

**CITY OF NORWALK  
NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 1, 2006**

**ATTENDANCE:** Chairman David Shockley; Mayor Richard Moccia; Glenn Iannaccone; Hal Alvord; Mike Moccia; Fred Eshragi; Tony Capuano; Derick DeMarche; Jim Clark; Laurel Lindstrom; Dorothy Romanelli; John Romanelli; Christine Abraham; Nancy Whitmore; Al Raymond; Mark Pierce; Ernest Dumas; Don Nelson; Lee Berandino; Mary Rogers; Maribeth Becker; Katherine Griffing; Rafael Degroso; Laurel Anderson; Iliana Navarro; Yolanda Cespedes; Officer Ramirez (10:15 a.m.); Chief Rilling (10:25 a.m.)

**OTHER:** Jessica Kaplan, Norwalk River Watershed Initiative

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Shockley called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. He asked that everyone introduce themselves, there were some new members in attendance..

**REVIEW AND APPROVE JANUARY 4, 2006 MEETING MINUTES**

The corrections to the January 4, 2006 minutes are as follows:

On page 1, under Attendance, Dorothy and John Romanelli should be added to the list.

On page 2, under Eastern Norwalk Neighborhood Association, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, the word Easter should be changed to Eastern.

On page 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence should read: "Ms. Lindstrom said they are looking to have "Know Your Town" directories printed for the League of Women Voters in Norwalk."

On page 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence should read: "The neighborhood association is printing up 200-300 at a time, of its own expanded directory, "Norwalk at Your Fingertips", which she distributed to everyone present."

**\*\* MS. ROMANELLI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 4, 2006.**

**\*\* MS. LINDSTROM SECONDED.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**WILTON AVENUE; MARK PIERCE**

Mr. Pierce asked Mr. Eshragi about the crosswalk and three-way stop. Mr. Eshragi said they were done with Wilton. He said his plan is to add a yield sign and add a crosswalk on Wilton Avenue on both sides of the intersection. This has been used at similar locations and provides a safer environment. His recommendation the Traffic Authority will be a crosswalk, two signs for a crosswalk, also two warning signs for the crosswalk and two yield signs on both sides of the intersection. Mr. Pierce asked if the flashing 25 mph sign on Flax H Road is permanent. Mr. Eshragi said these signs cost money. The first step will be to put in the signs as

suggested above for Wilton Avenue. They will go before the Traffic Authority at their next meeting, sometime within the next two weeks. When the signage is put in on Wilton Avenue, they will do some restrictions for street parking.

### **GOLDEN HILL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION; JIM CLARK**

Mr. Clark said the issue of illegal apartments continues to be a concern for the neighborhood. Mayor Moccia said that the courts take a long time to get this process resolved. Mr. Clark agreed with Mayor Moccia, and he said that they are trying to work on a more detailed and behind the scenes approach to the problem. Mr. Clark wanted to thank City Scan for coming to the neighborhood, and he thanked the students from Briggs High School for doing valuable work in the neighborhood. He mentioned the signs on I-95, and he thanked Mr. Alvord and Mr. Shockley. Also, he thanked Mr. Bob Duff and Mr. Dean O'Brien, a legislative aide, for their work in getting the graffiti cleaned off the signs. They also had the stop sign replaced at the end of exit 14. He said they will look into the issue of putting temporary fencing on the bridges at Cedar Street in two locations. The new fencing will deter people from getting near the signs and the highway. Mr. Eshragi reviewed some pending traffic/signage issues in the neighborhood for Mr. Clark.

### **EASTERN NORWALK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION; LAUREL LINDSTROM**

Ms. Lindstrom said she wanted to get a traffic update on Strawberry Hill Avenue. Mr. Eshragi said the signs have been done for the whole street and the connector. He had the counter put out for different locations and found several people going 44 mph. He has the data, and he will change all of the Strawberry Hill zones because of the school. Ms. Lindstrom said she was glad to see the Strawberry Hill traffic calming study as a request on the capital budget. Enforcement is definitely needed. Mr. Alvord said nothing will be done if the project isn't budgeted. Mr. Eshragi hoped that he would have it put together before the next Traffic Authority meeting. Mr. Alvord said they have looked at every school, and they have upgraded some crosswalks, crosswalk markings, and speed limit signs. As there are several schools on Strawberry Hill Avenue, there will be a calming effect from the improvements they have made. The larger traffic calming project on Strawberry Hill Avenue is dependent on the capital budget. Ms. Lindstrom said there is a public hearing on the capital budget before the Planning Commission this evening. The next public hearing will be before the Common Council Planning Committee, prior to Common Council approval. The Finance Director's recommendations will be posted on the website later today. Mr. Eshragi confirmed that all of Strawberry Hill Avenue will be 25 mph and 20 mph near the schools.

