

CITY OF NORWALK
HEALTH, WELFARE, PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
March 28, 2019

ATTENDANCE: Nick Sacchinelli, Chairman; Chris Yerinides; George Tsiranides; Doug Hempstead; Eloisa Melendez

STAFF: Deanna D'Amore, Director of Health

OTHERS: Michael Wrinn, Asst. Planning & Zoning Director; Kathryn Hebert, Director of Transportation, Mobility and Parking; Michael Yeosock, Asst. Director of Transportation, Mobility and Parking; Patrick King, Code Enforcement

I. WELCOME - ROLL CALL

Mr. Sacchinelli called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and stated that the above members were in attendance and there was a quorum present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 28, 2019

**** MR. YERINIDES MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 28 AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Ms. Melendez joined the meeting at 7:05PM.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Matt Scully- 30 County Street

Mr. Scully stated that he purchased his home in 2009, and for the first six years there were never any issues with flooding, but over the past four years it has been awful. When it rains it causes a major health hazard and that the water overflows from the pond, into his driveway and then his basement. Following a rain storm he has to bleach his basement to be sure there is not any mold and he does not know how much damage the water has caused or will cause. He said he is here tonight for a remedy and that he wants someone to at least address the issue.

Mr. Tomasino -28 County Street

Mr. Tomasino stated that he has lived in his house for nine years and in the past year flooding has gone from not being a problem to overflowing. He said that he has photos that he has emailed and that he will share with the committee and when there are heavy rains the water doesn't flow from the pond and backs up into the houses. There is a drain that is 90% clogged and when he has called the city he has gotten the run around and so far no one has tried to fix the problem and he is here tonight to try and get some help.

Diane Lauricella – 21 Blue Mountain Ridge Road

Ms. Lauricella stated that Andrews Field had been a wetland and many years ago it was turned into a field and nature has taken it back. She suggested that that residents request to be put on the DPW Committee agenda. She said she would like to see more infrastructure utilized and she will be forwarding her thoughts to DPW and she is looking forward to speaking with Mr. Carr regarding the flooding issues and that it is causing public safety and health issues, and she doesn't want to see the city address the flooding issues with traditional engineering but to use things that other towns are doing which is green infrastructure and vegetative buffers and to look at all of drainage strategically.

Ms. Lauricella stated that she is looking forward to hearing about the dust control issue and how it is being managed and is progress is being made including covering of the sand piles because sand of this sort can contain silica dust which is a human carcinogen, and she is hoping that this committee as she had suggested last time will forward a city wide policy that all sand piles be covered and that any contractor the city uses for construction purposes that they assure staff upfront that they have dust control and sound control measures and that it should be conveyed to the Purchasing Department.

V. OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Flooding

Mr. Sacchinelli said the flooding is primarily being handled by DPW but there is a concern under the prevue of this committee which is the health impact and he understands in trying to resolve the long term flooding is something that may take time, but if there are any short term approaches that may resolve the issues or for city wide flooding if there is potential signage so that an officer would not need to be placed in an no nescience area. He said that he has had discussions with Mr. Igneri and there will be a joint meeting held in the future with DPW to discuss some of these issues and how to take a split resource approach to it.

Ms. D'Amore presented graphs of customer service requests regarding flooding complaints. Ms. Melendez said this is an issue that we have heard about the most and it seems to be getting bigger and bigger and she requested detailed information about where the complaints are originating, and it will be interesting to know if the flooding areas are increasing as things change. Mr. Sacchinelli said the committee members are invited to attend Tuesday's Public Works Committee meeting to learn about efforts to address flooding. Mr. Tsiranides said that Norwalk Chief of Operations and Public Works Anthony Robert Carr who was hired largely for his expertise in flooding issues and he will hopefully be a good addition and help dramatically with what's going on right now. He also said that DPW will be scheduling some work once the winter is over because they could not get through with the cameras and encouraged the residents to attend the next Public Works Committee meeting for further details. Mr. Hempstead said that these things take time and that the studies are a lengthy process and are involved. Mr. Sacchinelli said if the health impacts to the area due to the overflow of wetlands into the system or vice versa is being addressed. Ms. D'Amore said that when the Health Department gets involved it would be for a mold issue but it would primarily be in rental units. Mr. Sacchinelli asked if flooding should be considered a public health issue and not just a nuisance which would be availing a different set of resources within the city outside of the DPW Department. Ultimately, we would be putting additional urgency on certain areas. Mr. Hempstead said that he would like to see what the plans are to address the issues and what happened to the work that was supposed to have been done to address some of the issues. Ms. Melendez said she would like to see a list of flooding locations that are most effected and plan for the areas showing signs of having issues within the past few years. Mr. Hempstead also requested what sections the volume of calls was from and for the rain data.

