



John L. Salomone
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR JEFF WRIGHT

MINUTES NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL October 13th 2009

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Councilors Present	
Councilor Christopher Banach	X
Councilor Tony Boni	X
Councilor John "Jay" Bottalico	X
Councilor Thomas J. Bowen	X
Councilor Myra Cohen	X
Councilor Mike Lenares	X
Councilor David Nagel	X
Councilor Kristine Nasinnyk	X
Mayor Jeff Wright	X

Staff Present	
Executive Assistant - Jaime Trevethan	X
Council Clerk - Scott Coleman	X
Town Planner - Ed Meehan	X

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

John Volstrich Resident 142 Pfister Drive Newington

He spoke concerning the nearby fire department and certain issues and concerns related to noise, partying, swearing, until 1am, as well as the lack of respect shown, and implied threats which he alleged. He mentioned that he has spoken with the "chain of command", and had even called the police, but had been unable to resolve the issues or even get police reports. He asked for assistance from the Council.

Mayor Wright explained that, while the Council does not engage in two-way dialogues during the public comments portion of the meeting, if the speaker would leave his contact information, he would contact Mr. Volstrich directly.

John Donahue Resident 28 Maplehill Avenue Newington

Voiced his concern about the NHS students who had been invited to perform at the upcoming groundbreaking ceremony in the center of town at which the Governor would be in attendance. He expressed his feeling that this was an excellent opportunity for the students to showcase the band and hoped that it would not become tied up in a "political debate".

Judy Igielski Resident 23 Old Musket Drive Newington

The resident voiced her opinion concerning the appearance of the NHS band at the parking lot groundbreaking ceremony. She explained that she did not believe that it was appropriate that officials request, what has been termed, a "command performance" of the NHS band during a school day. She did not feel that it was in the best

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interest of each and every student involved to pull them from classes for “perhaps” several hours. She feels that it is important that the Board of Ed is informed of such requests, and that they vote on such matters. She further explained that the band had not performed at other groundbreaking ceremonies such as that for the local ice rink. She suggested that the band be made available to perform at all Town improvements, but on a weekend, not on a school day. She asked the Council to consider the cost of the participation, including school buses & driver overtime, police involvement, etc., as well as the lost class time, record of class absences, and possible loss of course credit.

Meg Casasanta Board of Ed 110 Steeplechase Drive Newington

This Board of Ed member explained that the Board is aware of the requested performance by the students and that the decision is ultimately in the hands of the School Superintendent. She expressed her support for the event, describing it as “significant moment in our town”.

Karen Nunes Resident 111 Cherry Hill Drive Newington

This resident appeared as a parent as well as a President of the Music Boosters. She explained she was informed by the Director of the marching band, Mr. Bell, that the Superintendent had requested the performance by the NHS marching band. The students, she said would only be missing band, lunch, and one or two classes.

Rose Lyons Resident 46 Elton Drive Newington

Ms. Lyons spoke concerning new business agenda item V, “Acceptance of STEAP grant Phase IV funding”. She expressed her preference to have the \$350K funding remain where it is, and hoped that in the future she would not have to appear before the Council concerning the moving of funds to the parking lot project.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Revised Job Description: Head Dial-A-Ride Driver

RESOLVED:

The Newington Town Council hereby approves of amendments to the “Classification and Pay Plan” by approving revised job/position description for the Head Dial-A-Ride Transportation Driver (LT-9) as recommended by the Town Manager in his capacity as Personnel Director in his memorandum dated September 22, 2009.

MOTION BY: Councilor Bottalico
SECONDED BY: Councilor Nagel
VOTE: 9 – 0; Motion Passes Unanimous

V. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

A. Plan of Conservation and Development – TPZ

Mayor Wright invited the Town Planner, Ed Meehan, along with the Chairwoman of Town Planning and Zoning, Cathy Hall, to present an overview of the 2020 Newington Plan of Conservation and Development The presentation (attached) is available on the Town’s Website

<http://www.newingtonct.gov/content/78/118/152/8642/8645.aspx>.

Ed Meehan presented an overview of the content.

Mayor Wright commented about the great deal of work which had gone into the preparation and asked for Council comments and questions.

