be reasonable.

Alderman Clancy noted that according to the report the James Building was the dirtiest one, 177 in September. Mr. Houle responded no, that was the maximum number of deficiencies they could have for that day, there were only 14.

Alderman Wihby asked where the money went that they collected for the fines. Mr. Houle replied that it stayed in the PBS budget; that they just did not pay them, they deduct it from what they owe. Alderman Wihby asked about PBS spending it. Mr. Houle noted that they were short in the overtime budget snow removal which was not part of the contract, they issue a purchase order for snow removal, if they needed it they would expect to use it. Alderman Wihby questioned how he could spend the money without

going to the Board. Mr. Houle replied that he would expect to go to the Board.

In response to further question Mr. Houle noted that they had been fining them for about three months, and it amounted to about \$24,000.; that this was a new contract they had gone out to bid this past year; that they had been fining right along, but had gotten better which was why they had been funded for an extra inspector, it served two purposes, an inducement for them to keep the buildings clean; that they had been fining for a couple of years not to this extent. Alderman Wihby asked what they had been doing with the fine money. Mr. Houle replied that he would have to report to him, he was sure it was used wisely. Chairman Robert requested Mr. Houle provide a report for the next meeting. Alderman Wihby commented that he did not see how Mr. Houle could use the money in a line item of contract services, and did not know how it could be transferred to pay for someone's salary or pay for something else without it being authorized. Mr. Houle stated it wasn't spent on any area that wasn't previously authorized, but he would get back to him.

Alderman Wihby referred to the groupings on the report of A, B and C noting it appeared that group C did the worst job. Mr. Houle noted that this was developed as a management tool not only for PBS but for the contractor as well, so he knows where his problems are, his work area is defined by these areas and there is a supervisor for each of the areas.

Alderman Domaingue stated that all of south Manchester schools were in group C, commenting that she was as concerned about the money as the next aldermen but took very little solace in the idea that they can get money back by not having the job done, because the point of cleaning was to get the job done. The point of putting supervisors to supervise the supervisors was to get the job done, so when she looked at the report and if understanding correctly the first column of Memorial's maximum deficiencies of 132, and looking down they filed 169 questioning how that could be. Mr. Houle stated that 132 was the most the school could generate in one day, and they generated 169 for the whole month, the comparable for the month was 3,036. Alderman Domaingue asked if they were measuring deficiencies in terms of rooms or items. Mr. Houle responded rooms, there were measuring spaces and items within a space. Alderman Domaingue asked if they were including walls. Mr. Houle responded yes. Alderman Domaingue continued

stating countertops, toilet bowls, sinks, toilet paper. Mr. Houle responded yes, stating generally speaking the fine is for not cleaning, if someone went in and there was some dust on the wall they would probably tell them to clean it and would not fine, but if the toilet is dirty that is not cleaning the fine gets encumbered for the entire room.

Alderman Domaingue commented that this is where the communication breaks down between the school and the city, she was hearing from schools they want a little more clean, not they want a little more fines, and as an alderman she felt the need to respond to a little more clean. Alderman Domaingue noted that she did not sympathize with them totally because she knew sometimes that they get a little over-reactive, but in this case she was not impressed if the city was looking at a higher number of fines if they are leaving the dirt behind, she thought they had an obligation to make sure the dirt is cleaned up. Alderman Domaingue noted that there was a student available who could comment on the schools at Southside, but would not take the committee's time.

Chairman Robert referred to group C noting it seemed to have the worst problems and asked why. Mr. Houle responded that this was the current contractor's first year in group C, there had been three contractors through this area. It was difficult to give a rationale as to why they have problems in group C, they tried focusing on eliminating the problems from group C.

In response to question, Mr. Houle noted it was all the same contractor this year UFF&A. Chairman Robert asked if it was there taking on a new group of people. Mr. Houle stated there was a turnover problem, there was no question about that and this was a problem they were trying to work on stabilizing their work force. Chairman Robert asked why they were having a turnover problem, was it because they were unfamiliar. Mr. Houle responded the problem was everywhere and the contractor had attempted to shift people from one area into C, this had not worked out. Mr. Houle noted he requested the contractor to have exit interviews with some of his people, they had terminated a supervisor for practices they were not comfortable with, this supervisor now works for the airport and continuously goes to group C and hires people away from this contractor.

Alderman Domaingue commented that this was the business, it was not an excuse; that any business has competition from other businesses to steal

away employees that was not an excuse for not cleaning schools. Mr. Houle noted it was an excuse for turnover not for not cleaning.

Chairman Robert noted that they had some success in the other areas, and he presumed that was closer to the standard they would like to see throughout, asking what they could do to move group C closer toward what they had in other areas. Mr. Houle stated that they would continue to encourage the contractor to stabilize his work force, and in meeting with the building and sites committee, the contractor told the committee that the problem was essentially that the economy in the city was improving and it was becoming more and more difficult to hire entry level people, but again that was his problem.

Alderman Clancy asked what they paid the workers. Mr. Houle responded it was maybe \$6.00, \$6.50, some may be at \$5.50 he did not know.

Alderman Domaingue stated that group C contained all the schools in ward 8. She did not know of another ward that had that many, and for all of the schools in one section of the city to be in the worst possible group certainly required the attention of Public Building Services. Mr. Houle stated it did receive it.

