



TOWN OF HAMDEN

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Hamden Government
Center
2750 Dixwell Ave
Hamden, CT 06518
Tel: (203) 287-7100
Fax: (203) 287-7101

Scott B. Jackson
Mayor

CLEAN & GREEN COMMISSION

“OUR TOWN, OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, KEEP HAMDEN CLEAN”

MINUTES: The Clean & Green Commission, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting on Monday, June 21, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the 3rd floor conference room, Hamden Government Center. The following issues will be discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Scott Howland, Peter Palmieri, Charlene Webb, Barbara Schlein, Sandra Serrano-Alvarado, Marietta Mattei, Carl Jordan

Commissioners Excused: Diane Hoffman, Dakibu Muley, John Prete

Commissioners Absent: Jack O'Donnell

Others in Attendance: Legislative Council Representative Gabe Lupo, Recycling Coordinator Pam Roach, Commission Clerk Gerry Tobin

1. Call to Order

Mr. Howland called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Review Minutes of May 17, 2010

Ms. Mattei made a motion to approve the minutes of May 17th. Mr. Palmieri seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

3. Old Business

Mr. Howland said he received a response to his FOI request for the list of delinquent properties or properties with fines levied against them. He sent the request on April 27th and received a form letter in response with the following boxes checked: he needs to make a request to the agency who maintains the letters he is seeking (Ms. Creane); he did not file in a timely manner (within 30 days); and no more action will be taken. He said

we should send Ms. Creane another letter, and if she doesn't respond within 30 days, we can send FOI another letter.

The signs that we are going to put on the properties we clean are not done yet due to a health issue in his family.

Mr. O'Donnell was going to write a non-compliance letter to owners who had not cleaned up their properties. This has not been done yet.

Columbus Day Parade – the Commission will decide at a future meeting whether or not we will participate in the parade.

Ms. Mattei has drafted a letter to the Mayor for Mr. Howland to review.

4. New Business

Gabe Lupo, second District Legislative Council Representative was a guest at tonight's meeting. He was invited because some of his campaign literature mentioned blight issues.

Regarding the request for the list of properties that have fines levied against them, he recommended that Mr. Howland get in touch with Curt Leng, the Mayor's Chief Administrative Officer, to request the information from Ms. Creane.

Mr. Lupo said changes are happening. He is on the Circular Avenue Cemetery Committee. The difference is night and day from what the cemetery was. The Committee has been in existence for two years. Major issues are being investigated by the Attorney General's office concerning prior board and caretaker issues. The cemetery is in District 2. The Mayor requested the committee take it over because of the number of complaints. Once they took it over they found abnormalities in the records. All graves are now up to date, and the property has been cleaned up. Eventually this committee will be dissolved, and they will be looking for volunteers to be on a cemetery committee. The Mayor's committee now controls the funds. They have hired a new caretaker, and have made great progress in straightening out the records and the appearance of the cemetery. To be appointed to the committee, you have to own a lot there or have a family member buried there.

The Legislative Council is in the midst of starting a change in the Town Charter, for the first time since the 60's. This is long overdue. A committee was approved in early June, and it will probably take a year to revise and then it will go to Town referendum.

The dump and the rink are in the midst of being privatized. There might be a little lag time at the dump, when it might be closed for a week or two. It looks like Trashmaster will take it over. Ms. Schlein mentioned that she owns a landscaping business and buys a permit for \$400 for twenty dumps. Mr. Lupo is not sure what the fee structure will be. We are not making money on scrap at the dump. Ms. Roach said we do get paid for recycled metals. Ms. Roach said that we get a check from Industrial Management for recycled metal. Hamden is priced approximately one/half of any other town at the ice rink.

Mr. Howland said the Town could be going after property owners under the blight ordinances and this commission doesn't know how far along we are. Mr. Lupo said there are a lot of things the Town can go after, but the Town gets into legal fees and so forth, so sometimes it costs more than is collected. Mr. Lupo suggested the Commission invite Holly Masi, Zoning Enforcement Officer to our meeting.

Mr. Lupo mentioned that senior busing has also been privatized to Greater New Haven Transit District.

