

South Watch: The South Side Flats and Slopes Code Enforcement Project
Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2017

Mission: South Watch: The South Side Flats and Slopes Code Enforcement Project works to improve the quality of life on the South Side by bringing people and institutions together to identify code violations, advocate for their remediation and monitor the outcomes. (This is also the mission of Oakwatch.)

- I. **Introductions** (5 minutes)
 - a. Barbara Rudiak shared the mission of South Watch. The attendees introduced themselves.
 - b. **Attendees** – Barbara Rudiak, resident, SSCC/South Watch; Heath Johnson, crime analyst, Pittsburgh Police; Bill Klimovich, Environmental Services; Shawn Wigle, Public Works; Frank Vitale, resident, SSCC; Tim Lewis, Duquesne University; Commander Karen Dixon, Pittsburgh Police; Robert Burns, Representative Jake Wheatley’s Office; John Fournier, PPA; Gerry Kahl, resident; Ernest Rajakone, Mayor’s office; Julie Reiland, PLI; Candice Gonzalez, SS Chamber of Commerce; Liz Style, resident, South Watch; Bridget Vyas, resident/South Watch; Perian Reid, resident/South Watch; Thomas Gaul, Pittsburgh Police; Bruce Kraus, City Council; Virginia Pavinich, resident; Dan Vito, resident; Anna Marie Kijanka, resident; Kitty Vagley, resident; Jeff Newbauer, resident; Michael Ballow, resident/South Watch; Kathleen Petrillo, resident/SSCC; Ernie Sota, resident/SSCC; Dan Grant, real estate agent.

- II. **Presentation(s)** meant to educate, followed by discussion and Q & A. (15 minutes)
 - a. Barbara Rudiak explained that this portion of the agenda would be used to educate those in attendance to various practices, programs, etc that would be important to the South Watch group and South Side residents. Since refuse collection is the focus of the SW work, Environmental Services presented on their practices. Refuse collection on South Side is on Thursday. Foremen return to the neighborhood if there is a need for follow-up. The South Side Flats/Slopes can present challenges for ES for a variety of reasons: in the alleys there is no parking on collection day. ES doesn’t like to have tickets issued or cars towed. At times the foremen will assist with the trash if the trucks cannot get through the alleys because cars are parked there. They may also pick up trash that may have been left out after the trash has already been collected. Recycling is single stream and that means that there is no need to separate glass, paper, etc. ES prefers recycling containers to the blue bags because they are not recyclable. They also would like the cardboard boxes flatten. May 6th – household chemicals will be collected at the North Park swimming pool parking lot. May 13th – hard to recycle materials will be collected at the Galleria at Pittsburgh Mills and May 20th will be curbside pick up of seasonal yard debris. To address the 311 service requests, ES staff may work on Saturdays and Sundays. Problems are often remedied when the staff is able to talk with tenants and/or the landlords. The department prefers to educate not cite but will if the problems are not remedied.
 - b. A resident asked about the overflowing trash cans on Carson Street. Barbara shared that Mike Gable in Public Works was working on trash cans with sensors so that DPW would be able to empty the cans that were full instead of driving to all the trash cans in the city over the course of the week. Bruce stated that Carson Street would be one of the first streets to get the new cans.

- III. **South Side Property Progress Report, Q & A (10 minutes)**
- a. Bill Klimovich, Assistant Director, Department of Environmental Services
 - b. Shawn Wigle, Program Supervisor, Department of Public Works
 - i. Bill went through the property progress report and shared what the violation was and the action taken by the ES staff. South Watch leads will continue to monitor in order to determine if the actions taken were sufficient to consider the property remediated.
 - ii. Eight (8) properties were remediated after a placard was placed on the door or after ES spoke with the tenant/homeowner/landlord.
 - c. Julie Reiland, Permits, Licenses, and Inspections
 - i. At this time there were no properties listed that needed to be addressed with PLI. Barbara asked Julie what 302.3 was in city code because she couldn't find it – sidewalks.

IV. **South Side Crime Report – Trends in crime for the month, Q & A (15 minutes)**

- a. Sgt Thomas Gaul, Pittsburgh Police, Zone 3 Saturation Detail
 - i. Sgt. Gaul takes charge of the saturation detail that patrols East Carson St on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, generally the 11 pm – 4 am shift. Officers from all over the city participate in the saturation detail. Weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports are prepared.
 - ii. He shared quarterly statistics for January through March:

	Total Q1 (38 days)	Average per shift
Officer shifts	530*	14
Physical arrests	53	1.5
Non-traffic arrests/citations	343	9
Traffic citations (Cycle officers 10 pm – 2 am)	1235	33

*Comprised of 400 Detail +130 Cycle & Supervisor shifts; does not include St Patrick's Day

- iii. It was noted that physical arrests are discouraged because they take officers off the streets. There were also approximately 247 zone-assisted calls, but this is about 70% of the actual calls where assistance is provided. The roughly 400 arrests in the first quarter are about 10% of interactions, and there have been no Office of Municipal Investigations (OMI) complaints (citizen complaints), which was noted as being exemplary.
- iv. He stated that the saturation detail focus is on
 - 1. Bars – infractions and violations that disturb the neighborhood, including noise violations, overserving, fights, etc., which are being forwarded to the bar task force detective that can result in Liquor Control Enforcement (LCE) citations for non-compliance
 - 2. Side street patrols – the majority of issues are related to public urination (zero tolerance approach, with a focus on known frequented areas, including Carey Way)
- b. Heath Johnson, Crime Analyst
 - i. Heath presented first quarter crime statistics for both South Side Flats and Slopes. There were 135 part 1 offenses for the flats. They included 1 rape, 6 robberies, 15 assaults, 5 burglaries, 104 thefts, 3 vehicle thefts and 1 arson. On the slopes, there were 30 part 1 offenses. He shared heat maps for crime on SS and citations for disorderly conduct, public drunkenness and DUI. Most are concentrated in areas where the police have situated their police park and walks. An additional park and walk is in the Hollow

where there have been issues with a property with squatters and drug activity. There were 5 calls for shots fired on the flats and 4 on the slopes.

