

SPECIAL MEETING
COMMITTEE ON LANDS & BUILDINGS
June 3, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Chairman Levasseur called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Levasseur, Vincent, Long, Goonan, Thomas

1. Communication from the NH DOT Bureau of Traffic requesting approval to install up to four permanent traffic monitoring stations in the following locations:
 - Brown Avenue in front of Lot #675-48
 - Queen City Avenue by Lot #459-27A and the end of Caron Street
 - Candia Road in front of Lot #478-8A, across from 840 Candia Road
 - Bridge Street at the edge of Lot #906-3A (Derryfield Park) across from 443 Bridge Street

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded **Alderman Vincent**, it was voted to approve contingent upon entering into a revocable license agreement to be approved by the Solicitor's Office.*

TABLED ITEMS

2. Request from William Socha to purchase six lots within the Hackett Hill property (Tax Map 0766, Lots 15, 15B, 15C, 15D, 15E and a portion of 15M).
(Note: Tabled on May 20, 2025.)

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Vincent**, it was voted to remove this item from the table.*

***Alderman Vincent** moved to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(d) for consideration of property acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community. **Alderman Long** duly seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous roll call vote.*

Chairman Levasseur called the meeting back to order.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Vincent**, it was voted to seal the minutes.*

*On motion of **Alderman Goonan**, duly seconded by **Alderman Vincent**, it was voted to approve the P&S with certain conditions.*

Matthew Normand, City Clerk, stated as I understand it, you want to deem this property surplus and then direct City staff to negotiate with Will Socha on a final deal and authorize the Mayor to execute all related documents.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Vincent**, it was voted to deem the property surplus.*

*On motion of **Alderman Thomas**, duly seconded by **Alderman Goonan**, it was voted to direct City staff to negotiate with Will Socha on a final deal and authorize the Mayor to execute all related documents.*

Chairman Levasseur stated in order for us to allow this to go forward in the City of Manchester, we have to articulate a public good for not going out for an RFP on these parcels. There are a lot of people out there who are concerned that people are getting backroom deals. I will start and others can join in if they like. I have been sitting on this Board or have been involved on this Board since 1999. I was part of French Hall when it was the Merrimack Valley branch for UNH. I went to school up in that property when it was traded. Mayor Wieczorek made a trade with UNH and gave us that massive property for the purpose and hope that someday it would be turned into a place where people could live and work and there would be substantial development. Moving forward over the last 25 years that I have been involved in city politics, there was one buyer who went in there and had to be foreclosed on. We recently had a big commercial bio-fabricator come in and say they were interested and we went through motions and sales and numbers and took that property off the market for at least a year before they pulled out. That property has been sitting there. This city has been waiting for the state who promised us an exit on the northern part of that development for over 25 years. We were told that we were going to get another exit there. That has not occurred. They have dangled that carrot in front of us but have now taken it away. The public good is that the number one issue for the state and Manchester is housing. A poll came out today and what people are most concerned about is affordability. The more housing we put out and the more houses and apartments we build, eventually those prices are going to come down and there are going to be more places for people to live. The public good for this project is that we have been sitting here and not collecting property taxes on any of that land for almost 40 years or something like that. We will now have a buyer, the Socha family, who have done amazing work in the City of Manchester. They are not a big powerful name company that seems to be getting all of the big deals in this city. They are a regular family-owned business that has built hundreds and hundreds of units without any blemish with a great record and have always done what they said they were going to do. They have managed their properties in a professional manner and keep them in excellent condition. We are lucky to have the Socha family in Manchester developing as much as they are and now they are going to take Hackett Hill and develop 88 acres into something that will be another jewel that was envisioned by former Mayor Wieczorek when we got that property. If there is anyone else that would like to talk about public good issues, I would entertain that.

Alderman Long stated also the public good is the Socha company has built in the vicinity of that area. They know the land and they know what they need to do with the ledge and all and that gives me the confidence. The fact that this is mixed use. Ward 12 doesn't have a lot of businesses. It would be nice to get a cleaner there and a barber and other things that will add to the economic development on the west side.

Chairman Levasseur stated also I would like to say that this is not the first time they have approached the city on this property. They came forward four years ago and presented the same plan. They are going to be fixing and rebuilding a road that currently goes through there. It is going to cost about \$2.5 million. The city and aldermen believe that once the Socha family starts to build in there and reconstructs that road that more developers – commercial and home developers and businesses will have an opportunity to be able to use that road to get to other spots on that property. I believe there is another 250 acres or so that will still be available after this portion is sold off. We are looking at finally getting something done. Thank goodness this will be done while I am sitting here because it is something I have wanted for a long time. We worked with the Socha family a couple of years ago. Unfortunately, that deal did not go forward, not because of the Socha family but because certain aldermen wanted to keep it as a research park. They are buying this property at a good price. Interest rates are high and the cost of doing construction is very high so there are not a lot of people out there. This has been a known commodity to developers in this city for decades. It has been there and the mayor has stated he has had people contact him about the properties but nobody has ever come to the table with an actual contract, plan and a deal. We finally have that today and I am proud to cast my vote for the Socha family and this project.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Vincent**, it was voted to approve selling the property to Will Socha as it is in the best interest of the city and for the public good.*

3. Communication from the family of Inspector William Moher, a police officer who died in the line of duty on July 3, 1921, requesting that the city find a fitting way to honor his memory.
(Note: Tabled on September 3, 2024.)

This item remained on the table.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Vincent**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.



Clerk of Committee