



# CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

## CLERK OF COMMITTEES

October 30, 2014

### REPORT OF THE FLOOD FORUM SPECIAL COMMITTEE

| Attendee Name       | Title               | Status  | Arrived |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------|---------|
| Maryann M. Heuston  | Chair               | Present |         |
| Mark Niedergang     | Vice Chair          | Present |         |
| Robert J. McWatters | Ward Three Alderman | Absent  |         |

Others present: Alderman Mary Jo Rossetti, Alderman Katjana Ballantyne, Alderman Matt McLaughlin, Frank Wright, Omar Boukili, Michael Glavin, Melissa Miguel, Stan Koty

### Approval of the Minutes of October 07, 2014

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

### **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.:**

This item was discussed with 197471 & 197636

Ms. Miguel gave a brief and said that upgrades, while sometimes not visible, are being done. The Cedar Street sewer separation project work has been going on behind the scenes for the past year and will cost about \$7 million to construct. Somerville's system is a combined system with storm water & sewer on the same line. The estimated cost to upgrade the entire city's system would be \$5.3 billion.

400 catch basin are being cleaned each week cleaned. In a recent 2 week period, 225 tons of debris have been removed from catch basins in Ward 2, alone. The city is working to develop a 15-year capital improvement plan for its aging sewer system. 85% of sewer water from Somerville, goes to Deer Island for processing. 40% of the water treated at the MWRA is I/I (Inflow and Infiltration).

Ms. Miguel requested that a project in Union Sq. Be halted and redesigned, since it wasn't headed toward a sewer separation system.

Ms. Miguel explained that sump pumps not allowed to be discharged into Somerville's sewer system, since the MWRA does not allow groundwater to be treated. Her recommendations to

property owners is to install an underslab groundwater drainage system & to waterproof foundations.

Mr. Koty noted that a lot of work was previously done in West Somerville in the past 4-5 years.

Chairman Heuston requested a list of any projects performed between 4 and 10 years ago.

Several residents were allow to comment on their experiences and Ms. Miguel offered to speak with residents about specific concerns.

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

**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:****WORK COMPLETED**

**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:****WORK COMPLETED**

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

**RESULT:****PLACED ON FILE**

**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:****WORK COMPLETED**

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

This item discussed with # 197637

Mr. Boukili stated that regulations addressing this matter are already on the books in Somerville. Chairman Heuston stated that the process of getting the city where it wants to be on this issue is more important than the route taken to get there.

After some discussion, the committee determined that it needs additional information:

- Is a permit is needed to install a backflow preventer?
- Are backflow preventer installations inspected?
- Can the installation of backflow preventers be made a condition of building permits?

**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.:**

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**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.:**

**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:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**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:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

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

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**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:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

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

This is a concern throughout the city and has been discussed by several of the BOA's committees.

The item will be referred to the Legislative Matters Committee to be discussed as a Committee of the Whole.

**RESULT:****REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION****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.:****RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED****197836 - DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 9/11/14.:****RESULT:****PLACED ON FILE****197858 - DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 9/23/14.:****RESULT:****PLACED ON FILE**