

Perry Park Neighborhood ResiStat Meeting Notes

Monday, January 14, 2008

City Officials Present:

Anthony Holloway, Chief of Police, Somerville Police Department
Stephanie Hirsch, SomerStat Director
Ethan Field, ResiStat Analyst

Ward 2 Alderman Maryann Heuston had weather-related car trouble and sent her regrets.

Traffic:

Ethan Field gave updates about sign improvements at the intersection of Dane Street and Dane Ave. Ethan also provided information on the City's efforts to petition the State to lower the standard speed limit in Somerville from 30 mph to 25 mph. (See presentation.)

- Residents noticed that Beacon Street is rough in a number of places, especially from Start Market to Porter Square. City staff let residents know that Beacon Street is scheduled for major work after the Somerville Ave project is complete.

Next Steps for City Officials:

- See if any maintenance is scheduled for Beacon Street prior to the major renovation.

Next Steps for Residents:

- If there are specific areas residents find particularly difficult, call 311 or use the 311 web service. Provide the specific location. If using the web service, residents can upload digital pictures of the specific area.
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Parks and Sign Improvements:

Stephanie Hirsch gave updates about Lincoln Park and the Argenziano School and planned changes in signage at parks Citywide. She also gave a brief update about Union Square zoning. (See presentation.)

- A resident reported that there appear to be problems with drainage on the soccer field in Lincoln Park. Stephanie Hirsch mentioned that particular area is scheduled to be filled in the spring; it was not filled in the fall because it would have been difficult to re-seed grass at that time.
- A resident mentioned that a nearby stretch of Lincoln Parkway has not been draining in the rain/snow.

Next Steps for City Officials:

- Update on plans to fill in soccer field in spring.
- Report Lincoln parkway drainage to DPW.

Next Steps for Residents:

- If there are areas that seem to be flooding (excluding the field, which will get fixed this spring), call 311 right away and the DPW will be sent to examine. Also, note the location of storm drains are near your house before a major snowstorm. After the snowstorm, if you clear a small path for water & melting snow to flow into drains, that greatly reduces snow-related street flooding.
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Police Issues:

New Police Chief Anthony Holloway discusses plans for the Police Department reorganization, to be implemented late spring or early summer. (See presentation.)

- Residents reported being generally satisfied with Police response to nuisance complaints (teens suspected drinking in the park, etc.), but that it was an ongoing problem of having teens breaking bottles, etc. in Lincoln Park.
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Next Steps for City Officials:

- Problem solving around specific parks will need to be part of the new community policing model this spring.
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Resident Questions and Issues:

Residents were asked what issues are of concern to them, and what ideas they have for the City.

- Residents reported being generally satisfied and enjoying living in the City.
- **Parking Permits:** Resident asked: "There is a number on my the parking permit sticker in my car – is my permit only valid in some neighborhoods?" Ethan Field responded that a permit sticker is valid anywhere in the City. The number on the sticker represents the month in which you should renew the sticker. A paper Visitor's Parking Pass is only valid within a few blocks of your house, and only for two consecutive days.
- **Parking Violations:** Residents reported that a particular residence semi-regularly parks too many cars in their driveway, with one car parked across the sidewalk. Residents also reported that the narrow corner of Lewis Street at Magnus is periodically blocked with utility trucks, moving vans, etc., though this has improved somewhat with re-marking of fire lanes. Chief Holloway said that both are cases of illegal parking, and that residents should call 311 immediately when they see this happen, and Police will respond.
- **Arts and Community Events:** Residents reported enjoying the arts and community programs in the summer from the Somerville Arts Council and Union Square Main Streets. Residents said that seeing art in parks or doing some kind of unique painting of parks would be nice. One resident who is subscribed to the Arts Council email list said that the list is good, but that it would be better to get a monthly bulletin with a run-down of all City-sponsored arts events. Stephanie Hirsch responded that the City is exploring the possibility of a consolidated online calendar for all City events. Such a calendar could be filtered by interest, and could be emailed to residents regularly.

- **Reaching out to Tenants:** Residents suggested a special outreach to tenants to ensure they know more about City operations. This could occur in the fall when many tenants move in.
- **Promoting Housing Resources:** Residents suggested some City resources they thought were useful, and should be mentioned on the 311 FAQ. The class for first-time home buyers was one: <http://www.somervillema.gov/section.cfm?org=housing&page=419> and the resource for Tenant's Rights: http://www.somervillema.gov/CoS_Content/documents/Tenant%20Helper%20-%206th%20Edition.pdf
- **Litter in Parks:** Residents requested that the DPW be more attentive to litter collection in Lincoln Park, especially on weekends.

Next Steps for City Officials:

- Suggest posting mentioned resources to the 311 FAQ, if they're not already there.
- Continue to pursue consolidated calendar of City events, possibly including a "Featured Resource" section.
- Check with DPW to see if regular litter & trash-clearing schedule includes weekends.

Next Steps for Residents:

- Residents should call 311 when they see instances of illegal parking in their neighborhood.
- Residents should tell their neighbors about how to contact 311, ResiStat, and their Alderman. The more the City hears from residents about their neighborhood, the more responsive the City can be.