2. Dust Control/Quality

Ms. D'Amore asked Mr. Wrinn to clarify what the zoning regulations are around dust control. Mr. Wrinn said that excavating yards that tend to create problems and they find that contractors bring rock crushers on site that they have no approval for and it's a cat and mouse game out there. People are smart, and there are landlords who know how to play the system, and We'll take away their Zoning violation for a month or two, then gradually it will creep back and we'll have them do the same thing and there are no controls in place. Mr. Hempstead asked if there is a permit for rock crushing on site. Mr. Wrinn said a contractor can bring a rock crusher on site and would not need a permit as long as there's a building permit and there are very seldom problems with those, it's a problem when the contractors bring them into their own yards and those are not legal. Mr. Wrinn said if a permit was required then at least the conditions would be on it as to how they will go about keeping the dust down. Mr. King said there is nothing in the code to enforce rock crushing or dust control. Mr. Hempstead asked if there could be a way for a police officer to hand out tickets. Mr. King said "no" and that the Building Department will issue a warning. Mr. Tsiranides suggested maybe a line on a permit application that asked if there would be rock crushing onsite. Mr. Hempstead requested possibly sending it to the Ordinance Committee and asked for information on what other communities do for further discussion at next month's meeting. Ms. Melendez said the whole point about passing an ordinance is how it will be enforced and if it's going to have weak enforcing then that is a issue. Mr. Yerinides asked if there is a way to be more proactive and not everyone knows to call Customer Service. Mr. Sacchinelli suggested a PR campaign to make the public more aware of the resources available for these instances. Mr. Hempstead also requested signage is installed on the construction sites as part of the permit and include the customer service number. Mr. Sacchinelli suggested that another body may be needed in customer service. Mr. Yerinides said he thinks it should be both a communication and marking thing but a lot of the cases that he has personally dealt with are for people who already know to reach out and contact their district representative but are still facing the same problems so we need to be sure that what is being reported is enforced.

Mr. Sacchinelli suggested inviting Ms. King to the next meeting to speak to the enforcement side of things. Mr. Hempstead also requested that the monthly customer service report that the Public Works Committee receives is also provided to the full Common Council.

Ms. Lauricella said she'd advocated better regulation enforcement during a Mayor's Night Out some time ago, and never heard back from Ms King, whom she'd been told to follow up with and there should be department proactive management in addition to what has been discussed because some people give up calling because they don't see results.

Ms. D'Amore said at a future meeting they can give a presentation on what they enforce, the measures and the results if the committee is interested.

Mr. Wrinn said that Mr. Kleppin is doing and test and that Planning & Zoning has targeted Lubrano Place and Lexington Street for two weeks and have issued 16-17 notice of violations, and in two weeks from now will go into another neighborhood to try and make

it more efficient because it is very difficult with a town the size of Norwalk to keep going out to the outlying areas trying to find a time to see a truck and take photos of it.

3. Sidewalks and Safety

Ms. D'Amore said that there have been 125 sidewalk complaints received in total. Mr. Sacchinelli said that identifying dangerous sidewalks would fall under the Health, Welfare and Public Safety Committee's purview. The sidewalk protocol has been enforced for a long time in conjunction with its paving program and have leveraged some of the grants for the Safe Walk to School Program, and are now looking at dangerous intersections that might be able to take advantage of a sidewalk that is outside the current paving protocol. Ms. Hebert said that the Transportation, Mobility and Parking Department is working with the Bike/Walk Commission on pedestrian safety and are breaking away from what has been done, and are going to continue to do sidewalks connected to the paving project, but in the spirit of what this economic and community development and Transportation, Mobility and Parking is supposed to accomplish, is to look at these intersections and safe crosswalks sidewalks because walking is big part of mobility and a big part of connectivity. She said the sidewalk program isn't developed yet, but Transportation, Mobility and Parking is working collaboratively with the Commission and the Health Department to create a plan.

Ms. D'Amore said the Bike Walk Commission has taken a look at pedestrian crash data and analyzed it and has come up with some recommendations for improvements by district. She said that they have also launched a Pedestrian Audit and that they have received over 60 responses to it, and that it is posted on the Health Department's website and has been pushed on social media. The committee members decided to ask Joshua Morgan to attend a future meeting and discuss outreach efforts, including an effort to publicize the customer service department.

V. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd
Telesco Secretarial Services