



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON CITY PROPERTY
DATE: MARCH 30, 2023
TIME: 7:04 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS MARIA GIESTA, CHAIRPERSON;
SHANE BURGO; NAOMI CARNEY; SCOTT LIMA;
LINDA MORAD; SHAWN OLIVER;

ABSENT: COUNCILLORS IAN ABREU; DEREK BAPTISTE; BRIAN
GOMES; WILLIAM BRAD MARKEY; RYAN PEREIRA

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Councillor Giesta called the Committee on City Property Meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk read Communications from Councillors Abreu, Baptiste, Gomes, Markey and Pereira explaining their absences. The Communications were received and placed on file by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Oliver.

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A motion was made to take up items 1, 1a and 2 together, without objection. They were received and placed on file by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Oliver. This motion passed on a voice vote. The items are as follows:

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, Chairman of the School Committee, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER, relative to the proposed construction of a new or reconstructed DeValles School on its present site or as expanded to the north by the acquisition of six (6) parcels bordered by Rivet, Orchard, Bonney and Katherine Streets. (Ref'd 03/23/2023) (1)

AN ORDER, (To be Referred to the Committee on City Property.) (Ref'd 03/23/2023) (1a)

COMMUNICATION, Andrew O'Leary, Assistant Superintendent of the New Bedford Public Schools to City Council, regarding the site acquisition options for the new DeValles/Congdon School. (To be Referred to the Committee on City Property.) (Ref'd 03/23/2023) (2)

The Chair recognized Andrew O'Leary, Assistant Superintendent, New Bedford Public Schools, who gave an overview of the School Committee's request. Mr. O'Leary explained that meetings have been held with the School Planning Board, consisting of Union Representatives, Educators, Parents, City Councillors, City Administrators and the School Committee. These meetings have been held since January to meet the Massachusetts School Board Authority requirements to meet the site selection deadlines. When the MSBA convenes in June, they will need to review new details as it relates to the City's site selection. These details need to be sent to the MSBA by April 27, 2023.

This request allows the City, through M.G.L. Chapter 30B State requirements, flexibility to identify properties that could be taken for the building of a new school. It was discovered that the Order did not include the former Goodyear factory site, which may be considered for taking.

Councillor Morad asked if a site selection had been made yet. She was told no and that the State allows, through M.G.L. Chapter 30B, to proceed without a Request for Proposals (RFP). It was explained that this is allowed because the principal site, the current DeValles School property, may be used.

Atty. Eric Jaikes, City Solicitor, was recognized. He explained that in issuing the original Order, he neglected to include the former Goodyear site which abuts the De Valles School property. He needed to add the location, this is why the Order has been revised and submitted for consideration. Atty. Jaikes also reiterated that a site for the new school had not yet been selected.

Councillor Morad asked Atty. David Gerwatowski, Legal Counsel, if he had any concerns with the amended Order. He stated that he did not. He explained that the procurement laws require that whenever a City is going to acquire land, it must be done through the RFP process. However, the law says if there is a unique location that the City needs, in this case the school, and they are looking to expand in this specific area, then there is no need to issue an RFP. The Committee must determine that the property they are taking is unique, and the language before the Committee does this. He stated that the steps the Committee are taking are correct.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Burgo, the Committee VOTED: To recommend that the City Council Adopt the SUBSTITUTE ORDER, relative to the proposed construction of a new or reconstructed DeValles School and take NO FURTHER ACTION on the original motion that was submitted at the City Council meeting of March 23, 2023. This motion passed on a voice vote.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Burgo, the Committee VOTED: To recommend that the City Council take NO FURTHER ACTION on the COMMUNICATION, Andrew O’Leary, Assistant Superintendent of New Bedford Public Schools, regarding the site acquisition options for the new DeValles/Congdon School. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Councillor Morad made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Lima. This motion passed on a voice vote.

This meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

ATTEST:

Denis Lawrence, Jr.
Clerk of Committees