



Public Safety & Health Committee - Board of Representatives

Gloria DePina, Co-Chair
Anabel Figueroa, Vice Chair

Scott Mirkin, Co-Chair

Committee Report

Date: Thursday, April 29, 2010
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Democratic Caucus Room, 4th Floor Government Center,
888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford CT

The Public Safety & Health Committee met as indicated above. Present were Co-Chair Mirkin, Co-Chair DePina, and Committee Member Reps. Adams, Caterbone, Coppola, Figueroa and Pia. Absent or excused were Committee Member Reps. Giraldo and Martin. Also present were Representative Kaufman; Jim Hricay, OPM; and Vin Freccia, Esq.

Co-Chair Mirkin called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
3. PS28.007	REVIEW; status of blighted properties with regard to demolition, foreclosure, fines collected.	Report Made

The committee first considered item PS28.007. Mr. Freccia stated that he has been asked by Corporation Counsel to prosecute various blighted properties and gave an overview of the status of the properties. He explained that of the properties he was asked to handle:

- 6 have foreclosures pending;
- He is awaiting responses to 6 demand letters he sent out within the last 2 weeks;
- He is currently negotiating with the owner of 1 property; and
- He has a conflict with representing the City for 1 property.

In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Freccia explained that the outstanding fines may not be the amount finally paid on these properties because the amount may be negotiated, the owner may have failed to ask that the per diem charge stop after the property was rehabilitated or the amount may be reduced as part of a settlement agreement. Some of these properties may have a judgment of foreclosure within 60 days, while others may take longer due to other situations, such as bankruptcy issues or requests by the owner to the Court for additional time.

Mr. Freccia and Mr. Hricay explained that the money received as a result of these judgments goes into a special blight account as required by state law. Money in that account may only be used to address blighted properties.

Mr. Caterbone, who is a member of the Blight Committee, explained that when the fines begin running depends upon the owner's response to the committee's initial blight notification.

Mr. Freccia explained that the City has no legal obligation to continue to notify individuals of their outstanding liens.

Mr. Freccia stated that his goal is to get these liens resolved as quickly as possible. He will provide the Board office with updates on the status of these properties and the state statute which mandates that the funds go into a special blight account. In response to an inquiry from Chair Mirking, Mr. Hricay stated that he will investigate to what extent the funds in the special account can be used to clean up properties, e.g. for mowing lawns or making repairs.

2. PS28.006 REVIEW; status of Scofieldtown Park area well **Report Made**
contamination; update from Co-Chair of Task Force,
Mitchell Kaufman.

Representative Kaufman provided the committee with a report on the status of the Scofieldtown Park area well contamination. He provided the committee with two maps, copies of which are attached, reflecting the test results from the wells of various residences in the Scofieldtown area and the status of connection of these houses to the public water supply as of March 2, 2010. He explained that the wells were tested for pesticides and VOCs.

- No VOCs above the standard amount were detected in any wells
- 36 wells had the pesticides dieldrine and chlordine above the standard amount
- 175 wells did not have the pesticides dieldrine and chlordine above the standard amount
- 20 wells were not tested

The City engaged TRC to do an investigation of the Scofieldtown landfill site, based upon the assumption that it was the source of the pesticides. TRC tested the water in Scofieldtown Yard, the magnet school m and Alma Rock and Very Merry Roads. TRC did not find contamination in the water at Scofieldtown Yard or the magnet school although it did find some pesticides in the soil at the yard and in the water of Alma Rock and Very Merry Roads. TRC determined that it is therefore questionable that the landfill is the source of the contamination.

Representative Kaufman stated that phase I of the water line installation has been completed and phase II is almost completed.

The Task Force has engaged Dr. Robbins, a professor at UCONN, to evaluate TRC's results, and look at historical usage of the properties and additional remediation options. \$250,000 has been budgeted for this. In addition, the North Stamford Concerned Citizens for the Environment (NSCCE) would like a Phase I site assessment of the Arboretum, Smith House, Scofield Manor and Scofield Yard to see if these are possible sources of the contamination.

Representative Kaufman explained that it is difficult to determine the source of these chemicals because they are highly insoluble and travel in multiple directions through fractured rock. The water is then pumped up through the rock and then dispersed through septic systems.

The Task Force has asked the Health Department to come up with a plan for homeowners to arrange for testing of their wells and to provide information regarding the type of filters they should install and has asked Ernie Orgera to come up with a plan to get homeowners connected to public water, including a cost estimate, a feasibility review and an assessment plan. The City's current position is that because there is no evidence that the source of the contamination is City property, the homeowners will have to bear the cost, most likely through an assessment. The current estimate is that the cost will be \$30-40,000 per household.

The properties which are not being connected to the public water supply are being given carbon filters. Because the State has taken back the filters it installed, the City is reusing the filters which were installed in the homes now being connected to City water. The homeowners will have to bear the costs for recharging and installing the filters.

The Task Force is expected to meet again in 3-4 weeks.

1. [PS28.001](#) PROPOSED ORDINANCE; **for final adoption**;
providing for restrictions on open burning on
residential property.

Representative Mirkin explained that he spoke with the Fire Marshalls for both the volunteers and the City and they are all in favor of this ordinance. Upon motion made and seconded, the committee voted to approve this ordinance by a vote of 5-1-1. (Reps. DePina, Mirkin, Caterbone, Coppola and Pia in favor; Rep. Adams opposed; and Rep. Figueroa abstaining.)

As Secondary Committee

1. A28.046 Health Commission
Cathy Catrini Freccia (R) Repl. Cutler
62 Middle Ridge Road (Term Exp. 12/01/12)
Stamford, CT 06903
Term Exp. 12/01/12
2. A28.047 Health Commission
Patricia D. Parry, RN (R) Reappointment
66 Emery Drive (Term Exp. 12/01/08)
Stamford, CT 06902
Term Expires: 12/01/11

A motion to waive consideration of the appointments was made, seconded and approved by unanimous vote. (Reps. DePina, Mirkin, Figueroa, Adams, Caterbone, Coppola and Pia in favor.)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Mirkin, Co-Chair