### **HARBOR SHORES NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION; DOROTHY ROMANELLI**

#### **1. Concerns regarding increased criminal activity**

Ms. Romanelli said they are experiencing increased criminal activity in the neighborhood, with one house being entered twice. She wanted to be sure that they have their tree liaison on record. Mr. Shockley confirmed he had received it. The open sewer problem at 17 Sable Street is an on-going problem. There was water backup, the homeowner hired a contractor, and they found out that the house was connected to septic, not sewer. There are no sewer connections on Sable Street. The sewer has been open for some time as they can't locate the connecting arm. The neighbors are requesting the Health Department condemn the

house. The homeowner can't get the situation resolved. Mr. Capuano from the Health Department said I will send out a sanitarian again. Mr. Alvord said he will follow-up with the Health Department.

### **MEADOW STREET; MORAVIA LANGLEY**

Chairman Shockley spoke for Ms. Langley who was unable to attend. He said her concern was school crossing signs on Meadow Street by Meadows Gardens and speed limit signs. People would cross the street down by Woodward. The original request was to cross in the middle of the street, but that was not allowed as it is a S street. Mr. Eshragi said they would make the crossing sign at the 4-way stop sign.

### **BROAD RIVER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION; KELLY STRANITI**

Chairman Shockley spoke for Ms. Straniti who was unable to attend. He said they had a discussion regarding the buffer zone. He put a letter together and will review with her. He confirmed for Mayor Moccia that the letter was also about the littering problem, and noise and evening activities.

### **WEST MAIN STREET; CHRISTINE ABRAHAM**

#### 1. Spring Cleanup Plans

Ms. Abraham said that she is interested in knowing when the spring cleanup will take place. Chairman Shockley said that they are the first on the list, and they are scheduled for early April. She mentioned that there were two box trucks parked on the street, as well as landscaping trucks. Chief Rilling asked Ms. Abraham to give him the information, and he will have someone look into it. There are limitations and restrictions as to the size of the truck and how long it's parked there, and if it's parked on the property, it becomes a code enforcement issue. On School Street, she suggested that "No Parking" signs be put up, and the street can't be cleaned of leaves and debris because of too many parked cars. She also mentioned the cable trucks on Jefferson generating a lot of traffic and not slowing down. She said the park committee will be starting up this month. She asked who owns the property at the end of Summer Street. It is full of trash. Both Mr. Alvord and Mr. Alvord confirmed that the street is in the city right of way, and the railroad worked with them last spring to get 40 tons of trash off the property. Within two days, there was another tons dumped there. Ms. Whitmore said there is a refrigerator with the doors still on it, on the porch of 2 Holmes Street. Mr. Capuano said he will send the Health Department there today. There is a broken pipe at the corner of Main and West Main. The First Taxing District should repair it. Chairman Shockley said he will follow up. Ms. Abraham said that the house at 3 Godfrey Street continues to be a problem. Mr. Capuano said the Health Department cleaned it up last year. He will send someone out again.

### **SPRING HILL /HOSPITAL AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION; AL RAYMOND**

Mr. Raymond said he would like to follow up on the traffic issue. Mr. Eshragi said they are done with the analysis. He had done the full warrant analysis for the stop sign. It is warranted, and they will use the one-way solution to make it safe and nice. Regarding the volume on Truman Street heading west, he said he can't make that a one-way. The other side, eastbound, can be a one-way. Mr. Raymond said there is a sight line problem coming out of Stuart. Mr. Eshragi said they will put a stop sign on Stuart Avenue heading north, and on Truman Street they will put a stop sign heading east. The westbound direction will be one-way. They will install two

crosswalks, with one on Benedict. This will be Mr. Eshragi's recommendation to the Traffic Authority for them to take up at their next meeting. Mr. Raymond said that at a recent neighborhood meeting, several people complained of speeding on Christie Street and it being used as a cut-through route. Mr. Raymond confirmed Mr. Eshragi that it's between Benedict and Nostrom. On Saranack Road, there is a rock in the middle of the road. It was noticed during the Mayor's Walk in May of last year. People have complained of hitting it and having their cars damaged. Mr. Raymond said he will provide Mr. Alvord with the information so he can take care of it. Another topic from the recent neighborhood meeting was the sidewalks in the Spring Hill area, and who is responsible for the maintenance. Mr. Alvord said the property owner is responsible for the repairs, by City Code. The homeowner is also responsible for obtaining the permit. Regarding Kendall School, it was brought to their attention that there is property on the west side of the school that is scheduled for demolition. They were hoping that the city would purchase the property so they would have it for future expansion of Kendall School. Mayor Moccia said there wouldn't be any future expansion; they are in the middle of a \$7M renovation program at the present time. Mr. Raymond said that several people are concerned about the potential overcrowding in the schools.

