

CITY COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE
Ordinances & Administration
Monday, May 14, 2012 – 6:00 p.m.
1st Fl. Council Conference Rm. – City Hall
-Minutes-

Present: Chair, Councilor Sefatia Theken; Vice Chair, Councilor Robert Whynott; Councilor Steven LeBlanc, Jr.

Absent: None.

Also Attending: Councilor McGeary; Councilor Cox; Linda T. Lowe; Robert Ryan; Greg Bach; Jonathan Pope

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Items were taken out of order. There was a quorum of the City Council.

1. Continued Business:

- A) Appointments (Cont'd from 4/30/12)
Tourism Commission TTE 02/14/2013 Wendie Woodman DeMuth

The matter of Ms. Demuth's appointment is continued to June 4, 2012.

- B) CC2012-013 (McGeary) Amend GCO Sec. 22-159 "Parking prohibited between certain hours and on certain days" re: Davis Street Extension (Cont'd from 04/30/12)

Councilor McGeary requested that CC2012-013 be withdrawn in favor of CC2012-024 for the Committee's consideration on the same matter but that new order expands upon it.

By unanimous consent the O&A Committee allowed for the withdrawal of City Council Order 2012-013 (McGeary).

This matter is closed.

- C) CC2011-053 (Verga/Tobey) Establishment of City Ordinance re: Securing and Maintaining Vacant Properties and Properties in the Process of Foreclosure (cont'd from 04/02/12)

Councilor Theken announced this matter, at the request of General Counsel and the Building Inspector due to conflicting meetings, would be continued to June 4, 2012.

This matter is continued to June 4, 2012.

- D) CC2012-007 (Tobey/Verga) Establishment of ordinance for process to review and accept proposed donations to or installations of public art in the City of Gloucester (Cont'd from 04/30/12)

Councilor Theken announced this matter, at the request of General Counsel would be continued to June 4, 2012.

This matter is continued to June 4, 2012.

- E) CC2012-020 (Hardy) Election of City Clerk pursuant to City of Gloucester City Charter Sec. 2-7(a) (Cont'd from 4/30/12)

Councilor Theken stated that as Chair of O&A, it is up to her to do the review of the City Clerk. She had asked for a delay by O&A on their voting on the City Clerk's re-election as she wanted to explore concerns and questions that arose and were addressed. She would be having regular meetings with the City Clerk's office with a view of reorganizing that department to best fit the current and future needs of the community; to also encourage cross training and teamwork. She has talked with the City Clerk and proposes that Ms. Lowe should be re-elected as the City Clerk. She spoke with the department's employees and the City Council and that she and Ms. Lowe met on

those points brought up. **Linda T. Lowe**, City Clerk acknowledged her discussions with Councilor Theken confirmed, expressing her appreciation for those meetings which were very helpful to her. There would be a meeting this Thursday afternoon with staff to focus on reorganization. She stated her hope that all the Councilors would assist in the reorganization as well. Ms. Lowe also stated she has a list of goals going forward which she would submit later to the Committee. **Councilor Theken** added she would be meeting with the City Clerk monthly to see that the goals set for her were reached.

MOTION: On motion by Councilor Theken, seconded by Councilor Whynott, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed pursuant to the City of Gloucester City Charter Sec. 2-7(a) concerning the election of the City Clerk, recommends to the City Council the election of Linda T. Lowe as the City Clerk for a term of April 2012 to April 2014.

F) Report of Ad Hoc Committee regarding possible amending of the Gloucester Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article V, Sec. 2-471 to 2-476 re: Tourism Commission as relates to CC2012-015 (Hardy/Cox)

Councilor Theken explained that she is waiting to have this review. A memo of changes has been submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee. She is awaiting a response from the Chair of the P&D Committee as to whether a joint meeting is needed for this discussion; but since she had no response on the matter, she would continue this matter to June 18, 2012 to discuss the Ad Hoc Committee's conclusions of their study.

This matter is continued to June 18, 2012.

