

Wallingford Town Council
SPECIAL MEETING
Ordinance Committee
October 16, 2008 6:00 P.M.
Room #315 -- Town Hall
45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT 06492

Minutes

The following attended the Ordinance Committee meeting of October 16, 2008: Corporation Counsel Adam Mantzaris, John LeTourneau, Nick Economopolis, Mike Spiteri, Rosemary Rascati (arriving at about 7:04 p.m.) Mike Brodinsky and Pat Kohl. The meeting convened at about 6:11 p.m.

Tax relief for seniors: Review of and/or action on recommendations of Mayor's study group, which reported on tax impact of proposed tax relief ordinance.

The Mayor's study group report was discussed. The chairman made the point that there should be little to no impact on property tax revenues, as this was basically a matter of tax shifting rather than tax loss --- a point not raised in the report from the Mayor's study committee.

After much deliberation, and some compromising of ideas, the Committee asked the Law Department to draft an ordinance that would (1) limit the tax deferral to 75% of the taxes due so the Town would be able to lien properties subject to the proposed tax deferral program; and (2) increase by \$10,000, instead of \$15,000, the income limits that apply to the existing deferral program.

Blight case review; review of possible amendments to the blight ordinance, including whether broken down cars are vehicle specific or property specific. Status of Law Department's opinion on that point.

The blight ordinance that pertained to broken down vehicles was discussed. To aid the police department, asked the Corporation Counsel to send a letter to the police department explaining that a vehicle that was inoperable, or heavily damaged, or unregistered, or filled with junk would blight a property; and that the ordinance refers to properties that are blighted by these cars, not to specific cars that may be on the property. Thus, if one such vehicle were replaced with another such vehicle, that would be a continuation of the same blighted condition. It would not be a new condition requiring the initiation of a new enforcement procedure.

The Committee reviewed new reports of alleged blight from the Blight Officer, Peter LeClerc.

Liens for blight fines as a tool, especially in foreclosure cases.

The Chairman explained that liens securing fines for blight were treated like taxes for collection purposes, and that we should, perhaps, be more prompt with liens on properties and houses that are vacant (a possible sign of pending foreclosure) or in

foreclosure. The Corporation Counsel said that the Law Department was aware and would continue to be most watchful for these situations.

Status of Law Department's letter to CL & P re: ATV's.

C. L. & P. wrote to the police department to advise that no one has permission to ride on its easements. In view of that, a rider beneath the power lines would be trespassing. C. L. & P. has put in a gate. Attorney Small's report was sent to the Committee and was in the back-up materials. Chairman Brodinsky said that he would advise Officer Fuller and Sergeant DeMaio of this. Attorney Small's letter, in the back-up materials, was reviewed, noted, and appreciated.

Status of Law Department's revision of purchasing ordinance.

The Chairman reminded all that a proposed ordinance was expected by this meeting, based upon past representations. The Law Department is now promising a revised ordinance for November. Attorney Small's letter, included in the back-up packet, was reviewed, noted, and appreciated.

Report from the Law Department on other ordinances from other towns concerning the use of public areas, which use may involve political and or commercial speech. Do we need a policy for the use of the parade ground?

After much discussion and not much agreement, the Corporation Counsel said that the Law Department would issue a draft report on the basic tenets of pertinent First Amendment Constitutional law for consideration by the committee. Attorney Small's report in the back-up materials was noted, and appreciated.

Review of new littering ordinance.

This was deferred for the time being.

Lyman Hall project: Discussion and Issues for Research

Chairman Brodinsky submitted suggested issues for research, which were approved, without objection. Councilors Spiteri and Economopoulis added: (1) encouraging tourism based on local history (M.S.); possible ban on un-recyclable plastics (N.E.).

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at about 8:00 p.m.

Draft minutes prepared by
Mike Brodinsky on 10/20/08

Mike Brodinsky, Chairman