



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

May 1, 2017

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Katjana Ballantyne	Chair	Present	
Robert J. McWatters	Vice Chair	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six Alderman	Present	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Present	

Others present: Brad Rawson - OSPCD, Vanessa Boukili - OSPCD, Jill Lathan - Recreation, Oliver Sellers-Garcia - OSE, Vithal Deshpande - OSE, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Alderman Ballantyne and adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Approval of the March 20, 2017 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
----------------	-----------------

200428: Submitted by Envirotrac for Speedway LLC, to advance 3 soil borings in the sidewalk at 24 and 26-28 Kensington Avenue, and install monitoring wells in 2 of those borings.

Ms. Connor will meet with the Ward 1 Alderman on this matter and the committee will follow up on this request.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
----------------	--------------------------

201378: That the Director of Sustainability and Environment provide an energy master plan for the most effective systems to approach net zero for Union Square and other "transformative zones" as outlined in SomerVision.

The committee reviewed a memo from OSPCD that discussed LEED Certification, a Sustainable and Resident Buildings Questionnaire and establishing standards for assessing shadows, wind and solar glare.

RESULT:**WORK COMPLETED**

201432: That the Director of the Office of Sustainability and Environment and the Commissioner of Public Works explore alternatives, such as a "pay as you throw" program, to limit the amount of curbside trash, and integrate curbside composting.

Mr. Sellers-Garcia gave a presentation on solid waste management and planning and said that Somerville's recycling is slightly above the state average. Data compiled, using 22,500 as the number of households, showed that the city's annual cost per household for trash is \$219.81. A comparison between the current system and a "pay per bag" system was reviewed. Questions were asked regarding any interest in doing composting here. Mr. Sellers-Garcia reported that a new recycler for Styrofoam has been found. Discussions were held about using social media, environmental service postcards and working more with the Somerville schools to inform the public. Alderman Sullivan spoke about trash being placed into recycling bins and wanted to know what the city could do about this. Mr. Sellers-Garcia stated that this is a complicated matter and he mentioned the Waste Wizard; which is a database of materials and how to dispose or recycle them. (The presentation materials are attached.)

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

201695: That the Director of Sustainability and the Environment report to this Board on reducing food waste and expanding composting at city schools.

Mr. Sellers-Garci and the DPW Commissioner will work with teachers to determine recycling patters. Over the next couple of weeks, they will meet with teachers and principals and will report back to this committee in a few months.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

202992: That the Director of Sustainability and Environment and the City Solicitor advise this Board on the feasibility requiring certain commercial and multi-family buildings to require composting as a part of regular waste disposal.

Mr. Sellers-Garcia would like the City Solicitor to weigh in on this matter.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

202993: That the Director of Sustainability and Environment update this Board on the planned curbside composting pilot program, and on other possible programs to promote composting.

Mr. Sellers-Garcia informed the committee that the composting plans have been put on hold and that additional recommendations will be made at a later date. Members discussed a revenue neutral method for covering the cost of composting and were told that the city is looking into ways to assist residents who may have hardship claims. Alderman Sullivan spoke about people who own houses in Somerville, but reside elsewhere, bringing in barrels of trash to be disposed of by Somerville. There needs to be more information available to the community about why the city is considering a "Pay as you Throw" system.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

202994: That the Director of SPCD report to this Board on the community gardens program, and what steps are being taken to develop new community gardens for the hundreds of residents on the waiting list.

Dr. Boukili said there are 11 independently operated community gardens throughout the city and that each garden has a volunteer coordinator and a waiting list. The coordinator sets and collects the fees and distributes information about the rules for the community gardens, e.g., an individual must be a Somerville resident to participate and may not be a part of more than one garden. Some coordinators call people on the wait list every year to see if they are still interested in participating. Dr. Boukili is not sure how many individuals are on the waiting lists. There were a couple of suggestions from the committee to help those who have gardens and are not able to work them, e.g., having volunteers help elderly residents with their gardens. The city is responsible for the irrigation of the community gardens and it was suggested that rain barrels be placed in areas that do not have irrigation.

RESULT:**WORK COMPLETED**

202997: That the Commissioner of Public Works consider installing an irrigation system for Prospect Hill Park.

Alderman McWatters said that this area is often used for wedding and prom pictures. The committee was told that the DPW is currently pricing out irrigation systems for this area.

RESULT:**WORK COMPLETED**

203071: That the Director of SPCD update this Board on discussions with DCR regarding city management of DCR fields such as Foss Park, Draw 7 Park and the Dilboy Auxiliary Fields, and provide an updated Fields Master Plan if warranted.

Ms. Lathan stated that Draw 7 and Foss Park are owned by the DCR and thus are not under the city's control. The DCR has been working on a plan to use Draw 7 as a concert venue and Ms. Lathan said that she attended a meeting on this topic 6-8 months ago, however no details have been finalized at this time. Alderman Niedergang asked the Administration to look into a resolution regarding the Draw 7 concert venue and how they are planning to take care of the grass/open space area. The city is looking to update the grass facility around the Dilboy Auxillary fields. Chairman Ballantyne said that the matter of field maintenance will be discussed at the next committee meeting on May 23rd. Ms. Latham shared that DCR will not allow artificial turf on their fields as it would be contrary to their state-wide master plan. There will be no update to the Fields Master Plan at this time.

RESULT:**WORK COMPLETED**

202009: Conveying the Department of Public Works' response to questions about landscaping at the Healey School.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

203058: DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted this evening, 3/23/17.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

Handouts:

- Memo - OSPCD (with 201378)
- Solid Waste Presentation (with 201432)