



Public Works Committee of the City Council

**Councilor Paul D. Spector
Councilor Jesse M. Adams
Councilor Alisa F. Klein**

**Location: City Council Chambers
210 Main St., Northampton**

9/28/2015 - Minutes

1. Meeting Called to Order

At 4:45 pm Councilor Spector called the meeting to order. Present were Councilors Spector and Adams. Councilor Klein arrived at 4:58pm.

2. Approve Minutes of the Previous Meeting

A. Minutes of September 3, 2015

Councilor Adams moved to approve the meeting minutes of September 3, 2015; Councilor Spector seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 2 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Councilor Klein).

3. Discussion regarding the Center Court (Continued from the Previous Meeting)

Councilor Klein asked whether any work had been done by the DPW for Center Court. Director Huntley reports that a survey had been done that can be used to either take the roadway from a private to a public way or for use for utility business. Director Huntley explained that a waterline is desired; if it failed as a public way, he would pursue an easement to maintain it for utilities.

Councilor Klein asked what additional steps were required to make Center Court a public way. Director Huntley explained that the surveyor would need to work with city solicitor to describe the exact property/location the city would want to make public. Costs of street surveys range from \$1,500 to \$6,000. The additional fees for solicitor work is not known or included this this price.

Councilor Adams stated that the City Solicitor suggested the City Council draft a resolution to gauge whether there is support to take Center Court as a public way. This would send a message to the Mayor what the will of the Council might be.

Councilor Spector stated that he would not support the resolution. The Mayor does not want to spend any money to make Center Court a public way.

Councilor Klein wanted the committee to draft a resolution and felt that members of the Council could debate the merits of making Center Court a public way on the council floor.

Councilor Adams shared a draft version of a resolution; members of the committee recognize that the resolution has no enforcement power.

Floyd Andrus stated that the money has already been spent on the survey. For what it will cost to finish it up, the city already knows what is required. If the city is not going to make it a public way, the property owners will be pursuing rebates.

Councilor Spector noted that the feeling was that the BPW rejected this private way for other reasons. They were very liberal in their interpretation of what constitutes a public way; the committee was concerned about the parking. In the opinion of the BPW, there was very little about the location that felt like a public way.

The committee voted to send the resolution forward to Council: 2 Yes, 1 No (Councilor Spector). The resolution shall read:

"The City Council resolves that the Mayor prepare an order of taking of Center Court and further requests its submission to the City Council".

4. Discussion Regarding Florence Road

Councilor Klein stated there are serious immediate issues that need to be addressed on Florence Road and Nonotuck Street. There are two different issues: Florence Road has been under construction leading to Pine Street. In the meantime, there are on-going traffic calming needs due to speed and visibility issues. A temporary measure had been suggested (speed bump). Councilor Spector suggested that the Transportation and Parking Commission would be the more appropriate forum to address this issue.

5. Discussion Regarding Nonotuck Street

There is been one home on Nonotuck Street that has been struck by a car twice within a three month period. The house is occupied by a family with an infant. The family wrote a letter asking for help. Councilor Klein contacted the DPW to ask if there were any temporary measure that might be taken. She was told that because a traffic study has been voted on, the City is doing all it can do until the full report of the study is made available. Councilor Klein asked the committee if the city is responsible to take emergency measures to protect this family until the study can be done.

Councilor Adams stated that emergency measures have been taken in the past for other situations that were deemed hazardous to public safety; these measures were taken by the Mayor. He noted, however, that in the past that certain Councilors questioned the Mayor's authority to take action.

Councilor Adams moved that Councilor Klein draft a memo from the Committee to the DPW and the Mayor asking that emergency measures be taken to protect the family from traffic hazards and attach a copy of the letter that the family has written. Councilor Spector seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 3 Yes, 0 No.

6. Review of Proposed Revisions to the Stormwater and Flood Control Utility Credit Policy

DPW Director Ned Huntley and City Engineer James Laurila were present. Mr. Laurila discussed the proposed revisions to the Stormwater and Flood Control Utility Credit Policy.

Last year was the first year that the DPW had a credit policy that applied to the recently implemented stormwater fee. The basis of the changes to the document was to make it easier for people to apply for credits. Revised policy standards fall into four major categories. They are:

1. Small residential credit for a properly functioning dry well. A 25% reduction in fee will apply.

2. Actively enrolled landholders who have Chapt. 61 land protection will see a credit increase from 20% to 50%. If protected status is removed, the credit will go away.

3. Change is introduced to the section that pertains to best management practice for stormwater systems. The former policy was difficult to implement. The change will make it easier to apply for certain credits, such as retention bases.

4. The revised policy will add a new credit-there will be 100% credit for land is totally dedicated to stormwater system. City-wide only 2 - 3 properties are affected.

Some language changes were also done where it made sense to clarify meaning. The proposed changes will be sent to the full City Council for consideration. Councilor Spector suggested summarizing the changes in a one-page document for the Council.

Councilor Adams moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:40 pm; Councilor Klein seconded the meeting. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 3 Yes, 0 No.

Prepared By:

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