

DAVIS SQUARE ADVISORY GROUP MEETING, 7/9/07

GRAFFITI

- Residents noted that there are problems with graffiti at Tannery Brook Row, next to Orleans
- Stephanie Hirsch, the City's SomerStat Director, encouraged residents to call 311 about graffiti. Offensive or gang-related graffiti will get cleaned up quickly.
- **Follow-up Questions:**
 - Is it the responsibility of residents to clean up Graffiti on their private property?

NOISE

- The Police Department often receives noise calls about 45 College Ave , however it is a church.
- Follow-up Questions:
 - What exactly is the City's noise policy?
 - Is there a specific ordinance about noise, and does it not take affect until a certain hours of the day?

CAR AND HOUSE BREAK-INS

- Somerville Police reported that:
 - GPS units left in plain site in cars have become favorite targets for thieves
 - Housebreaks are most often crimes of opportunity. Open windows or unlocked doors invite theft. Be aware of suspicious behavior such as unwarranted doorbell ringing. Also make sure that windows are closed, and not just the screens.
 - They recommend residents protect themselves and get to know their neighbors so that they can watch out for you too.
- Follow-up Questions:
 - Is it possible to track such break-ins, so that we know when a certain area is being targeted?

SNOW & ICE

- Residents expressed concern about property owners who don't clear their sidewalks after snowstorms.
- The City should start ticketing or fining them to ensure that walks are kept clear
- Many of the homes in the Davis Square area are rented out, and the resident is not affected or bothered by property tickets
- Stephanie Hirsch recommended that residents call 311 to report scofflaws. The City will investigate and ticket.
- Follow-up Questions:
 - What is the local ordinance regarding keeping sidewalks clear?

POTHoles

- Some streets have a large number of potholes

- Winthrop Street and Curtis Street are particularly bad
- Bower Street also needs work
- **Follow-up Questions:**
 - What is the process for selecting streets to repave?

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TRAFFIC

- Residents commented that many of the streets near Davis are used as cut-throughs. The streets from Irving to Paulina are especially abused. The worst part of it is how fast the cars go when they're on those streets
- Stephanie Hirsch, Sgt. McCain, and Ald. Gewirtz reported that the City can install speed limit and "slow" signs, but it requires state approval to change the speed limit on a specific street and that is very difficult to get. Also, speed tables are very expensive.
- Another Traffic concern is the intersection of Irving and Holland, where it has become almost impossible to turn left onto Holland because of zero visibility
- Elm Street also gets very clogged up because people will double park along it near the square
- Follow-up Questions:
 - Is it possible to get rid of a parking space at this intersection to increase drivers' lines of sight?
 - Could the City put more police on bikes so that someone can both reach and resolve the issue when it happens?
 - How many policemen were on bikes at the peak compared to the numbers now?

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GENERAL

- A resident commented that the City lacks the resources to make every change requested. She asked what residents can do?
- Sgt. McCain suggested that residents are the City's eyes and ears and must report problems, not just crime problems but potholes, traffic issues, etc. Also, he encouraged residents to get to know your neighbors, because that is the cornerstone of building a vibrant community.