Councilor Boni commented on sixty-two and older housing, stating that it seemed that other towns had done more in this area. He felt that the Town had been lax in providing this type of housing for seniors. He asked about the status of a sixty-two and older housing development, about which he had heard, to be situated behind Walgreen’s, and whether the town actually solicited these types of developments. **Chairwoman Hall** responded that the fifty-five and older detached housing development on Deming Road had been approved, and that she had seen some recent activity. She explained that the current economy may have put the brakes on some projects, and that the approval granted has a period of five years to run. Furthermore, she stated that this type

of project is developer-driven, and that Newington is land-poor (98% has been designated for development). Both these factors have contributed to the current level of this type of housing. **Ed Meehan** added that the current zoning now permits this type of development and that no new regulation would be required. This type of housing, he explained, is accomplished through a special permit in the R12 zone, and that there exists some incentives in the zoning regulations for age-restricted market rate housing. A minimum of five useable acres is required.

Councilor Cohen asked whether there had been any major changes since the last Plan of Development. **Ed Meehan** stated that the most significant changes have been at the state and Governor level involving transit development. Also, new to this plan are for different land uses such as an office park along Fenn Rd. near Route 9.

Councilor Banach asked whether the plan included a look at traffic congestion around the high school. **Planner Meehan** explained that this plan is broader and longer range in scope, and that it does not address the specifics of the issue raised. He further explained that the traffic problem has occurred, in part, due to the fact that more parents are driving their children to school. This issue is micro, whereas the plan is more macro in nature. Councilor Banach asked who would address this issue. Mr. Meehan responded the Town Engineer, and Public Works has been discussing adding another driving entrance into the north student parking lot, but that the ultimate decision rested with the DOT, because it is their road.

Councilor Banach asked whether the plan addressed other small businesses outside the center of town and what could be done for them. **Planner Meehan** responded that the thought is to take those areas such as Stoddard, Hartford Ave., New Britain Ave., Willard-Stoddard, and Maple Hill is to offer façade plans as well as conceptual site plans. Businesses, he offered, might get together and close curb cuts, and/or improve parking, signage, and lighting.

Councilor Nasinnyk asked for a definition of the term “gateway”. **Planner Meehan** explained that it is generally thought to refer to an area where a change in land use, or significant visual change occurs.

Councilor Nagel asked the Planner to make comment on sidewalks and street-calming, which may or may not have been addressed, in the plan. **Planner Meehan** explained that department would like to address sidewalk gaps, possibly requesting funding over time to close twenty or thirty gaps which have been identified. The priorities for traffic calming (to slow traffic), he said, are within the town center. He explained that the state had been somewhat reluctant to join the Town because of issues with snowplowing.

Councilor Bottalico continued the sidewalk discussion asked why the town hadn’t closed gaps (specifically on Rockledge), and whether there was enough in the budget. Planner Meehan answered that there are some physical challenges, and property owner related issues, as well as budgetary. **Mayor Wright** mentioned that this had been estimated to cost \$40-\$44K just on Culver St.

B. Authorize Town Manager to Accept STEAP Grant Phase IV Funding

Mayor Wright explained that this referenced a memo from Town Manager Salomone regarding a letter received from the Office of Policy and Management covering the STEAP grant for Market Square streetscapes.

VI. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS

A. Board of Fire Commissioners

1. Acknowledge Resignation of Michael J. Fox

MOTION BY **Councilor Bowen**

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Michael J. Fox, from the Board of Fire Commissioners in accordance with a communication dated September 22, 2009.

SECONDED BY: **Councilor Nasinnyk**

VOTE: **9 – 0; Motion Passes Unanimous**

B. Appointments to Other Boards and Commissions

MOTION BY Councilor Bottalico

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby makes the following appointments:

14. Conservation Commission

**7 members, 3 alternates, 4 year term
Party max.: 5
Remaining Members: 4 Rep., 2 Dem.
Alternates: 1 Rep. 2 Dem.**

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Alex Forte	123 Church Street	R	IMMED.-11/30/11	Terri DiMartino (Resigned 8/20/09)

19. Development Commission

**9 members, 3 alternates, 3 year term
Party Max.: 6
Remaining members: 3 Dem., 5 Rep.
Alternates: 2 Rep., 1 Dem.**

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Mark Pappa	105 Back Lane	R	IMMED. -11/30/09	Vacant (M. Paolucci res. 5/20/09)

