



Public Facilities Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Present: Councilors Albright (Chair), Getz, Kelley, Leary, Danberg, and Gentile

Absent: Councilors Kalis and Laredo

City Staff: Associate City Engineer John Daghlian, Commissioner of Public Works Shawna Sullivan and Deputy Commissioner of Public Works Bernie McDonald

All Public Facilities agendas and reports, both past and present, can be found at the following link: <https://www.newtonma.gov/government/city-clerk/city-council/council-standing-committees/public-facilities-committee>

For more information regarding this meeting, a video recording can be found at the following link: [Public Facilities Committee - March 19, 2025 - YouTube](#)

#60-25 Appointment of Daniel Manning to the Sustainable Materials Management Commission

HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing Daniel Manning, 429 Cherry Street, West Newton, to the Sustainable Materials Management Commission for a term of office to expire on April 7, 2028. (60 Days: 05/10/25)

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 6-0**

Note: Daniel Manning joined the committee to discuss his appointment to the Sustainable Materials Management Commission. Mr. Manning explained his interest in serving on the commission stemmed from speaking with some current members, a desire to get more involved in the community in retirement and reading some City and SMMC documents related to waste reduction.

A councilor thanked Mr. Manning for being willing to serve on the commission and encouraged the commission to continue efforts for a citywide composting system.

A councilor asked if there were any issues that Mr. Manning wanted to bring to the commission's attention and Mr. Manning offered a current trash/recycling issue he is dealing with in his condominium complex. He explained that there is no curbside pickup for his complex but instead an independent contractor collects the trash and recycling in the same truck.

Councilor Kelley motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

Public Hearing 03-19-2025**#56-25 Request for a main drain extension at 132 Homer Street**

BETSY HARPER, 19 Fairmont Avenue, Newton, petitioning for a main drain extension that begins at an end of the line drain manhole near #16 & #17 Chapin Road and extends approximately 482 feet easterly to the end of Chapin Road. This will provide a means for overflow connections to the proposed on-site infiltration system that was designed for the new dwellings. The overflow connections will be provided to the dwells along the proposed drain main extension.

PETITIONER TO PAY ENTIRE COST

<https://newtonma.viewpointcloud.com/records/861204>

Action: **Public Facilities Held 6-0, Public Hearing Continued**

Note: Associate City Engineer John Daghlian joined the committee to discuss this item. Mr. Daghlian explained the Board of Survey approved a 3-lot subdivision at the end of Chapin Road at the address 132 Homer Street. During this process, it was discovered that the groundwater was near the surface which triggered the need for a main drain extension. The closest drain manhole is between #16 and #17 Chapin Road so they will be extending the 12-inch drain line approximately 500 feet to the subdivision. Mr. Daghlian noted that the petitioner will be required to put in service connections so neighbors on Chapin Road can tie their sump pumps into the drain extension. Additionally, the existing drain line from the existing manhole in front of #16 Chapin Road to the culvert will be inspected for prior damage and post-construction damage as well as to determine if the culvert can handle the increased flow from the subdivision and when the Chapin Rd. residents connect to the drain extension.

A councilor asked if the City would consider installing an additional storm drain on Chapin Road to help with flooding and Mr. Daghlian said that he could not make that decision but that the petitioner will be required to install a couple of catch basins which should help alleviate the problem so long as they are properly maintained.

A councilor asked if there was a timeline for when the connections would be installed to connect the neighbors' sump pumps with the drain extension line and Mr. Daghlian said that once the drain line is in, they would put in the lateral stubs to connect to the line.

The public hearing was opened.

Diane Finklestein, 50 Chapin Road, asked why the individual property owner is responsible for paying for the main drain extension and Mr. Daghlian answered that because the site does not have conducive soil for the infiltration of stormwater, the Board of Survey required the owners of the subdivision to extend the drain line to be able to handle the influx of water in the system due to the construction of these two new homes.

Laurie Berinstein, 55 Chapin Road, asked for clarification regarding a comment Mr. Daghlian said about homeowners who have gas heat in their homes. Mr. Daghlian explained that if a homeowner has gas heat, either they have an underground oil tank or an oil tank in the basement so the concern would be if those tanks were to rupture or leak, that oil could get into the sump pump and get discharged out to the drain line. To prevent that from happening, the homeowner would need an oil-water separator put on their property.

