

Board of Selectmen – May 23, 2011

Present: Babson, Tsagaris, Searle, Gibbs, Dugan

Also present: Larsen, Connolly, Ketchen, Robinson

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm.

Warrants approved: 2011-049 (\$4,540,521.21)

1. Executive Director's Update

The Board voted to approve the minutes for the May 16, 2011 meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Mr. Michael Connolly came before the Board to speak in favor of proposed changes to his comprehensive permit for 65 Washington Street. Mr. Dugan asked if Mr. Connolly had met with neighbors regarding the project. Mr. Connolly stated that he had met with 3 neighbors and committed to inviting neighbors to meet with him before his meeting with the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Ms. Babson presented a draft letter for the Board to consider. Ms. Searle read the letter aloud. Ms. Babson offered additional language relevant to Mr. Connolly's appearance before the Board. The Board voted to approve the letter to the Zoning Board of Appeals presented by the Executive Director regarding the construction project at 65 Washington Street.

The Board voted to authorize the chair to sign a letter for the Board from the Board to the Massachusetts Housing Financing Agency in opposition to Mr. Connolly's request for the proposed modification and to ask Mr. Larsen or Mr. Robinson to write such a letter.

2. Advisory Recommendations

Mr. Jack Haley of the Advisory Committee came before the Board to present recommendations from the Advisory Committee regarding the Town's organization and financial planning.

3. Traffic Regulation Amendments

Ms. Babson opened the Public Hearing at 7:41 p.m. Mr. Connolly made a presentation on proposed changes to traffic regulations along Washington Street in the Lower Falls section of Wellesley. Mr. Connolly was joined by Kien Ho of BETA Engineering. The proposed amendments involved a left turn prohibition from River Street to Washington Street and the elimination of a parking space along Washington Street.

Ms. Babson invited members of the public forward to address the proposed amendments.

Mr. Neal Glick, 89 River Street, spoke in favor of the left turn restriction. He raised concerns about speeding on River Street.

Mr. Michael Racette, 21 Fairbanks Avenue, spoke against the left turn restriction. He expressed concern that it would increase traffic and safety problems on Fairbanks Avenue. Mr. Ho indicated that the changes would be reevaluated after a 6 month period.

Mr. Francis Champion, 76 Prospect Street, spoke against the left turn restriction. He expressed concern that it would increase traffic and safety problems in his neighborhood.

Mr. George Levine, River Street, asked if the restriction was for left turn from Washington to River Street. Mr. Connolly confirmed that it was not.

Mr. Dan Lothian, Crescent Street, spoke against the left turn because it would increase traffic and safety problems in his neighborhood.

Ms. Ariella Levy-Murray, Prospect Street, expressed concern that the restriction would create a cut-through in the Prospect/Fairbanks neighborhood. Mr. Ho indicated that the purpose of the change was for safety and congestion improvement.

Mr. Raymond Dellucci, 5 Washington Street, opposed the left turn restriction because it is ineffective. He complained about the lack of traffic lights with thousands of cars driving past with no controls in place. Mr. Larsen indicated that new signals are going to be created at Forrest Street and at 27 Washington Street.

Ms. Lori Ferrante, Crescent Street, spoke against the left turn because it would increase traffic and safety problems in his neighborhood.

Ms. Diane Hall, 80 Prospect Street, echoed prior concerns about cut-through traffic. She also indicated that she is a member of the Trails Committee, which has determined that a crosswalk was needed on the Cross Town Trail on Fairbanks because of concerns about traffic. She also questioned the configuration of the intersection at Washington and River streets.

Maureen Febiger., 24 Crescent Street, agreed with neighbors regarding the concern about traffic and safety issues related to restricting left hand turn.

Mr. Russ Murray, 39 Prospect Street, asked if the traffic analysis took into account traffic coming down Walnut Street. Mr. Ho confirmed that the full length of Walnut Street was considered.

Mr. Joe Fleming, 15 Prospect Street, asked what process would be used for a future evaluation. Mr. Ho indicated that, based on comments received, an expanded scope would be used to consider the impact to neighborhoods.

The Board further inquired as to the impact of alternative actions.

The Board voted 4-1 (Tsagaris opposed) that the Traffic Regulations adopted by the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Wellesley on February 1, 1937 under the provisions of Section 22 of Chapter 40 and in accordance with the provisions of Section 2 of Chapter 85 of the General Laws be further amended as follows:

ADDING TO SCHEDULE III (A), TURNS PROHIBITED, the following:

| Locations | Direction of Travel | Turn Prohibited |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| River Street at Washington Street | North | Left onto Washington Street |
| Monday - Friday 7:00 am – 9:00 am 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm | | |

The amendment regarding the reduction of parking spaces was continued to June 6th. The Public Hearing was continued to June 6, 2011 at 8:50 p.m.

4. Sprague Fields Scoreboard Proposal

Ms. Babson indicated that the Selectmen's agenda was significantly behind schedule. Mr. Thomas Harrington of the Playing Fields Taskforce came before the Board and stated his willingness to discuss the Sprague Fields Scoreboard Proposal at another meeting in the future.

5. Common Victualler License Application, Justine's, 987 Worcester Street

Mr. Laurence Shind of Kertzman & Weil representing the applicant, came before the Board. He was joined by the applicant, Maryellen Behrend, Clark Brewer, the applicant's architect and Jeff Dirk, the applicant's traffic engineer.

Ms. Babson indicated that this was a continuation of a public hearing from May 9, 2011.

Ms. Babson asked Mr. Robinson to provide background on the application before the Board, which he did by reviewing the general requirements of laws and regulations governing Common Victualler licenses. With respect to a liquor license, the process is governed by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 138 and the Board's regulations regarding the requirement for good order, decorum and that the reputation and record of the applicant are in good standing. Beyond the statutory and regulatory standards, the Board must establish if the issuance of the license is in the public good. Mr. Shind made a presentation reviewing the parking plan including the addition of a gate between the Lee Volvo and 987 Worcester Street properties.

Mr. Ho made a presentation on the proposed parking plan. Deputy Chief of Police William Brooks came before the Board and spoke regarding the traffic concerns on the site, itself. Both Mr. Ho and Deputy Chief Brooks described problems with the sight as being "tight". Deputy Chief Brooks also observed safety concerns with the proposed parking arrangement behind Lee Volvo.

Mr. Larsen gave a presentation on traffic, parking and pedestrian safety with particular attention toward the arrangement with Lee Volvo. Mr. Shind agreed to address the various comments presented by Mr. Larsen, Mr. Ho and Deputy Chief Brooks. Mr. Brewer addressed a number of the parking concerns raised. He further raised the possibility of additional off-site parking across the street and further down the street in Natick.

At 10:31 p.m. the Board voted all yes to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the reputation and character of an individual.

At 11:24 p.m. the Board reconvened in public session.

The Board voted to continue the Public Hearing until a date certain, June 13, 2011.

Redistricting

The Board voted to accept, as presented by the Town Clerk, the 2011 Re-Precincting Plan for the Town of Wellesley, including the map, legal description, and block listings; and further to forward the same to the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

At 11:29 the Board members voted all aye to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy for collective bargaining..