

May 28, 2008

**REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEES ON LICENSES AND PERMITS
AND PUBLIC UTILITIES AND PUBLIC WORKS**

The Committee on Licenses and Permits and the Committee on Public Utilities and Public Works convened in Joint Session on May 28, 2008, with Chairmen Bruce Desmond and John Connolly presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Maryann Heuston and Robert Trane also present and voting. Also present were Alderman William White, DPW Commissioner Stan Koty, Highway Superintendent Steve MacEachern, Assistant Solicitor Matthew Buckley, Stephen Mackey from the Chamber of Commerce and NSTAR representatives William Zamparelli, Dana Teague, Bob Masci, Fred Martins and Susan Sougel.

The committee discussed the frequent power outages that have been affecting the Union Square area and NSTAR's actions to correct the problem. A claims representative was not able to attend this meeting, however Mr. Zamparelli has brought claims forms with him for anyone who needs one. At this time, there are still 2 or 3 claims outstanding and Mr. Zamparelli is working with the claims manager, Dave Matthews, to resolve them. Mr. Zamparelli distributed NSTAR's history of power outages in Union Square, noting that he does not agree with the number of outages listed in the report. He also informed the members that NSTAR has plans to double the capacity of the transformers in Union Square. Mr. Masci explained the working capability of cable network circuits and discussed the reasons behind the power outages. The installation of new circuits would not impact Union Square but rebuilding the manhole would fix the problem and NSTAR is committed to rebuilding the it by June 21st. Adding transformers and rebuilding manholes will make a big improvement to the service. He also stated that NSTAR does not take preventive measures by replacing old cable and Alderman White expressed concern about old cable causing outages.

Mr. Koty informed the members that all NSTAR permits were shut off until last week in an effort to get them to perform the tasks needing to be done in the city. Mr. Koty cautioned the members to get all agreements with NSTAR in writing because past history indicates that they use old equipment. Chairman Desmond said that service has declined since NSTAR purchased Boston Edison and he feels that money is not being spent now on training, infrastructure, etc. Mr. Masci replied that there were previous cutbacks, but now the company recognizes the need to hire more employees. Alderman Heuston stated that her main concern is that the problems affecting Union Square get fixed and she requested that NSTAR provide a schedule to address the problems. She also stressed the importance of adhering to the June deadline. Alderman Connolly suggested that an action plan be developed between the city and NSTAR, noting that such plans have been helpful in the past.

Alderman Heuston motion that NSTAR complete the repairs to the manhole affecting power in Union Square as soon as possible and advise the Board of Aldermen of its progress, was approved.

Alderman Connolly motion that the Commissioner of Public Works, in conjunction with NSTAR, develop an action plan reflecting Somerville's future service needs along with a time-line for their implementation, was approved.

No papers were acted on.

Alderman Bruce M. Desmond, Chairman
Committee on Licenses and Permits

Alderman John M. Connolly, Chairman
Committee on Public Utilities and Public Works

COMMITTEE REPORT

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Permits and Public Utilities and Public Works,
May 28, 2008

In Board of Aldermen

Clerk