



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CLERK OF COMMITTEES**

September 24, 2014

**REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

| <b>Attendee Name</b> | <b>Title</b>       | <b>Status</b> | <b>Arrived</b> |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|
| John M. Connolly     | Chair              | Present       |                |
| Mary Jo Rossetti     | Vice Chair         | Present       |                |
| Mark Niedergang      | Ward Five Alderman | Absent        |                |

Also present: Captain Steve Carabino - Police, Superintendent of Inspectional Services Goran Smiljic, Solicitor Frank Wright, Jaelyn Rossetti - Communications, Stan Koty - DPW, Omar Boukili - Mayor's Office; Michael Glavin - OSPCD

**Approval of the Minutes of July 23, 2014**

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**192737 - That this Board's Committee on Public Health and Safety arrange for representatives of Riverside Community Care aka Somerville Mental Health Association, to appear before the Committee to explain where the programs are and how the City can assist them.:**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**194408 - That this Board requests that representatives of the Community Assessment of Freeway Exposure and Health study and SPCD's Housing Division appear before the Committee on Public Health and Safety to discuss the recent \$675,000 grant from the Kresge Foundation to address health risks to residents from I-93.:**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**195321 - That the Director of Traffic and Parking install an audio tone device for the pedestrian walk signal at Highland and College Avenues for the benefit of visually impaired individuals utilizing that crosswalk.:**

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196433 - That the Chief of Police explain the reasoning for not towing vehicles obstructing a city fire hydrant.:**

Captain Carabino explained the policy and stated that is a vehicle is blocking a hydrant, it will be towed.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**196890 - That the Director of SPCD (ISD) appear before this Board to provide an update on complaints, fines and resolutions associated with 100 The Fellsway.:**

Mr. Smiljic reported that this building should be demolished the week of September 29th and that the demolition would most likely be done over the weekend.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**197367 - That the Director of SPCD (ISD) provide updates on the problems reported at 38 Illinois Avenue and 39-41 Michigan Avenue, detailing a plan of how these properties will be dealt with.:**

Mr. Smiljic reported that there have been numerous violation and court action associated with the property at 38 Illinois Ave., going back to 2003. ISD will be taking the appropriate actions in cooperation with the Law Department.

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**197435 - That the Director of Communications place a link on the City's web site to allow residents to complain about noise from Logan Airport flights as had been done in the past and also notify residents via social media about that link.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**197458 - That the Director of SPCD (ISD) inspect 21 Michigan Avenue to ensure compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances relative to its rental by the day.:**

Mr. Smiljic reported that rooms are being rented and that landlord was not aware of this. ISD has made the individuals involved aware of the proper procedures that need to be followed.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**197463 - That the Director of SPCD (ISD) inspect 50 Oliver Street for reports of an illegal basement apartment and a broken water main.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**197467 - That the Commissioner of Public Works inspect the sewer at McGrath Highway and Cross Street and take corrective action to prevent it from flooding when it rains.:**

Mr. Koty stated that he believes this work has been completed by the state.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**197628 - That the Administration inform the various constituencies surrounding the McGrath Highway overpass about the ongoing work there.:**

Mr. Koty reported that the city met with Mass DOT and Ward 1 Alderman Matt McLaughlin. According to Mr. Koty, there have been very few complaints from residents. The Communications Department sent out information to residents about additional police during school hours and about meetings concerning the project. Ms. Rossetti told the members that residents are receiving ongoing communication regarding construction/detours.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**197642 - That the Chief of Police appear before this Board's Committee on Public Health and Safety to discuss enforcement of Ordinance 9-97. Nuisance Control, especially for students hosting loud parties and creating noise disturbances.:**

Captain Carabino reviewed a breakdown of complaints over last 2 years and stated that the ordinance has not been used as it should have been. He has been authorized to put out extra patrols on weekend nights and he will address the issue. Captain Carabino thinks it might be time to discuss the matter with Tufts about and ask that something be placed in the school paper. Alderman Rossetti requested a follow up in 2-3 months.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**193094 - That the Director of Public Health provide the Committee on Public Health and Safety with the CAFÉ study information once it's completed.:**

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**194296 - That this Board requests that the Mayor consider implementing a Community Emergency Response Team, a volunteer citizen support group which is part of FEMA, to assist response efforts during emergencies.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**194939 - That this Board requests that the Cambridge Health Alliance cease, or shelve, its proposed consolidation plan until they convene stakeholders to discuss how best to meet the challenges of an ever changing health care landscape, while meeting the needs of our community.:**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**194984 - That the Committee on Public Health and Safety request that the Executive Director of the Cambridge Health Alliance appear to explain, at a public hearing, its recent proposal to reduce funding for services to Somerville's youth community.:**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**195082 - That the City's Disability Coordinator appear before the Committee on Public Health and Safety to update the Committee on pending claims on accessibility issues and the status of plans to improve access to City buildings and sidewalks, including the East and West Branch Libraries.:**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**195502 - That the Environmental Programs Manager report to the Ward 6 Alderman and the Committee on Public Health and Safety, the impact of bamboo and whether it is a plant that should be limited due to its invasive nature.:**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**195509 - That the Administration provide an update on air traffic noise over Somerville and continuing efforts to reduce this noise.:**

Mr. Wright spoke about MassPort soundproofing houses, the city hiring of outside counsel 6 years ago and runway changes and noted that this is actually an FAA matter - not MassPort's. The city has spend \$169,000 on this issue over the years. Ms. Rossetti spoke about the city's website alerts and tracking complaints. Alderman Rossetti is waiting for additional 311 data from the Constituent Services Department.

