

**Planning & Development Committee**  
Wednesday, May 2, 2018 – 5:30 p.m.  
**1<sup>st</sup> Fl. Council Committee Room – City Hall**  
-Minutes-

**Present: Chair, Councilor Valerie Gilman; Vice Chair, Councilor Jen Holmgren;**

**Absent: Councilor Lundberg**

**Also Present: None.**

**The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. The Committee recessed at 6:12 and reconvened at 6:15 p.m.**

1. ***PP2018-003: Request from National Grid to relocate two J.O. poles beside Leonard Street #28 (Pole #1280 & #1279) - to be conducted as a public hearing***

**This public hearing opened at 5:30 p.m.**

**Those speaking in favor:**

**Sibhita Mahabier-Sheehy**, Senior Designer, representing National Grid (NG), explained the NG Pole Petition as follows: This is to relocate two (2) J.O. (Jointly Owned) on Leonard Street in order to “outrigger” the poles to alleviate aerial trespass. This creates a violation of clearances to NG wires which is why the wires must be moved. The communications wires are currently within inches of the roof. **Lindsey Crouse**, 28 Leonard Street, explained that she and her husband are undertaking a renovation of their home by erecting a second floor, and have been concerned about current electric service wires as they are, “practically on top of the roof.” A NG field representative informed them that not only do the wires need to be moved for the trespass reason, but that Poles #1279 and #1280 are cracked and need to be replaced. She noted that the petition is for the pole nearest the Annisquam Exchange (32 Leonard St.) to be relocated at the edge of #28 Leonard Street (Pole #1279). She noted the property’s driveway will be relocated there. She added that the other pole (#1280) needs to move up so the angle needed to carry the wires to an existing pole further down Leonard Street in front of #26. The purpose is to keep the wires going straight down Leonard Street and by the installation of an outrigger to hold the wires away from the home at 28 Leonard St. **Ms. Sheehy** reiterated that if the lines aren’t moved there is an aerial trespass. **Rick Blue**, 28 Leonard Street, added that when the NG representative viewed the situation, they would have liked to keep the pole #1280 where it is now located but the outrigger would need to come out such a distance that it wouldn’t be able to support the wires in adverse weather conditions. Both Mr. Blue and Ms. Crouse examined the NG plan with the Councilors illustrating the pole’s current and new location. **Councilor Gilman** summarized that NG is moving the two poles closer together make that not possible. This has to do with geometry Ms. Crouse conveyed, saying this was, “a necessity.”

**Constance Mason**, 25 Leonard St., expressed concern that with pole #1280 being moved further down Leonard Street with the street light attached to this pole will no longer adequately illuminate the Walnut and Leonard Street intersection. **Ms. Sheehy** expressed that NG expects to ensure the light aims to the intersection and not towards Leonard Street, saying that she understood the concern for the intersection’s illumination. **Ms. Mason** expressed she was pleased to know that the light will remain pointed at the intersection.

**Those speaking in opposition:**

**Martha Bentley**, 29 Leonard St. and 6 and 6A Union Court, noted her frontage abuts Leonard Street. She expressed concern as to where wires will travel up Union Court, suggesting that the wires would cut across her property. **Councilor Holmgren** had Ms. Bentley point to a strip of land on the plan that she conveyed was an indication of her property’s location between 29 and 27 Leonard St. **Councilor Gilman** pointed out that the purview of the Committee is only for the placement of the poles. **Councilor Holmgren** confirmed with **Ms. Sheehy** that the new location of #1280 will have wires fly looped (a connection) for secondary wires down Union Court for a connection and the wires shouldn’t be over anyone’s homes. **Ms. Sheehy** reiterated the wires shouldn’t be over anyone’s home only if the wire is servicing an individual home would that service wire would go over that person’s property. **Ms. Bentley**, also showing the Committee a drawing of the area in question, reiterated her concern for wires crossing Union Court and her property. **Councilor Gilman** asked for a definition of a service wire. **Ms. Sheehy** explained that a service wire provides electricity to a particular home would. If it is a home’s electrical service wire it goes across that person’s property. She pointed out that Ms. Bentley has made an assumption the wire would come directly from the pole, but it will not. She explained that service wires either comes from the fly loop or a mid-span which is any connection from a span of wires to a connection for a service wire.

**Lee Nelson**, 27 Leonard Street, a property abutting Union Court and Leonard Street, asked to have the wire come up parallel to Union Court to go further to the east five or ten feet which he indicated would be better and wouldn't be in the middle of a tree (heading towards the water), running more parallel to the street. Responding to **Mr. Nelson's** inquiry through the Chair, **Ms. Sheehy** conveyed that the replacement poles are 45 feet in height which is higher than those currently in place by about 10 feet, and are sunk about seven to eight feet into the ground. Poles any higher would require additional permitting, she pointed out, and generally are used for instances of three-story homes or higher. She confirmed that the wires would not sag as low as they do now as the pole is going to be higher than what is in place now. She also confirmed the poles will contain the same number of wires. Mr. Nelson explained that his final concern is that the streetlight installed on Pole #1280 currently sits in the middle of a tree and will be even further from that corner, about 10 to 12 feet further up Leonard Street. A photo of Pole #1280 as it is now (on file) was shown to the Committee and **Ms. Sheehy** discussed the concerns for the street light placement there now and the movement of the light about 12 feet further down Leonard Street. **Ms. Sheehy** noted that the city-owned light on the pole would have to be directed by the company who maintains the light.

