

Ward 3 Fall ResiStat Meeting Notes Wednesday, October 22nd, 2008

Officials Present:

- Tom Taylor, Ward 3 Alderman
- Tony Holloway, Somerville Police Chief
- Paul Upton, Somerville Deputy Police Chief
- Michael Devereaux, Somerville Police Captain
- Officer Alan Monaco, Ward 3 Neighborhood Police Officer
- Mark Friedman, Finance Director for the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development
- Stephanie Hirsch, Director of SomerStat

Updates on Issues from Previous Meetings:

After introductions of all attendees, updates were provided on the following topics. Please see the accompanying presentation for more information on these topics:

- Union square rezoning
- Somerville Ave construction
- 311 Call trends on quality of life issues
- Park reconstruction: Central Hill Park, Albion Park, Ed Leathers Park
- Public safety and police reorganization
- Your issues

Issues Raised

The following issues were raised during the discussion:

Feedback on 311:

- Technical Issues: A resident said that he could not get through to 311 at night, and another said she could not reach it from her cell phone. City staff said that 311 from a cell phone may not work close to the city's borders in some cases. A resident suggested putting the nine-digit 311 number on the website, so people know where to call if they are at work or elsewhere outside of Somerville.
- Work Completion: A resident expressed concern that a work request called in to 311 may be marked as complete online, when it is not actually complete. City staff said that the accuracy of the completion of work requests will be increased as the City moves to a work order system that allows staff to check off phases of completion, rather than just when the work is assigned to someone.
- Hours: A resident requested that 311 be open later.

Quality of Life Issues:

- Street Repaving: A resident said that her street – Belmont Place – very much needs repaving. City staff reported that it is not on this year's list of street to repave. Alderman Taylor said he would advocate for it to be placed on next year's.
- Airplane Noise: Residents expressed frustration with the constant airplane noise. City staff said that there are few options, except legal action, which the City is pursuing.

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Traffic:

- Somerville Ave: A resident expressed concerns about pedestrian access along Somerville Ave during work on sidewalks. She said she hopes a safe passage will be preserved.
- Quincy, Summer, and Prescott: A resident expressed concern about the safety of the intersection at Quincy, Summer, and Prescott. He said that it is very hard to see out from the side streets onto Summer to know when to cross. He suggested perhaps a longer lane of no parking or a bulb-out to prevent cars from parking close to the intersection. Alderman Taylor and City staff said that this topic will be sent to the traffic engineer to see what has been considered or may be possible for that intersection.
- Speed of Cars: A resident expressed concerns about the speed of cars traveling on Central Street and other side streets. (Prior meetings residents had expressed similar concerns about Walnut). City staff said that, while major traffic calming options like traffic tables are very expensive, we are working on a few strategies. We are petitioning the state to lower the speed limit to 25 and to pass legislation enabling the use of red light enforcement. Furthermore, we are designing key parts of the city, such as Lower Broadway, to make it harder for drivers to use Somerville as a cut-through for commuting. Chief Holloway added he would send an officer to monitor for speeders on Central and School in the coming weeks.
- School Drop-Off: A resident said that some of the worst driving she sees is around schools, where parents are dropping off children in a hurry. She suggested trying to educate parents about drop-off rules or to change the rules.

Other Issues:

- Dedications: A resident said she hopes there is a way for parks or streets to be named after women, and that we should consider naming things not just after veterans.