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February 12, 2008

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The Committee on Public Health and Public Safety convened on February 12, 2008, with Chairman William White presiding and Committee Member Alderman John Connolly also present and voting. Also present were Aldermen Bruce Desmond, Sean O'Donovan and Dennis Sullivan as well as City Solicitor John Gannon, Police Chief Anthony Holloway, Community Police Officer Leo Martini, Paul Nonni from Inspectional Services (ISD) and interested members of the public.

492 Medford Street

Alderman O'Donovan addressed the issue of the work being performed to the house at Trull and Medford Streets and noted many of the residents' concerns about the building not being constructed in accordance with the approved plans and safety issues. Mr. Nonni told the members that ISD has sent the owner a letter directing him to comply with the Zoning Board's decision within 30 days or the city would pursue the matter in court. These plans, among other things, would require a reduction in the height of the building. Mr. Gannon told the members that the city would seek an injunction in Superior Court if the owner fails to comply within the 30-day period and would also ask the court to impose a fire watch at the property at the owner's expense. Residents expressed concerns regarding whether the grade of the property was altered so that the building is 48 inches too high, debris, the lack of snow shoveling and about possible arson and Chief Holloway said that the arson matter is under investigation and that the public would be notified of the outcome once the investigation is completed. He also stated that the area would be patrolled to combat any further potential problems.

Alderman Connolly's motion **that the City Treasurer be requested to ascertain if property taxes and water bills for the property located at 492 Medford St. are in arrears, and if so, to report back to the Committee on Public Health and Public Safety**, was approved.

Chairman White's motion **that the City Solicitor, or his representative, review all of the plans approved by the Planning Board, with respect to the property located at 492 Medford St., with Inspectional**

Services to determine all deviations from the approved plans, and include all such deviations in the letter that will be sent to the owner, was approved.

Alderman Connolly's motion *that the City Solicitor have all of the official, stamped plans from the Zoning Board of Appeals and all permits granted by the Inspectional Services Department pertaining to the property located 492 Medford St. available for the courts review, if and when an injunction is sought*, was approved.

31 Wilton Street:

Alderman O'Donovan informed the members that there have been numerous complaints from residents regarding the activity at this address and he believes that the building is being used as a rooming house. Letters have been sent by the ISD directing the owner to apply for the proper zoning permits. Mr. Nonni stated that the Neighborhood Inspection Team (NIT) is investigating the situation and he noted that the original letter sent by ISD was returned. The City Solicitor stated that the City will seek an administrative search warrant to inspect the building. Alderman O'Donovan stated that previous access to the property by the NIT determined that the building was being used as a sober house and that the city and the Police Department have been culpable in dropping the ball in an investigation. Alderman O'Donovan said that the house is a haven for drug use, with needles being found in the area, and that it is in violation of the city's zoning ordinances.

Chairman White asked that ISD ascertain from the state, what the property is being used for and to notify the committee of the response. Chairman White also asked the City Solicitor to determine what is going on with the property and to provide his findings to the committee via email, and to explain what action the city intends to take to remedy the problem. Alderman Connolly asked Chief Holloway to find out if the state and/or the sheriff's office is obligated to notify local Police Departments if prisoners are being released to sober houses. Alderman Desmond requested that Sheriff DePaola be invited to attend the next meeting of the committee to discuss the policies involved when prisoners are released to sober houses. Alderman O'Donovan requested that a communication be sent to Sheriff DePaola regarding the policies of prisoners being released.

Alderman Connolly's motion *that the City conduct a review of the property located at 31 Wilton Street and forward its findings to the Committee on Public Health and Public Safety and that the Inspectional Services Department work with the City Solicitor's Office to remove all residents from the property as soon as possible*, was approved.

Directed Patrols – Bike Path:

Officer Martini told the members that he is making a concerted effort to have the undeveloped area of the bike path adjacent to MaxPak patrolled and that he has been working with the detectives to determine who is responsible for the break-ins. Officer Martini said that he is available to the neighborhood's residents whenever there is a problem. Chief Holloway stated that if break-ins are widespread, the city's Connect-CITY system might be useful in notifying residents of the problem. Alderman O'Donovan asked Chief Holloway to extend the directed patrols to the MaxPak site.

Police Department Re-organization:

Chief Holloway reviewed the proposed reorganization of the Police Department and noted some of the major changes, as follows:

- The city will be divided into 2 districts, East and West, each with its own sub-station
- Positions within each district will be bid on yearly, bringing continuity to the areas being serviced
- The goal is to have 12 officers on the streets during the evening hours

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, February 12, 2008

In Board of Aldermen

Clerk