Avraham Almozlino, 24 Chapin Road, expressed concern that the drainage system in place currently is not functioning well so what will happen when more water is added to the system. Mr. Daghlian explained that this will be reviewed when the video inspection of the culvert takes place.

A councilor asked what the diameter of the culvert was, and Mr. Daghlian said it was 4 feet by 9 feet and the pipe that they will be extending is a 1-foot diameter pipe.

Edmond Spruhan, 80 Jewett Street, is an engineer who was contacted by one of the abutters to review the project plans and asked for the committee to hold this item to give him time to further review the plans. He also suggested more catch basins be installed in Chapin Road. He noted that there are no curbs on Chapin Road either.

David Dagg, 44 Chapin Road, shared his experience with Chapin Road flooding.

Raphael Bruckner, 51 Chapin Road, expressed concern for the culvert's capacity, especially during a significant rain or snow melt event and concern for the groundwater levels on the two properties where the new houses would be built.

Josh Goodman, 37 Chapin Road, noted that his sump pump runs continuously in the spring and asked what happens if someone does not want to connect to the lateral stubs the petitioner will install. Mr. Daghlian said that people are not required but that it would make sense to tie in because it would help to direct water away from the house.

Jaclyn LoPiccolo, 132 Homer Street, asked that the inspection of the pipe be done before construction is allowed to begin.

Chris LoPiccolo, 132 Homer Street, expressed concern that if the storm drains are already malfunctioning then adding more groundwater and stormwater to the system, would mean a net increase of water to the system without any additional remediation. Mr. Daghlian noted that during the Board of Survey public hearings, there was no mention of street flooding so additional drains and catch basins were not proposed then.

Diane Finklestein, 50 Chapin Road, expressed frustration that neighbor feedback was not incorporated in the decision to approve this subdivision plot.

A councilor expressed support for holding this item and further inspection of the pipes and the system before construction begins.

A councilor expressed support for the additional catch basins and for a study of the topography of the road to be included in the final decision.

Jaclyn LoPiccolo, 132 Homer Street, asked if the neighbors could pay for their own private study of the issues and system and the councilors confirmed that they could.

A councilor expressed frustration with the process of subdivision approval and that this committee is brought in at the end of that process.

A councilor acknowledged flooding on Chapin Road has been a problem for a long time and encouraged the neighbors to consider installing curbing as a way to reduce flooding on their street.

A councilor noted that the City has required the petitioner to install lateral stubs along the drain extension so that the neighbors could benefit.

Raphael Bruckner, 51 Chapin Road, asked if the City had considered buying the land instead of allowing houses to be built and a councilor answered that they had looked into it but it was too expensive.

The public hearing was left open.

Councilor Danberg motioned to hold which passed unanimously.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#58-25 **Authorization to expend \$750,000 from the Current Year Stormwater Reserves**
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to expend the sum of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) from the Current Year Stormwater Reserve to fund engineering services and design work for stormwater control measures in support of the City's Phosphorus Control Plan (PCP), as required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 6-0**

Note: Commissioner of Public Works Shawna Sullivan joined the committee to discuss this item. Commissioner Sullivan explained that this funding will cover the design and permitting for the first four projects in Phase 1 of the Phosphorus Control Plan as required by the EPA under the City's MS4 Permit. The Commissioner noted that the City has applied for 17.5 million dollars for construction funding from the State's revolving fund loan program for these projects. She said DPW would be back before Council to approve the loan, if awarded, and to present the design of each project. The consultant will be Woodard & Curran.

A councilor asked which areas they would be starting in and Commissioner Sullivan said they would start with the Davis School and East Side Parkway.

A councilor asked why these sites were selected and Commissioner Sullivan explained that the City is prioritizing projects that will capture the most phosphorus.

A councilor asked how much phosphorus these projects will remove, and Commissioner Sullivan said it is estimated the Davis School will capture 60 pounds and the East Side Parkway will capture 40 pounds.

Councilor Leary motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

The Committee adjourned at 9:30PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Albright, Chair