### **SOUTH MAIN STREET NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION; ERNEST DUMAS**

Mr. Shockley said they had a meeting last night. They are in the process of fortifying that association. They also incorporated Lexington Avenue. They have representatives from both areas. They are putting together a list of concerns. From South Main Street, he welcomed Mr. Ernie Dumas, who spoke about Crespo's Variety Store, at 60 Lexington Avenue. There are parking issues with customers and residents. They are asking for help with that situation, as well as better lighting on South Main Street. By improving the lighting, they hope to deter the drug dealers from doing business there. The Police Department is very visible in the area. There are convicted felons that congregate during the day in front of the store. The store has dumpsters that aren't emptied on a timely basis, and that creates a litter problem for the residents. He spoke of the speeding city buses and the trucks from the lower end of South Main Street. Mayor Moccia said that the Transit District is responsible for the city buses; Chief Rilling would handle the illegal parking; and the Health Department would handle the dumpster problem. He understands the concerns of Mr. Dumas. Mr. Alvord spoke of the lighting problem and said that if the requested lighting information is provided to him, he will get it to the Traffic Authority and the Health and Safety Commission. Mr. Dumas spoke of the sidewalks on Grove Street and said there were some on the north side of the street. Mr. Alvord said they have a plan for a 5ft wide sidewalk to be installed on the street. It would depend on the capital budget for next year. Mr. Dumas mentioned the crossguard that has arguments with the drug dealers that hide behind larger vehicles on South Main Street and Grove Street. They are trying to rid the area of this activity, as it could impact on the children on the buses. Mr. Rafael Degrosso from Lexington Avenue spoke of the property at 6 1/2 Lexington Avenue, and the hole that was opened there. There are rats visible. There are also problems at 7 1/2 and 8 1/2 Lexington Avenue, with garbage all over the property. The Spanish corner store, at 61 Lexington Avenue, throws the garbage out in the back of the store, and it could become a fire hazard. There is a speeding issue in the area. There is a company at 5 Lexington Avenue that has a bad odor coming from the property. It could be a topsoil company. Mr. Capua said that the Health Department will look into it. Officer Ramirez is the Community Officer for the area, and said that the traffic issues at Ely and Lexington are priorities. The large hole at the 6 1/2 Lexington Avenue property is a health hazard, and they are working on getting a fence installed. There was discussion about the improvements needed for the area and potential budget issues. Mr. Alvord wanted to clarify that the city doesn't install street lighting; the electric company does. Chairman Shockley said that within the budget, they will be able to do 4 or 5 neighborhood clean-ups this spring; he has requests for between 6 and 8. There is a

spring cleanup scheduled for April 29, 2006, with residents interested in participating and private garbage haulers being involved also.

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE; CONNIE BLAIR**

Mr. Alvord spoke for Ms. Blair who was unable to attend. He said the doors have been opened since January 17, 2006, and the phone service is functioning. They have been getting an increasing number of walk-ins. There is a red phone in the atrium downstairs that is available to all residents for help in finding the correct departments, etc.

### **TREE ALLIANCE; DON NELSON**

#### **1. Free Tree Program Update**

Mr. Nelson said that they are preparing for the spring planting program, and they are organizing a neighborhood association approach to the planting. This is different from last year, when they dealt with individuals. They are getting a database together to make sure they have all the association officers, the liaisons, and the boundaries. They hope to do this on a "one neighborhood at a time" basis. Mr. Alvord said that they are trying to build on the recent success of the Golden Hill Neighborhood Association, where they worked with their tree liaison and had all the trees planted on Elmwood Avenue. He said there will be a meeting of the Coalition of Norwalk Neighborhood Associations (CNNA) on February 13, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in Room 231 to review the Golden Hill program and explaining the new approach to the neighborhood association tree planting program. Mr. Nelson urged everyone to get the officer, tree liaison, and boundary information to either himself, Ms. Becker, or Mr. Shockley.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1. Jessica Kaplan, Watershed Coordinator, Norwalk River Watershed Initiative with an overview of the Filter Project.**

Chairman Shockley introduced Ms. Kaplan, who presented an overview of the Filter Project. She provided pamphlets and a newsletter. The filter project, which involves the cleaning of 275 storm drains in South Norwalk to rid them of harmful pollutants and waste, was funded by an EPA grant and some local foundations. The project should take about one year. She would be interested in talking to the neighborhood associations to educate them about the filter project.

### **LOWE STREET; LEE BERANDINO**

Ms. Berandino said that she remembers when the Lexington & Ely neighborhood was nice at one time. She complained of parking and speeding issues. She mentioned that she has lived on Lowe Street since 1941, and she remembers it being paved only once since then. Mr. Alvord said that they are paving Lowe Street in the spring. She said the traffic could be reduced if the trucking laws were enforced. Chief Rilling said that he will be having a meeting with Mayor Moccia and the trucking companies. She said that she is paying taxes in a residential "C" zone, and several houses on her street appear to be running businesses out of their homes. Chairman Shockley offered to get the information from her so he could follow up.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Chief Rilling said they will be conducting “Slowdown Days” again starting the week of March 20, 2006. This will be citywide in an effort to focus on speeding vehicles and other violations that affect the quality of life in Norwalk. There will be extra officers on patrol. They will be working with the neighborhood associations to get them involved. This will be conducted 3 or 4 times during the year. The most important component of this will be public awareness and education. They will focus on a specific violation every time they have a slowdown week, but not to the exclusion of other violations.

**ADJOURN MEETING**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Marr  
Telesco Secretarial Services