Chairman Robert noted that they had done this in response to the school principals reports, asking how PBS reports differed from the school department reports. Mr. Houle stated that in the school departments' they were asked if they had any problems in these particular areas in the past month, it was not an objective report, and if you had a deficiency in one room for a month you could say you had a problem with floors and some of the narrative comments made dwell on the negative, no one said what was right this past month they wanted to know what was wrong this past month. Mr. Houle stated that when they took all of the information and computerized it he was impressed with the lowness of the numbers and he thought they could be higher if everybody worked at it harder, but he felt they were relatively low numbers, another way of looking at it was to say it was 98 percent clean.

Mr. Houle noted the importance of the principals encouraging the teachers to forward the notes, which the school was working on as a result of his last meeting with the building and sites committee, the superintendent was

issuing a memo to advise them to have the teachers comply with the deficiency note procedure. The other problems not related to cleaning they were working out and he believed they had a system in place now.

In response to question from Chairman Robert on what the building and sites people really wanted, Mr. Houle stated generally speaking the members of the committee have said all they are interested in is cleaning the schools, and generally speaking he was inclined to believe that, with some reservation, there were members not of the committee who would like to have their own custodians and have control over them.

Chairman Robert asked what the benefits to that would be. Mr. Houle responded they did not want it the way it was, they wanted the control with the principals and he could only say that that system went out of control, the city didn't rip off the custodians from the school department, they were given to the department by the superintendent and the board of school committee at that point in time, 1985.

Alderman Wihby asked if they were still saving money. Mr. Houle responded yes, in response to Alderman Shea on November 11, and a copy went to each of the aldermen, the department's overall savings for FY1997 was \$913,890. Asked if he really believed that. Mr. Houle responded yes, with \$830,000 attributed to the custodial division, all of the savings were in the fringe a large section being workers compensation, noting toward the end they were paying \$300,000. per year in workers compensation. Mr. Houle noted that they also had more custodians cleaning now than they ever had. Mr. Houle commented that the schools were as clean as they ever had been, were they up to snuff in terms of the contract, no they were not.

Mr. Houle noted that currently the contractor had about 95 to 100 employees in the school system. In 1994 PBS had 78, and on any given day 10 to 20 percent of those people were out and they had no method of replacing them, when they were out things were just not cleaned. Chairman Robert asked if there were other problems under the old system. Alderman Wihby noted that they had done more than these people were doing, shoveling. Mr. Houle responded that they were handy, and they would have done the shoveling, it was different and they got to know people and he thought when they say they are concerned with the turnover rate in some of the schools, they don't get to know the people, but basically speaking the day people in

all of the schools are fairly stable, there may be one or two schools they were having a problem with. Generally speaking the day shift seemed to be stabilized fairly well and it seemed to be a pretty good relationship, but they don't know the night people in some instances.

Chairman Robert asked if the committee was happy with the reporting barring certain improvements that had to be made, he thought they should make a report to the board about what they thought about the reports. If they can improve the cleanliness, and continue to save money he did not mind altering the contract if it had to be altered to get the schools to the condition that they should be in, he was happy with it as is.

Alderman Clancy asked if he was happy with what the custodians were doing right now. Chairman Robert noted no, there were obviously some problems and he wanted them brought to snuff, but he saw no merit in trashing the present system and doing something different.

Alderman Domaingue stated it was not her intent to trash the present system, and she would acknowledge and back up what Mr. Houle stated because she was on the school board back when they had problems with the custodial services under the school direction, but it was important to strive for improvement and recognize the tax savings was very high in their minds, but in looking at the report appreciating the work that went into it and there was room for improvement in one group. She was frustrated with the volume of paper generated in the monthly reports submitted by the school department, an inch thick with a paper shortage in the schools. Alderman Domaingue suggested they get to the short forms, have communication between PBS and the schools, let's see the improvement.

Chairman Robert asked if there was anything they could do with the contract to make things work better. Mr. Houle responded that he wanted to discuss the matter with the City Solicitor's office, it may come under negotiating terms of a contract in public. Chairman Robert offered to go into non-public session. Discussion ensued where it was concurred Mr. Houle would review the situations with the solicitor's office, because if it did become involved with changing money or terms and conditions he would feel a need to do so, and did not want it reported it publicly. Mr. Houle noted that in the current contract next year an adjustment for CPI would kick in, he thought that the contractor telling them that part of the problem was due to the low

unemployment rate he has to pay more to get good people and the contractor is such that he doesn't have the flexibility to do it, that was what he was hearing. The committee was asking what it could do to make it better, and he wanted to talk to the solicitor about what they could do legally, noting it was a public bid process. Members concurred he could work with the solicitor, and work on the group C area. Mr. Houle noted that the School Committee stated they would use their reports for one more month and then will rely on the same report PBS presented tonight, and he would expect if they improve the teachers reporting he thought it would go up, and then they would be managing the contract 100 percent because they could not be everywhere every night of the week.

Following brief discussion, on motion of Alderman Domaingue, seconded by Alderman Wihby, it was voted to forward the report to the full Board of Mayor and Aldermen advising that the committee was continuing to review certain areas.

There being no further business to come before the committee, on motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Clancy, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee