

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION MEETING  
FEBRUARY 6, 2007**

This meeting was called to order by Carol A. Raph, Municipal Clerk. It was properly advertised under Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

The flag salute was led by Mayor Frank Perri, Jr., and following the flag salute, he called for a moment of silence to recognize those fighting at home and abroad for our liberties, as well as those who serve the community, that they may return safely to their families.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Carew, Martinez, Mazzeo, Notaro, Turon, Vain, and Kern

City Solicitor Keith Bonchi, Engineer Ed Stinson of Doran Engineering, CFO Marilyn Dolcy, City Administrator Jeffrey Bruckler, and Deputy City Clerk Kim Hodsdon were present.

Council President Kern reviewed the agenda. Mayor Perri questioned Ordinance 4-2007. Solicitor Bonchi explained that the Ordinance needs to be amended first, in order to allow future changes to Policies and Procedures to be handled via Resolution. Mayor Perri and Councilman Carew questioned Ordinance 3-2007. Administrator Bruckler explained that the City is not currently seeking reimbursement of costs related to the clean up of hazardous materials spills. He explained that the procedure for handling these situations will not change, but the City will now recover the associated costs of clean up and the funds will be allocated to the operating budget.

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL**

Heather Mellon, member of Friends of the Library, presented Council with plans to refurbish the landscaping at the Library. She stated that the group is excited about the opportunity to beautify the grounds and hopes that Council will accept it. She reported that the sprinkler system has been checked to make sure that it will accommodate the new design and that Bayview Nursery will be doing the work. She requested that the City arrange for the grounds to be cleaned up before the work begins as there are some old shrubs that need to be removed.

On a motion of Councilman Mazzeo, second of Carew, all were in favor of allowing the Friends of the Library to proceed with the landscaping project. Carew stated that he and Councilman Turon would communicate with the Public Works Department to ensure the completion of the clean-up before Spring. Mayor and Council thanked Ms. Mellon and the Friends of the Library for their efforts.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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Councilman Mazzeo reminded everyone that Budget Meetings are scheduled for February 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. He announced that the Tax Office collected \$2,814,990.95 in the month of January.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Perri reported that he had attended a presentation by the County regarding shared services. Many areas are being considered for the program including central dispatch, storm water management, gasoline/fuel and electronic records management.

Perri stated that he had been contacted by some residents who wanted to know the status of a possible skate park within the City. Currently, the community children have no where to go to skate and the Mayor is open to suggestions. Administrator Bruckler has been gathering information from other municipalities who have such facilities. He stated that there are many factors to consider, such as insurance costs and liability. Council President Kern asked Bruckler to prepare a report for the next meeting.

Regarding the pending transfer of a liquor license, Mayor Perri stated that he has been in contact with both parties and the Police Department is conducting the necessary background checks.

Perri asked if additional requests for proposals are necessary in order to consider hiring professional planning services; If not, he requests that Council move forward.

**ENGINEER'S REPORT**

The City Engineer's report was provided to Mayor and Council and is on file in the City Clerk's office. Mayor Perri reported that some residents of Casey Drive have complained about trees that have overgrown into the street. Stinson confirmed that the overgrowth does extend into the cartway by approximately ten feet. Perri expressed concern that the overgrowth poses a problem for emergency response vehicles. Some of the residents prefer to have the trees as a buffer and have offered to install a fence, at their own cost, and dedicate it to the City. It was decided that the City would cut back the overgrowth at this time.

Councilman Mazzeo asked if the change of traffic direction on Davis Avenue would require any changes to City Ordinance. Police Chief James answered in the affirmative.

Mayor Perri and City Council discussed the issue of the 'yield to pedestrians' signs that are currently installed at Bike Path intersections. The Police Department

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received an anonymous complaint claiming that the signs are non-compliant with Department of Transportation regulations. Engineer Stinson explained the DOT regulations and the complexity of parking regulations in conjunction with the signs. Solicitor Bonchi recommended that the City remove the signs until the issue is resolved because signs that are not in compliance with the laws are a liability. Mayor, Council, the City's Solicitor and Engineer all discussed the matter at length, taking into consideration residential parking, pedestrian safety, liability issues and a possible DOT waiver. Stinson and Police Chief James will work together on a proposal to resolve the matter.

A motion was made by Councilman Carew, a second by Councilman Vain, to remove all of the 'yield to pedestrians' signs at this time. Roll call: Carew – yes, Martinez – no, Mazzeo – no, Notaro – yes, Turon – yes, Vain – yes, Kern – yes. Motion Carries. For the record, Mayor Perri expressed his opposition.

Council President Kern and Councilman Carew support the Mayor's idea of implementing four-way stops at Bike Path intersections.

Councilman Turon asked Stinson to follow up with the contractor to remove the orange construction barrels that remain on Harvey Drive as they are posing a traffic safety hazard during windy conditions.

Council President Kern discussed the status of Burton Estates with Stinson. Stinson provided her with an update and stated that he has been communicating with the Homeowner's Association. Stinson also answered Kern's questions regarding the Babe Ruth Field; weather conditions have restricted the contractor's ability to complete the job and the field is not anticipated to be ready for the beginning of the season.

**PUBLIC SESSION**

Council President Kern opened this meeting to the public and asked if anyone from the public wished to speak.

Guy Schlachter of 14 Mazza Drive, Northfield, came forward and commented on the 'yield to pedestrians' signs. He noted that documentation had been completed initially in order to gain approval for their installation and encouraged Council refer back to it. He also questioned why the four-way stop signs have not yet been installed at the intersection of Oak and Cedarbridge. Engineer Stinson advised the City Administrator that he had given the necessary information regarding the placement of the stop sign posts to Jim Clark of the DPW. Administrator Bruckler will follow up on both matters.

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Charles Cleary of 308 Clark Place, Northfield, came forward and explained to Council a problem he is having in his neighborhood. The owner of the home at 309 Clark Place apparently lives out-of-state and rents the property to tenants. Cleary is concerned about a history of disturbances at the home and described how the Police Department has responded to several calls including one instance involving a child. He believes that City Ordinances regarding noise and multiple tenancies are being violated. He reported this to the City Housing official and felt that Council should also be aware.

Council adjourned for a brief recess before reconvening for the Regular Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Raph, RMC/CMC