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June 18, 2009

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The Committee on Public Health and Public Safety convened on June 18, 2009, with Chairman William White presiding and Committee Member Alderman Rebekah Gewirtz also present and voting. Also present were Aldermen Maryann Heuston, Sean O'Donovan and Walter Pero, Administrative Assistant Jessie Baker, Superintendent of Inspectional Services George Landers, City Solicitor John Gannon and resident Joe Lynch.

31 Wilton St.:

Mr. Landers informed the members that an unannounced inspection of the property took place on May 5, 2009 and everything was found to be in order and Mr. Gannon told the members that in his opinion, the owner of the facility is allowed five beds per unit. Alderman O'Donovan stated his concern about ex-convicts, who are not addicts, living at the facility and being protected by the Fair Housing Act and said that it should be the owner's responsibility to prove that each resident is entitled to said protection. Chairman White, acknowledging the difficulty in proving that residents are not addicts, suggested conferring with the property owner regarding the screening process used.

Mr. Landers spoke about various locations where hypodermic needles have been found and Chairman White suggested that the Police and Health Departments coordinate their efforts to keep accurate records of where needles are being found.

Alderman O'Donovan's motion that the Chief of Police meet with the Massachusetts Corrections Office to determine if any prisoners were released to the Wilton Street property and to further determine if any of them were addicts, was approved.

Chairman White's motion that the Board of Aldermen support bills in the State Legislature that seek to regulate sober houses, was kept in committee pending review of the legislation.

Trull St.:

Mr. Landers informed the committee that the house at Trull and Medford Streets has been lowered and that the problems have been corrected.

No papers were acted on.

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