2. CC2012-024 (McGeary) Amend GCO Chapter 22, Sec. 22-159 (Parking Prohibited between certain hours & on certain days) Sec. 22-267 (One-Way Streets Generally), Sec. 22-265 (Turning Movements-Generally) re: Davis Street Extension & Chapel Street

Councilor McGeary stated this started as a request to prohibit parking in a small area in front of East Gloucester Elementary School because when vehicles parked there buses had difficulty negotiating the turns during drop off and pick up of students by private vehicles in the same area. In discussions before the Traffic Commission, some of the neighbors came forward with other issues surrounding the East Gloucester School during the drop off and pick up times. Members of the Traffic Commission, Mr. Ryan in particular, also with the help of the School principal Greg Bach, they devised a plan which they implemented with the help of the Police Department to prohibit entrance into the Davis Street Extension from 8:00-8:45 a.m. and 2:00-2:45 p.m.; and to reroute traffic coming up Chapel Street from East Main Street and down Chapel Street from Mt. Pleasant Street and funnel the traffic off onto Davis Street onto Highland Street. This seemed to make traffic flow much more smoothly from the test that was conducted and looks to be a good plan. **Councilor Whynott** knew they were moving towards getting out of the Elementary Schools for their use as polling places; but he suggested that however, there should be an exemption for days when the school is used as a polling place. It can be removed from the ordinance when they do locate another polling place for that precinct.

Robert Ryan, Traffic Commission noted several weeks ago they had an order come through regarding the Davis Street Extension parking issues; but there was a much bigger issue of people blocking residents' driveways; children nearly being hit by motor vehicles. Assistant Superintendent Brian Tarr, Greg Bach, Principal; Lt. Aiello of the Police Department, and himself studied the traffic issues over several days. The new order (CC2012-024) is to resolve the continuing traffic problems in this area during school hours. Vehicles that come from East Main Street up Chapel Street when they get to the intersection at the Davis Street Extension have to turn right onto Davis Street. If vehicles are traveling from Mt. Pleasant Street down Chapel Street, they have to take a left onto Davis Street. The only vehicles allowed onto the extension are staff vehicles, buses and the residents during drop off and pick up designated times. This is much safer and has been working smoothly for several weeks. The crossing guard is letting teachers and students through only. That is the new Council Order CC2012-024. They also allow those vehicles with handicapped vans/placards through as well. This is enforced by the crossing guard. The one-way street designations during these drop off and pick up times on school days all have to go to the Traffic Commission at their May 31st meeting for their review. The Committee would have their recommendations for their June 4th meeting. **Ms. Lowe** pointed out that this started a few years ago when an interim measure was adopted and sent it back to O&A for review recently. **Mr. Ryan** confirmed that interim measure was for Chapel Street; and that interim measure will be deleted with this new Council Order.

Greg Bach, East Gloucester Elementary School Principal submitted for the record several informal diagrams of the Davis Street extension. He highlighted in yellow the most critical areas where there will be a need to designate “No Parking” which is at the four corners of the intersection of Chapel and Davis Streets and the Davis Street Extension in order for school buses to be able to make the corner turning into the Davis Street Extension. That intersection also needs appropriate signage, and re-painting of those street corners bright yellow to clearly delineate the “No Parking” zones. They are asking parents to drop their students off at these corners so they can utilize the crosswalks. These crosswalks, he explained, are in bad condition; and requested that pot holes are filled, and that the area be re-hot topped. In his estimation it would not take much effort to make this area better. He created a parking plan also. This temporary order has been remarkable; it has created a very safe bus circle free of cross-cutting parent vehicular traffic. Previously there was a potential for accidents to occur every day. He has only received two or three complaints about the new traffic system. All other feedback has been that this was a good step to make the bus circle area safer. Now they need to remove staff vehicles out of the mix as well. He noted the second page of the submission (on file) showing the parking currently. H explained the situation of cars parking between the modulars, the hot top and the play field. Children were cutting between the cars on their way to the play field as well as playing around them. Even though the cars are stationary, it is not a good mix of children playing in and around these cars. They have about 8 or 9 cars in the current layout. They propose an expansion by 12 feet into the existing grass area; have two lines of cars and have no children playing in this entire area, which he showed the Committee on his layout of the parking area (submitted and on file). It would be painted clearly of where children can walk and play. This leaves a clearly defined fire lane and delivery lane. It would keep it completely separated from children to keep it a safe area. This does increase the parking by 8 spaces and free up parking on the extension for residents. They marked it out and measured it.