**Ms. Bentley** expressed a preference for Pole #1280 to stay where it is currently located. If the pole moves and isn't going to be an eyesore with a, "fan of wires over Union Court" she was okay with the wires and connection. **Communications:** Via email 4/27/18 from **Gerry Herbert and Peter Herbert**, 5 Union Court, expressing concerns that wires on the poles to be moved so as not to intrude into air space directly over the center of Union Court, and that one of the poles remain in its current location.

**Mr. Nelson** reiterated concern for the proposed new location of the pole which carries the city street light. **Councilor Gilman** conveyed she understood the concern of the neighbors for vehicular and pedestrian safety in lighting up the intersection of Walnut and Leonard Streets, and that it is a consideration moving forward.

**Councilor Gilman** asked if Pole #1280 wasn't moved as suggested by Messrs. Herbert, would aerial trespass continue to be an issue for the property located at 28 Leonard Street. **Ms. Sheehy** said it would.

**Councilor Questions: See above.**

**This public hearing is closed at 6:06 p.m.**

**Councilor Holmgren** noted as a former resident of Bay View, she understands the complexity of wires going across yards in an old, established neighborhood such as this. The pole placements at that time originally did make sense, she pointed out. She highlighted the poles in question are cracked and that this Pole Petition isn't just a move for aerial trespass but for safety reasons. She conveyed she trusts that NG will follow through with the commitment of engineering the wiring appropriately. She explained she would submit a Request to the Mayor regarding the street light on Pole #1280, through the DPW Director, to direct the city's contracted street light maintenance firm, Siemens, to examine the street light's illumination, with the planned movement of pole #1280 (Note: This light is currently at the intersection of Walnut and Leonard Streets). She expressed her support for the National Grid petition.

**Councilor Gilman** added her support saying that she would join Councilor Holmgren's submission of a Request to the Mayor to address concerns of the neighbors for the movement of the street light and redirection of it at the new pole location.

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Holmgren, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the Planning & Development Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Lundberg) absent, to permit National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc. be permitted to erect and maintain poles and wires to be placed joint or identical locations for and permission to erect and maintain poles and wires to be placed thereon together with such sustaining and protecting fixtures as said Companies may deem necessary, in the public way as substantially at the points indicated on plan entitled, "National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc., dated 28-02-2018, Work Request Number 24428749 for proposed Pole 1279 & 1280 Location: 28 Leonard St., Gloucester" with the following conditions:**

- 1. Notification to the Department of Public Works 72 hours in advance of the proposed work. A construction schedule will be prepared by the applicant for review and acceptance by the Department of Public Works.**
- 2. Proposed excavation may only occur during accepted road opening and construction season, 15 March - 15 November. No winter construction shall be permitted.**
- 3. In the absence of a detailed construction plan, the Department of Public Works requests: all proposed conduits and appurtenances shall be placed so as to cause minimum conflict with existing underground utility services.**

4. The existing sidewalks are cast in place concrete and the City of Gloucester will only accept full panel pours.
5. All excavated trenches shall be patched flush with the surrounding asphalt using hot mix asphalt binder at the end of each work day to minimize pedestrian hazards. Asphalt shall be applied in two lifts of 2 (two) inches totaling 4 (four) inches.
6. All final paving shall be done in consultation with the Department of Public Works and an agreed upon final paving plan executed by the applicant.

The Committee recessed at 6:12 p.m. and reconvened at 6:15 p.m.

2. *Memorandum from General Counsel re: Grant of Easement for National Grid at 24 Hough Street*

The Clerk of Committees, Dana Jorgensson, explained that DPW Director Mike Hale forwarded this request for an easement through General Counsel. She conveyed Mr. Hale informed her that this is necessary for National Grid to provide an underground electrical system at 24 Hough Avenue (Stage Fort Park). **Councilor Gilman** noted the memo of General Counsel (on file) which recommended the easement be put forward to the Council for their approval.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor Holmgren, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the Planning & Development Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Lundberg) absent, to recommend that the City Council pursuant to GCO Sec. 2-3(2)(d) grant to National Grid (d/b/a Massachusetts Electric Company) a perpetual right and easement to install, construct, reconstruct, repair, replace, add to, maintain and operate for the transmission of high and low voltage electric current and for the transmission of intelligence, an UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM," consisting of lines of buried wires and cables and lines of wires and cables installed in underground conduits, together with all equipment and appurtenances located in, through, under, over, across and upon a parcel of land situated on the easterly and westerly sides of Hough Avenue, a portion of which is known as #24 and as shown on a plan entitled, "Easement, City of Gloucester, 24 Hough Avenue, City of Gloucester, MA, WR#23830938 dated 08/17/2015; and as described in the easement submitted with National Grid's request for disposition of said easement for a nominal fee of \$1.00. National Grid shall record the Easement at the Southern Essex County Registry of Deeds and shall pay all costs to do so including providing copies to the City of Gloucester.

A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Dana C. Jorgensson*

Clerk of Committees

**DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING: None.**