

**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.**

October 19, 2009

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE**  
**ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

The Committee on Public Health and Public Safety convened on October 19, 2009, with Chairman William White presiding and Committee Member Alderman John Connolly also present and voting. Also present were Alderman Maryann Heuston, Administrative Assistant Matt Dias, Superintendent of Inspectional Services George Landers, Assistant City Solicitor David Shapiro, Manager of Public Health Nursing Maureen Monagle, Phil Ercolini and Walter Whitney from SPCD and Melissa McWhinney.

**187944 - condition of 82 Pearson Avenue:**

Mr. Shapiro spoke about the property and discussed what steps the city must take before it can secure the building and noted that initiating court action would take too much time to get anything done. The owners of the property are in bankruptcy and have not been proactive in working on the property. Mr. Shapiro told the members that a lien on the property by the city would receive first priority. Mr. Landers stated that the building has been completely gutted and that the city would take action to have it boarded up. Chairman White requested a written summary of the schedule of work to be performed. There was a discussion of how the city would be reimbursed for its expenses and what options might be available if the mortgagee forecloses on the property. Alderman Heuston spoke about an ordinance in Malden that requires banks that have foreclosed on properties to maintain them.

**188104 – flu vaccinations and policies dealing with potential outbreaks of swine flu:**

Ms. Monagle told the members that there has been a delay in the receipt of the seasonal flu vaccine and that the vaccine is not expected until January. Ms. Monagle reviewed the priority for dispensing the vaccine and said that the city received 1,000 doses of the seasonal flu mist. Permission slips for the swine flu vaccination will go out to parents of the city's schoolchildren and Ms. Monagle spoke about the possibility of schools closing due to an outbreak of the swine flu. There was a discussion about methods to inform the public about the vaccinations and also about the various locations where the vaccination might be obtained. Ms. Monagle explained the procedures for reporting cases of swine flu to the state and the methods by which the city is notified of cases, as well. Ms. Monagle also discussed emergency plans in the event of a pandemic. Chairman White asked about inoculation clinics for seniors and where seniors would be on the priority list. Alderman Heuston proposed that the Council on Aging be involved in getting seniors to the vaccination clinics.

**188164 - weatherization program for eligible homeowners:**

Mr. Ercolini addressed the members and stated that the city does not sponsor weatherization projects but said that the Housing Section of SPCD does refer citizens to Menotomy Weatherization, an Arlington based, non-profit agency that facilitates a regional program to perform weatherization in the Greater Boston area. Alderman Heuston noted that tenants should be made aware of the program, since they might also be able to take advantage of it and Mr. Whitney added that tenants who qualify would also have to have the cooperation of the property owner. Mr. Ercolini also discussed fuel assistance and Ms. McWhinney spoke of her experiences working with the City of Cambridge to get people enrolled in fuel assistance programs. Chairman White requested an explanation of the poverty guidelines for oil assistance programs and also for the eligibility requirements for the weatherization program.

**188065 – permits for contractors assisting residents with winterization projects:**

Mr. Landers told the members that the state building code (780 CMR) requires that a permit be issued for replacing windows in a building and he noted that, contrary to the claims of Menotomy Weatherization, all of Somerville's surrounding communities enforce this requirement.

**187942 – city's ability to regulate noise, overcrowding, and other activities from churches:**

Alderman Heuston spoke about noise emanating from some churches to the degree that it is impacting the quality of life for residents in the neighborhoods and said that even though a church is a protected use, it might be in everyone's best interest if a meeting were scheduled with the churches' pastors to enlist their cooperation in resolving this issue. Mr. Shapiro told the members that the city's noise ordinance can be enforced and Chairman White asked Mr. Shapiro to research how other communities are dealing with this problem.

No papers were acted on.

---

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