



Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council

*Councilor Rachel Maiore, Chair
Councilor Marianne LaBarge, Vice Chair
Councilor Stanley W. Moulton, III
Councilor Jim Nash*

Virtual Meeting
Meeting Date: June 8, 2022
Time: 6 p.m.

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** At 6:02 p.m. Chair Rachel Maiore convened the meeting.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were committee members Councilor Rachel Maiore (Chair), Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge (Vice Chair), Councilor Stanley W. Moulton, III and Councilor Jim Nash. Also present were DPW Director Donna LaScaleia and Administrative Assistant Laura Krutzler.
3. **Announcement of Audio/Video Recording**
Councilor Maiore announced that the meeting was being audio and video recorded.
4. **Approval of Minutes**
Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2022 meeting. Councilor Moulton seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.
5. **Continuation of Public Hearing To Alter The Lay Out Of Winter Street (from May 11, 2022)**
Councilor Maiore said they are going to change course here because the process to alter the layout of Winter Street has been terminated without decision. She stated that they need to close the public hearing.

Councilor Moulton moved to close the public hearing without determination. Councilor LaBarge seconded.

Councilor Nash asked if anyone wished to speak. He said he didn't see any members of the public present.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote. The public hearing was closed at 6:05 p.m.

Councilor Maiore said she would entertain a new motion based on additional information received on this project. They have heard from solicitor Seewald and Director LaScaleia is present.

Attorney Seewald was going to join them but he is at a Board of Health meeting, Councilor Maiore advised. He sent a letter [See email from Alan Seewald, Esq. to Rachel Maiore re: Winter Street dated June 7, 2022,

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attached] recommending that the Finance Committee support a new course which is to accept an easement on Winter Street for the purposes of drainage and snow storage, she reported.

At this point, the DPW is looking for a positive recommendation to take an easement over the area: a 33-by 70-foot (33' x 70') parcel at the dead end of Winter Street, Director LaScaleia confirmed. The DPW needs legal access to this area in order to put the Winter Street reconstruction project out to bid. The work needs an Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission and access to the site has to be part of the bid package. At this point, abutters on either side own to the center line of the roadway. She referred to a plan showing parcel A and parcel B.

The city is looking to take an easement over the entire area for the purpose of drainage and snow removal and storage, she explained. Since Winter Street is a dead end, plow trucks have to push snow to the end of the street in order to remove it in a way that allows the roadway to be de-iced. The taking is a housekeeping measure to allow the project to proceed.

Councilor Moulton moved to make a positive recommendation on the request for an easement for drainage and snow removal.

The city solicitor has informed them that the request to alter the layout of Winter Street can be terminated, Councilor LaBarge stated. She expressed her understanding that the request from the DPW now is simply to recommend acquiring drainage easements.

For its purposes, the DPW just needs an easement for drainage; it does not need to lay out a public way, Director LaScaleia confirmed.

Councilor Moulton thanked the director for her work untangling this situation. He has talked to neighbors most affected by the water main breaks in 2006 and 2019. That risk remains, so they're very concerned about getting this infrastructure project done during this construction season. He is supporting this and urging them to move ahead expeditiously.

Councilor Nash seconded.

Councilor Nash referred to one of the documents before them, 22.076, An Order Authorizing the Acquisition of Easements to Alter the Layout of Winter Street. He proposed altering the motion to send this order back to council with a positive recommendation *less the layout*.

Councilor Moulton accepted this as a friendly amendment.

Finance Committee members were charged with holding a public hearing and they have done that and heard from residents, Councilor Nash observed. Clearly, everybody would like this to move forward and get it resolved. The Neiboers want it resolved too. He is comfortable sending this to council with a positive recommendation.

Director LaScaleia added that there may be some minor revisions needed to the actual language of the order to make it more specific.

The city has an opinion of value on this parcel, so they will be paying damages to each abutter in the amount of \$1,000, Director LaScaleia added.

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The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

6. New Business

-Reserved for topics that the Chair did not reasonably anticipate would be discussed.

None.

7. Adjourn: There being no further business, **Councilor Nash** moved to adjourn. **Councilor LaBarge** seconded. The motion carried on a roll call vote of 4 Yes, 0 No. The meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

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