

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.

April 3, 2008

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The Committee on Public Health and Public Safety convened on April 3, 2008, with Chairman William White presiding and Committee Members Aldermen John Connolly and Walter Pero also present and voting. Also present were Alderman Sean O'Donovan, City Solicitor John Gannon, Police Chief Anthony Hollaway, Superintendent of Inspectional Services George Landers and interested members of the public. The meeting was held at the VNA, 259 Lowell Street.

Chairman White told those present that this was the 2nd neighborhood meeting being held to discuss the sober house at 31 Wilton Street and he reviewed information received from Senator Jehlan regarding the proper licensing of sober houses. Solicitor Gannon discussed his research on this subject and told the members that Medford's City Solicitor suggested that he examine the house rules of the facility to determine if it is actually a sober house. Additionally, Mr. Gannon stated that the property is not exempt from the law requiring rooming houses to have sprinkler systems and he said that he would work with the Fire Chief to enforce this requirement. Mr. Landers spoke of a similar situation in Chelsea that dealt with the sprinkler issue and said that there may be a way to limit the house on Wilton Street to 5 residents. Chief Hollaway informed the members that the Sheriff's Department is not placing inmates at the property in question.

Resident Lisa Morris addressed the committee and said that she believes that the property owner should be fined because the city was not notified how the property was going to be used as a sober house. She also stated that she has observed drug testing being performed on the premises and has seen drug deals being conducted, although none have been observed recently.

Resident Joseph Lynch asked for a clarification of the sequence of events regarding this matter and asked if the entity was a legally licensed organization. Chairman White responded that the City Solicitor was looking into the organization's status.

Resident Robert Langill asked if the residents of the property came from Bridgewater and he also spoke about parking issues in the area.

Alderman O'Donovan stated that he has been working with the Mayor on this issue and that the Mayor is committed to helping the neighbors address their concerns.

Chairman White noted that the property owner was not invited to this meeting since the committee was discussing legal issues and he directed the Clerk of Committees to send a communication to the City Solicitor requesting that all state records be examined to determine the owner(s) of the property.

No papers were acted on.

Alderman William A. White, Jr., Chairman
Committee on Public Health and Public Safety

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Public Health and
Public Safety, April 3, 2008

In Board of Aldermen

Clerk