Jonathan Pope, School Committee Chair expressed his endorsement of the traffic and parking plan. His only concern was regarding enforcement; but stated it seems that it is working.

Mr. Bach added once official signs are up it should be easily enforced.

Mary Ann Albert Boucher, 98 Mt. Pleasant Street and property owner on the Davis Street Extension thanked Mr. Ryan and the Traffic Commission, and Principal Bach for their test run. She viewed this test as successful with much less traffic there and making it safer for all. Although it is a huge improvement, she expressed concern about the parking area in the school yard. She understood there are not enough spaces for the teachers which she understood are required by contract. She wondered if they would be able to enforce the no parking on the corners of the Davis Street Extension, Chapel Street and Davis Street, expressing concern for the safety of the children. She pointed out it was remarkable to see the changes over the last several weeks with the traffic. She had received a letter from a parent thanking them for trying to change this and had heard from several others in person who were positive about these changes. She thought there would be a lot of opposition; but in fact most people are on board. She thanked the Committee for their attention to this situation.

Councilor Theken showed Ms. Boucher the plan for parking in the school yard for teachers. She also reminded Ms. Boucher that the meetings are all posted appropriately on line and in City Hall and at the Police Station so that any other interested neighbors can see when this matter is next before the Committee and comes up for public hearing before the City Council. **Ms. Boucher** urged enforcement of these changes. **Mr. Ryan** would arrange a meeting with Mr. Hale, DPW Director; and Mr. Bach regarding the parking issue to see if they can craft the best solution for all concerned on the school property. **Jay Albert**, 4Davis Street Extension read a statement (submitted and on file with photographs illustrating the parking issues on the Davis Street Extension). He mentioned that the school was designed to house Grades 1-4 with two classrooms each and had increased exponentially by adding about seven classrooms with a new wing without consideration for the increased parking for them by adding more students, teachers and support staff as well as more students are being driven to school. He pointed out some of the vehicular issues, including fire apparatus access and pedestrian safety. **Principal Bach** mentioned a solution for the parking on school grounds (as noted earlier) which he endorsed. It is not just at the beginning of and after school traffic but during hours with visitors to the school and deliveries.

Councilor McGeary thanked Mr. Ryan for his fine work along with the Traffic Commission. **Councilor Theken** wished Principal Bach good luck in his new position as Assistant Superintendent for the Gloucester School System.

This matter is continued to June 4, 2012.

The following three items are continued to the June 4, 2012 regularly scheduled O&A Committee meeting:

- 3. CC2012-025 (McGeary) Amend GCO Chapter 22, Sec. 22-270.1 (Resident Sticker Parking Only) re: Farrington Avenue (TBC 06/04/12)**

4. *CC2012-026 (McGeary) Amend GCO Chapter 22, Sec. 22-270 (Parking prohibited at all Times) re: Eastern Point Road (TBC 06/04/12)*
5. *CC2012-027 (McGeary) Amend GCO Chapter 22-287 (Disabled veteran, handicapped parking) re: Eastern Avenue #19 (TBC 06/04/12)*

A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana C. Jorgenson
Clerk of Committees

DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING:

- Hand-drawn map of the area of the intersection of Chapel and Davis Streets and the Davis Street Extension by Robert Ryan
- Map of the area of the intersection of Chapel and Davis Streets and the Davis Street Extension; photos of roadway condition at crosswalks; and current and proposed parking layout on school grounds adjacent to the East Gloucester Field by Principal Greg Bach
- Statement; 7 captioned photos of parking/vehicular issues on the Davis Street Extension with dates and time of day by Jay Albert