Ms. Serrano-Alvarado asked how do you get a block watch going and keep it going. Mr. Lupo said when he was a Sargent, he was assigned to community policing, which encompassed block watches, bike patrols and school officers. He is a firm believer in block watches. We are now having all of the problems of the inner city. We have the same number of officers today as we had in 1975. Officer Ron Glifort is now in charge of the block watches. Start by getting someone from the area, two to three blocks in each direction. Get neighbors together, have a meeting at the Keefe Center, have the officer come and have everyone sign in. Select a captain, who can call five people who will also call five people, etc. He mentioned Cherry Hill Street and Connie Vereen, where they have a great block watch. She set up parties for the kids, and many other things. He recommends a meeting once a month, but they can go inactive for a couple of months. A good block watch would have between 25 and 50 members. Many of the problems people talk about at a block watch meeting are not police matters, i.e. sidewalks, road paving, speeders, etc.

Mr. Jordan mentioned a couple of dilapidated houses in his neighborhood, and he is concerned that this might spread throughout the neighborhood. Lawns not mowed, etc., Mr. Lupo suggested he call Holly Masi in the Planning Office. Ms. Webb asked Mr. Lupo if the Council ever discusses blight issues. Mr. Lupo responded citizens are always welcome to speak before the Council. Ms. Webb said we have Ordinances in place, but people aren't being fined, nothing ever happens. Mr. Lupo said the Town has to go through certain channels and it takes time. Also, the Town would hire an attorney to collect fees, but the attorney fees might be more than the Town could take in. She also mentioned street sweeping and wondered if street sweeping could be posted. Mr. Lupo mentioned the drawbacks of people's cars being ticketed and/or towed if sweeping was posted and people didn't move their cars. Mr. Lupo recommended the Commission invite Council President Jim Pascarella and/or Chief Administrative Officer Curt Leng, who are both sharp people and very concerned about what is going on. He would be happy to attend commission meetings in the future.

Mr. Lupo said he has been a Hamden Police Officer for 23 years and prior to that he was a Police Officer in Woodbridge. He mentioned that many towns have no pool, no rink, no transfer station, no paid fire department, etc. He expects services will be reduced with the layoffs coming up.

One of the commissioners mentioned that if the Commission wants to do a cleanup on a Saturday morning, two public works employees, a truck and a supervisor are required, and right now the Town doesn't have money to pay them, so we can't do them.

Ms. Schlein will write a thank you note to Lieutenant Lupo.

Ms. Roach said as she is talking to people on the neighborhood/civic association list about the cleanups, and they are asking what the responsibilities are of sponsoring a cleanup. She mentioned the idea is to keep neighborhoods clean. Perhaps C&G could put a letter in the local paper thanking the Group. Mr. Howland said Ms. Roach should refer people to him. Mark Candido of Quinnipiac Bank will sponsor a September cleanup with three or more people on September 18th. We don't want anyone to spend any of their own money, and we don't want any children because it is too dangerous. The Commission will clean up after the July concerts beginning on July 10th. There are no cleanups scheduled for August.

New Business

Mr. Howland said if we march in the Columbus Day Parade, we will need a banner. Commissioners thought Ms. Hoffman might have our banner. If not, we can purchase one with the funds in the Commission's gift account.

Cookout – Mr. Howland will send out an email with a date.

Mr. Howland will send out information on the concert cleanups. Bags and supplies will be put under the stage. Recycling bins will be stored under the stage. Ms. Coleman has announcements all written up for the concerts, including thanking the Clean & Green Commission.

Mr. Jordan mentioned that five employees of the Public Works Department including himself were laid off back in 1976. Layoffs are usually those at the low end of the totem pole. He was out for about a year. Mayor DiMeo was in office.

Ms. Mattei has drafted a letter to Mayor Jackson, but might change it to Curt Leng. Ms. Mattei said if we can send out complimentary letters to people who keep their properties up, why can't we send out letters saying your property is a mess, what kind of statement is that making about you and your Town/neighborhood.

5. Adjournment

Mr. Palmieri made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Jordan seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Submitted by:

Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk