

**NOTICE: This is NOT the official version of the Committee Report as APPROVED by the Board of Aldermen. While reasonable efforts have been made to assure that this is the Committee Report that was presented at a meeting of the Board of Aldermen, you should check the Minutes of that meeting in order to confirm its approval, rejection or amendment. Do not rely on the accuracy of this information without first checking with the City Clerk.**

June 3, 2008

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE**  
**ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS**

The Committee on Legislative Matters convened on June 3, 2008 with Chairman Thomas Taylor presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Walter Pero, Robert Trane and Dennis Sullivan also present and voting. Also present were Chief of Staff Michael Lambert, Assistant Solicitor David Shapiro, Monica Lamboy from SPCD and Brandon Wilson from Historic Preservation.

**Recycling of plastic bags:**

Mr. Shapiro spoke on the proposed ordinance for the recycling of plastic bags informing the members that implementation of the ordinance could take 6 to 9 months. Alderman Pero stated that the timing for this proposal is wrong, since the committee doesn't know what the terms of the new RFP for trash collection are going to be.

Ms. Lamboy said that the city could send letters to business owners to find out how they are disposing of the bags. Chairman Taylor suggested that business owners be given a list of vendors that pick up the bags and said he thinks that the sooner the ordinance is passed, the better for the city's environment. Chairman Taylor foresees the proposed ordinance becoming part of the existing trash ordinance.

Alderman Sullivan expressed concern about how much of a burden the ordinance would be on smaller businesses and suggested raising the square foot threshold. Alderman Sullivan asked that Mr. Lambert respond to his concern and provide information on what the cost of recycling the bags would be to businesses.

Alderman Trane told the members that all supermarkets in Somerville dispose of plastic bags and he added that certain companies would not pick up the bags unless there is a large quantity. Alderman Trane asked Mr. Shapiro to determine the cost to implement the proposed ordinance and report that information to the committee.

Chairman Taylor made a motion that the City set a period of 120 days for implementation of the ordinance. After discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

Alderman Sullivan's motion *that the implementation period for the plastic bag recycling ordinance be set at 180 days*, was approved.

**Senior Safety Zones:**

This measure will be redrafted by the City Solicitor. Alderman Sullivan requested clarification on the previous Home Rule Petition on Senior Safety Zones, specifically, what happened to it and where did it die, i.e., in the legislature or in the Mayor's Office.

**Demolition by neglect:**

At this point, Alderman Pero made a statement about having more than one committee meeting scheduled at the same time, where an alderman is a member of both committees, and he made a motion to adjourn. The motion failed, (Aldermen Trane and Pero voted to adjourn and Aldermen Taylor and Sullivan voted not to adjourn).

Ms Lamboy gave an overview of the demolition by neglect proposal and noted the following:

- Reduced applicability
- Owner occupied properties are exempted
- The property does not have to be restored to its original condition
- SPCD will take property owners through the process, starting a dialogue to get owners to remedy their properties
- Once a violation is issued, a property owner may appeal to the Planning Board
- There are 3 places for an appeal to be made
- The city can self identify properties or be notified by citizens
- Determinations will be made by the Historic Preservation staff

The committee discussed matters before it and took action on the following 2 items:

**185272:** Communication - SPCD Director responding to #182645 re: Ordinance for "Demolition by Neglect."

**RECOMMENDATION:** Should be Placed on File

**VOTE:** Unanimous, 4 - 0 in favor

**185447:** Communication - Small Property Owners Association Executive Director submitting comments re: Proposed Demolition by Neglect Ordinance

**RECOMMENDATION:** Should be Placed on File

**VOTE:** Unanimous, 4 - 0 in favor

**185597:** Order – That the appropriate city department notify all supermarkets in the city of the proposed ordinance regulating plastic bags, which is scheduled to be discussed on May 20th by the Legislative Matters Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Should be Placed on File

**VOTE:** Unanimous, 4 - 0 in favor

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report of the Committee on Legislative Matters,  
June 3, 2008

In Board of Aldermen

---

---

---

---

---

Clerk