Alderman Rossetti's motion *that the Administration provide the previously requested information relative to airline traffic noise, ASAP*, was approved.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**195671 - That the Director of the Women's Commission appear at a future Public Health and Safety Committee meeting to update this Board on the city's domestic violence prevention efforts.:**

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196353 - That the Administration take steps to address the snow related concerns affecting public safety, especially of school aged children and elderly residents, expressed in the attached letter.:**

Mr. Koty explained the snow clearing procedures and the order that clearing is performed. Alderman Rossetti and resident Trisha Shrum spoke about problems with sidewalks not being shoveled on several streets, as noted in a letter from several residents. Mr. Boukili stated that the city responded to the letter and he spoke about increasing enforcement for shoveling violations. The committee requested a copy of the city's response. Chairman Connolly would like city to meet with the makers of the letter to discuss the matter further, and then return to committee.

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196373 - That the Director of SPCD (ISD) direct the MBTA to shovel the sidewalk at the bus turn-around by Clarendon Hill Towers.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**196374 - That the Administration contact the owner of 1060 Broadway and inquire about the reuse of the property.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**196432 - That the Middlesex County District Attorney update the City on the investigation into the murder of Deanna Cremin, on this, the 19th anniversary of her death.:**

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196456 - That the Commissioner of Public Works notify the MBTA to repair the broken street lamps at the Davis Sq. Busway.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**196458 - That the Commissioner of Public Works repair the broken street lamps at Davis Square Plaza.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**196613 - DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted March 27, 2014.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**196758 - That the Director of Personnel appear before the Committee on Public Health and Safety to report on the process for, and status of, the search for a new Police Chief.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**196766 - That the Director of SPCD (ISD) and the Director of Public Health explain the policy for food and food donations at charity or nonprofit events.:**

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196787 - That the Director of Public Health and Commissioner of Public Works install a sign on the island at Bow Street and Somerville Avenue prohibiting feeding the birds, and that the Director of Public Health distribute a flyer around the neighborhood explaining why birds may not be fed, and that the Police, Animal Control, ISD, and DPW enforce Ordinance 3-3 at this island.:**

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196891 - That the Director of the SPCD (ISD) and the City Solicitor appear before this Board to discuss the city's schedule of fines and how and/or why they have or have not been used fully.:**

Mr. Wright explained that inspectors write the tickets and that if the conditions are not complied with, the Law Office assists with the necessary paperwork to file for subsequent court action. Mr. Smiljic stated that there are only 13 building codes that may be cited, with various fines.

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196958 - DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted April 24, 2014.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**197032 - That this Board urges the Cambridge Health Alliance to reverse its decision to consolidate its Psychiatric Emergency Room with its general Emergency Room.:**

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**197132 - That the Chief of Police enforce the NO BIKING ON SIDEWALK ordinance citywide, especially in business districts, and attend the next Public Health and Safety Committee meeting to discuss bicycle safety education and enforcement.:**

Captain Carabino assured the committee that he will encourage more enforcement of cycling violations.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**197144 - That the Commissioner of Public Works investigate and remedy the low pressure of the water fountains at the ESCS and the strange taste of the water from the school's second floor faucets.:**

Mr. Koty reported that the issue has been resolved.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**197222 - That the Director of SPCD (ISD) inspect the fire damaged property at 27 Dickinson Street for violations and hazards which negatively impact the neighborhood, and direct the owners to make all required changes.:**

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**197253 - DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 6/12/14.:**

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**197268 - That the City Clerk request of MassPort an explanation for the increase of air traffic noise recently in West Somerville, and that the Director of Communications add to the website information about the most effective method to complain about such noise.:**

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**197483 - That the Director of SPCD (ISD) and the Chief Fire Engineer inspect 29 Dickinson Street for deterioration, safety and security, and contact the owner regarding actions they must take to remediate the building.:**

Mr. Smiljic reported that the owner will demolish the building and construct a new building, on same foot print.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**197484 - That the City Solicitor inform this Board of City and State requirements for property owners with condemned or fire-damaged buildings, including time frames to secure the buildings and obligations to maintain them.:**

Mr. Wright spoke about requirements and fines associated with the ordinance. The state statute was also discussed. The key to the process is notifying the actual owner, which is often a difficult task. Mr. Smiljic explained the process for securing a building and said that an owner has an obligation to respond to the city's notification within 30 days and to provide a reasonable

plan for the property at that time. This item will be discussed further with Assistant Solicitor David Shapiro at the next committee meeting.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**197604 - MassPort responding to #197268 re: airplane overflight noise.:**

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**197684 - DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 8/28/14.:**

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**