

Appropriations Committee

Chairman Mortimer, Infurna, Brodeur,
Tramontozzi, Forbes, Wright, McAteer-
Margolis, Seaboyer, Medeiros, Conn,
Boisselle

Appropriations Committee called to order by Chairman Mortimer at 8:20 p.m.

Alderman Medeiros motions to open Public Participation, 2nd by Alderman Infurna. All in favor.

Ralph Moore, 39 Dexter Road says there needs to be some kind of plan to stop the plight of abandoned property. It's a major problem in the City. There's a property on Dexter Road that's been abandoned for 15 years and another one going on five years; people move into these houses. Something has to be done to make someone responsible.

Joe Arcadipane, 42 Dexter Road says he has been a resident and taxpayer for 40 years. The Dexter Road property is deplorable. Abutting properties won't sell because no one wants to live on the street. He is concerned about the threat these properties pose to the safety of firefighters. Banks and holding companies make the residents and firefighters suffer while they hold onto these houses. Abandoned houses are an open invitation for people to use drugs and Melrose is losing too many young people.

Alderman Infurna motions to close Public Participation, 2nd by Alderman Medeiros. All in favor.

Chairman Mortimer says the City Solicitor is working vigorously on this statute along with the Building Commissioner and the Health Director. The City Solicitor is trying to come up with the correct statute that will hold up to legal challenges. Alderman Wright has done some research which he would like to address.

Alderman Wright says he is putting forward for consideration with the City Solicitor a registry program that mortgage providers have implemented to address issues when they become aware of them. They have created Safeguard Properties as part of the MERS Initiative which includes monthly inspection of the property, removal of outside debris, and providing neighbors with a 24/7 telephone number. He would like to see this type of service included in the City's ordinances.

Alderman Wright motions to add the materials pertaining to Safeguard Properties and the MERS Initiative to the order, 2nd by Alderman McAteer-Margolis. One opposed (Forbes). Motion carries.

Alderman Medeiros motions to hold the order in committee, 2nd by Alderman McAteer-Margolis.

On discussion Alderman Brodeur says the state through the Division of Banks maintains a database of foreclosed properties. There is a tremendous amount of information in terms of notice. What the City wants is a solution to the problem the folks on Dexter Road faced. The proposed ordinance doesn't trigger until the property is vacant and foreclosed. He says aggressive enforcement is needed to make it work.

Alderman Medeiros says the intent of the order is to find resolution to the problem but it won't come easily.

Alderman McAteer-Margolis says the existing ordinances don't give the Building and Health Departments the tools they need. She thinks it's important to find the tools that will work.

Alderman Forbes says he is leery of any program managed by the mortgage companies. He hopes the information offered by Alderman Wright can be combined with the proposed ordinance before them and keep it local. The goal is to protect the rights of the abutters.

On the motion to hold, All in favor.

Order No. 10-27, Requesting approval of the Honorable Board of Aldermen that the polling places for Ward 4, Precincts 1 and 2 and Ward 6, Precincts 1 and 2 be relocated to: Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall, 590 Main Street, Melrose, MA and designated as such. Further, that the polling place for Ward 1, Precinct 2 be relocated to: Roosevelt School, 253 Vinton Street at Brunswick Park, Melrose, MA and designated as such as set forth herein.

Chairman Mortimer says members of the Election Commission has run into a problem with the conditions of the ramp at Memorial Hall and are not ready to go forward with this at this time.

Alderman Brodeur motions to hold the order in committee, 2nd by President Boisselle. All in favor.

Alderman McAteer-Margolis motions to adjourn, 2nd by Alderman Forbes. All in favor.

Appropriations Committee adjourns at 8:48 p.m.

Maribeth Harrington
Clerk of Committees