



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

CLERK OF COMMITTEES

October 7, 2014

REPORT OF THE FLOOD FORUM SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Meeting as a Committee of the Whole

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Maryann M. Heuston	Chair	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Vice Chair	Present	
Robert J. McWatters	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Rebekah L. Gewirtz	Ward Six Alderman	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Alderman at Large	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	
John M. Connolly	Alderman At Large	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Absent	
Tony Lafuente	Ward Four Alderman	Absent	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Absent	
William A. White Jr.	Alderman At Large	Absent	

Others present: Water Supt. Ginger Barrett, Michael Glavin - OSPCD, Goran Smiljic - ISD, Matthew Buckley - Law, Melissa Miguel - City Engineer, Stan Koty – DPW

193933 - That the City Engineer report to this Board the steps that are being taken to mitigate flooding on streets that are regularly flooded, including Simpson Avenue.:

The committee heard reports of flooding on Newburn Street and Morrison Avenue.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

195792 - That the City Engineer investigate flooding occurrences in the Hunting and South Street area and provide his findings and recommendations to the Ward 2 Alderman.:

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

196782 - That the City Engineer and the Water Superintendent prepare a summary of water and sewer work completed in 2013 near Dane Avenue, Dane Street and Washington

Street, and include plans for work near Kingman Road and Clark Street, and present this summary to this Board's Flood Forum Committee.:

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

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

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197471 - That the City Engineer, the Director of SPCD, and the Superintendent of ISD advise this Board of their plan to manage and eliminate flooding on streets, in houses and in businesses throughout the city.:

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197624 - That the City Solicitor draft an ordinance to require backflow regulators in new construction.:

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197636 - That the Administration provide this Board with a detailed explanation of how future flooding events throughout the city will be mitigated and a plan to upgrade the dated city piping infrastructure.:

Residents spoke about having to deal with flooding events, some as far back as 1986, and their experiences in having to deal with sewerage during those events. Alderman Rossetti spoke about flooding on parts of the bike path and read statements from constituents who were unable to attend this meeting.

Ms. Miguel spoke about the city's sewer lines and the planned retention tank in Union Square and the sewer separation projects in Union Square and on Cedar Street. The sewer system is being cleaned, which should help to alleviate some of the problems, and a capital improvement plan is being worked on. Ms. Miguel noted that even if the system was separated, flash flooding would continue to be a problem. Ms. Miguel told the members that it would take a few years to remedy the problems and would cost about \$5.3 billion to fix problems in the entire system.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197637 - That the City Solicitor draft an ordinance requiring developers of new residential projects to install backflow preventers to prevent combined sewer overflow during heavy rains.:

There was a discussion about backflow preventers and why they were not required.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197645 - That the Commissioner of Public Works investigate the sewer overflow problems on Richdale Avenue, especially in front of 12 Richdale Avenue.:

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197649 - That the Commissioner of Public Works clear sewer drains of leaves and other debris on Cedar Street between Highland Avenue and Summer Street, and on surrounding streets.:

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197657 - That the Commissioner of Public Works prevent storm drain backups on Richdale Avenue.:

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197661 - That the Commissioner of Public Works and the City Engineer determine if there are infrastructure problems on Richdale Avenue that contributed to the severe flooding during the last two storms.:

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

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

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197706 - That the Director of SPCD (ISD) report to the Flood Forum Special Committee on the enforcement of Ordinances 11-33 and 11-145 regarding increasing pervious surfaces.:

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

197712 - That the Water Superintendent report to this Board on participation in the newly enacted Water Infrastructure legislation signed by the Governor on August 6, 2014.:

Ms. Barrett discussed eligibility requirements, additional tax revenue to pay for work, public/private partnerships, loans from the MWRA and identification of additional projects over the next 6 months. Mr. Buckley discussed the state plumbing code and when backflow preventers are required, noting that the city cannot supersede state law.

Committee members expressed concern that requests for work have taken so long and discussed the de-paving of city property, citing the amount of concrete and asphalt throughout the city as a problem.

The committee also discussed the “stretch code” used in Cambridge, sub-grade development in areas with a history of flooding, ways to better inform the public, and having discussions with both the Planning and Zoning Boards regarding backflow preventer requirements. Mr. Smiljic will review the plumbing code, and its interpretation, and report back to the committee.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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