



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

May 2, 2012

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
William A. White Jr.	Chair	Present	
William M. Roche	Vice Chair	Present	
Rebekah Gewirtz	Ward Six Alderman	Present	
John M Connolly	Alderman At Large	Present	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Present	
Thomas Pasquarello	Chief of Police	Present	
Nick Stiles	Somerville Police	Present	
Eddie Nuzzo	Supt., ISD	Present	
Tim Toomey	State Representative	Present	
Patricia Jehlen	State Senator	Present	

192050 - That the Chief of Police and the Director of SPCD (ISD) respond to the attached list of problem addresses and be prepared to provide an update at this Board's October 24 Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting.:

The committee received updates on problem properties previously discussed in October 2011.

Residents were concerned about basement apartments but Mr. Nuzzo reported that none were discovered during his inspections and that he has not received any complaints regarding this issue. Alderman Roche also stated that he has not received any calls regarding basement apartments. Chairman White asked Mr. Nuzzo to drive by the suspected properties at night to determine if there are basement apartments present and to follow through with enforcement of the zoning codes. Chairman White also believes that stoves in basements should be removed. Mr. Nuzzo discussed the zoning process and stated that he is not comfortable peeking through residents' windows at night. Chairman White stated that he did not expect Mr. Nuzzo to peer through windows but that evidence of occupancy can be observed from the street in many instances.

Residents also expressed concern about attic apartments and houses being used as rooming houses and requested written updates on each problem property.

Alderman Roche's motion that Mr. Nuzzo follow up on each of the problem properties and report back to the committee with his findings, was approved.

Chief Pasquarello reviewed the list of problem properties and informed those present that there were no calls for services to those addresses and that directed patrols were being conducted in those areas. The committee will re-visit this item after Mr. Nuzzo's report on the properties is received.

Mr. Nuzzo also spoke about the property at 20 Mount Vernon Street and said that there is a possibility that a court order would be issued directing that the property be cleaned up. Neighbors asked that the city bait the public way behind the property for rodents and that an illegal auto mechanic shop located there be investigated. One resident stated that there are at least twenty people living at that address and Officer Stiles asked residents to call the Police Department if there are problems there.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

192278 - That the City Clerk send a communication to Senator Patricia Jehlen and Representative Timothy Toomey, inquiring as to the status of the sound barrier along Route 93 and the Nunnery Grounds area.:

Representative Toomey explained that Somerville was not on the DOT's 1989 list to receive noise barriers and that due to a lack of funding, the list would not be expanded. He will continue to explore funding options and suggested that mitigation funds from the Green Line extension and/or Assembly Square development might be used. Representative Toomey said that the estimated cost to construct the noise barrier would be eight to ten million dollars.

Senator Jehlen stated that she would prefer that a sound barrier extend from McGrath Highway to Sullivan Square and along Mystic Avenue. She stated that she would like to advocate for new revenue and suggested seeking funds from developers at Assembly Square, since the ramp to that area is going to be widened. Additionally, use of an air study might help to build an environmental justice case that might be used in obtaining the barrier.

Alderman Sullivan, speaking as a private citizen, spoke about safety concerns and mentioned that the fence near New Hampshire Avenue needs to be repaired. Phil Ercolini complained about the pollution from the highway and noted that there should be an agreement of some kind, dating back 40 years, in which the federal government promised to construct the sound barriers.

Chairman White's motion that the City Solicitor and the Executive Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, locate relevant files, documentation and/or any agreements made by the federal government regarding the initial construction of Route 93 through Somerville, was approved.

Chairman White's motion that the Director of Health inform the Committee on Public Health and Public Safety when the CAFÉ study is completed and provide the study's information to the committee, was approved.

Chairman White's motion that the City Clerk invite representatives from MA DOT to appear before the Board of Aldermen to respond to questions relating to improving the existing fencing between Route 93 and the Nunnery Grounds, was approved.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

192919 - Rep. Toomey responding to #192278 re: sound barriers along I-93.:

This item was dealt with as part of item 192050, above.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**