**SECONDED BY: Councilor Boni
VOTE: 9 – 0; Motion Passes Unanimous**

8. Board of Ethics

MOTION BY Councilor Bowen

**7 members, 2 alternates, 4 year term
Party Max. (Reg. members): 2 Rep., 2 Dem., 3 Unaf.
Remaining members: 2 Rep., 3 Unaf., 1 Dem.
Alternates: 1 Rep., 1 Dem.**

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Rose Lyons	46 Elton Drive	D	IMMED.-11/30/12	Pat Lavery (de facto 11-30-96)

**SECONDED BY: Councilor Banach
VOTE: 9 – 0; Motion Passes Unanimous**

VII. WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER, OTHER TOWN AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS, OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC

None

VIII. COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Newington Community TV - Councilor Nagel:

- NCTV donated surplus equipment to NHS.
- There may be a possible agreement between in the dispute between AT&T and Cox by January.
- Cox has agreed to continue making agreed upon payments to NCTV through 2012; uncertain after that.
- Move progress is on-course.

Commission on Aging and Disabled - Councilor Nagel:

- The State has restored budget funds for Dial-a-Ride.
- A new program is available offering rides to the aging and disabled called Independent Transportation Network run by volunteers. The Middletown program would like to expand to Newington. Users pay an annual fee of \$140 and \$3 per ride. It operates 24/7 and rides are not limited to medical visits. It is hoped that this will be offered in Newington by the end of October. Elderly, who no longer drive, can donate their vehicles for use by the program.
- The Senior Center is holding an exposition on November 6th from 10 am to 1
- **Councilor Cohen:** Continuing about ITN. It is a portal-to-portal service, unlike Dial-a-Ride which is curb-to-curb. It is a fee-paid program. The fees cover insurance, etc.

Cemetery Committee - Councilor Cohen:

- The project is almost complete. Some minor touchup remains.

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

Judy Igielski Resident 23 Old Musket Drive Newington

- Ms. Igielski elaborated on the Independent Transportation Network, mentioned above. The value of the donated cars, she explained, is placed into an account for the donor from which program usage fees are applied.
- She asked that a correction be made on the effective date of her resignation from the Library Board. Her letter dates the resignation effective September 14th, not September 8th. She is requesting that the correction be made to the records.
- She elaborated on her earlier comments concerning the NHS band performance stating that she was not opposed to the band playing for an event that is important to the Town. She stated that she does object to the sudden manner in which this was done. She felt that all were not informed in a timely manner. She also indicated that she would've preferred a weekend event during which more of the town would be able to participate. She expressed her concern that all Board of Ed members were not aware that this was happening, and asked that all be informed at the same time.

Rose Lyons Resident 46 Elton Drive Newington

- MS Lyons commented that she had made numerous inquiries concerning the maintenance and status of the Mill (or Piper) Brook area. She will follow up with the Town Manager.
- She stated that she was happy about reevaluating the reopening of Mill Street.
- With the oncoming of winter weather conditions, she asked that the Board of Ed might consider sharing their phone line.

X. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Bowen addressed the earlier comments made by the public concerning the fire department issues being brought forth. He stated that he is a liaison to the department and that he had thought this situation was being addressed by command. He is disappointed that the issue hadn't been resolved and that he too will be looking into it.

Councilor Nagel mentioned that he too is a liaison and had also thought the public's issue was being addressed.

Councilor Bottalico commented on the fire department issue and he as well had thought the fire commission had taken care of it.

Mayor Wright wished to commend the Downtown Business Association for the first (what he hopes to be, annual) Taste of Newington Center event. He mentioned that over 100 bracelets were sold. He noticed the groundbreaking ceremony to be held on Wednesday at 11 am for the New Samaritan age-restricted affordable housing unit. He noted that the next groundbreaking ceremony will be Thursday, October 22nd for the Constitution Square redevelopment and reconstruction project at 11 am for which Governor Rell will be in attendance. The NHS Band will perform as well. He stated that students will probably only be in attendance for an hour, and that he thought that the event was a good thing for the students. He stated that, to save time, the students would not be dressed in band uniforms, and that this was not the first time that the students had performed at a groundbreaking ceremony. He also explained that he too would've preferred a weekend event, but that the Governor's tight schedule had to be accommodated.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Bottalico moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:13pm

Deputy Mayor Lenares seconded the motion

The motion passed 9-0; unanimous

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Coleman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott Coleman
Clerk of the Council

September 17th 2009