- ii. Commander Dixon and Heath stated that most thefts are cell phones that are left on bars and theft from vehicle.

V. Pittsburgh Parking Authority, Q & A (5 minutes)

- a. John Fournier, Director of Meter Enforcement and Residential Permit Parking
 - i. The South Side Parking Enhancement District (PED) initiative is in effect, including a dedicated patrol for Residential Permit Parking (RPP) enforcement and dedicated meter enforcement on Friday and Saturday nights.
 - ii. For March:

	Tickets	Licenses Checked
RPP Violations*	503	19,007
CC	146	9,717
DD	31	3,775
II	198	2,530
KK**	128	2,985
Non-RPP Meter Violations	2,350	

*Resulting in a 2.6% illegal parking rate

**Resources were increased in this zone

- iii. In the first 4 weeks, warning tickets were written for the PED. Of the PED-related meter violations, there were 79 live tickets (blocking driveway, fire hydrant, handicap parking, etc.), 143 warning tickets in the public safety pullover lane (12th St – 17th St), and 325 meter warnings. Live tickets will begin after another weekend of warnings. Revenue is expected to pick up once live tickets are issued. Meter collection amounted to \$15,000 with a 34% meter utilization rate (the goal is closer to 50%).
- iv. Ridership on the Nite Rider Shuttle was light - about 20 people per weekend. Ride sharing was up 20% on the South Side.
- v. To a question about the difficulty for employees to park in the 2nd Avenue lot on Friday evening because the shuttle doesn't start until 6 PM, John indicated that there have been no employees parking at the lot on Saturday evenings. He stated that he would not be interested in opening up a conversation about Friday parking until he saw employees using the lot on Saturdays.

VI. News from Duquesne University Q& A (5 minutes)

- a. Tim Lewis, Director of Commuter Affairs
 - i. Following from the previous discussion on the Nite Rider Shuttle, Tim noted that Duquesne also has two free shuttles for students, one on the weekends and one during the week.
 - ii. A large number of students participated in spring clean-up efforts in the neighborhood.
 - iii. A communication was issued for St Patrick's Day celebrations, which coincided with spring break, and no issues were raised during the designated holiday timeframe. The following weekend, however, there was a complaint about a S 12th St residence, and an officer was able to provide names of the occupants. The students were brought in, and student conduct charges were filed and sanctioned.
 - iv. Information was distributed to students about trash regulations, and reminders are also being pushed via app.

- v. A meeting was held yesterday with 150 students in attendance. Topics included reminders about trash removal, being responsible neighbors, staying off rooftops, bulk trash removal considerations when moving out, and encouraging the donation of items no longer needed.
- vi. Easter break extends until Tuesday, 4/18.
- vii. Environmental Services communicated that a foreman had a problem with some Duquesne students at 111 & 113 S 12th St. Tim will follow up and determine if the addresses are registered.

VII. News from the Mayor's Office, Q & A (5 minutes)

- a. Ernest Rajakone, Community Affairs Liaison
 - i. A resident asked about adding the numbered streets to the street cleaning schedule on South Side. Barbara shared that with street cleaning only occurring once a month (if the sweeper actually arrives on SS and sweeps), it seems like a waste of money to even have street cleaning. She shared that residents were told that they needed to sign a petition to get their streets added. Another resident in attendance said that her street didn't want their street involved because there is no place to park. John Fournier shared that the city leases 4 street sweepers. Barbara also shared that she understood that the city was looking at revising street sweeping throughout the city and would share the resident's concern. Ernest stated that he would also share this information with the mayor's office.
 - ii. Ernest communicated that assistance was provided to the Parking Authority as an effort to educate and get the information out on the PED implementation through social media, flyers, etc.

VIII. News from City Council, Q & A (5 minutes)

- a. Bruce Kraus, City Council President
 - i. City Council is aware of the problematic alcohol license establishments and has scheduled meetings with the property owners. One owner has already had two meetings with the District Attorney's office. The DA will pursue shuttering such businesses if necessary, although that is not the objective.
 - ii. Bruce emphasized that PED revenue is coming back to the South Side directly. Fund access is restricted against other uses by legislation.
 - iii. A large public meeting was held about the reconstruction of E Carson St. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PENNDOT) will be making major public safety improvements including new road service, signage traffic lights, crosswalks, etc. from the Smithfield St Bridge to the intersection of Sarah and E Carson St. Construction is expected to begin in mid to late 2018.

IX. News from State Offices, Q & A (5 minutes)

- a. Robert Burns, Legislative Assistant, State Representative Jake Wheatley. Robert shared that Representative Wheatley introduced legislation that would ban suspensions of students from kindergarten through 5th grade for non-violent offenses. He also said that Representative was working on the state budget.

X. Community Announcements & Events

- a. Friends of South Side Park Meeting – April 19th from 6 PM – 8 PM at Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy
- b. SSCC Plant Sale – Orders needed to be placed by April 21st
- c. South Side Church Crawl – April 30th from 1 PM – 5 PM
- d. Love Your Block Grant @ Ormsby Park – May 6th
- e. South Side Planning Forum Meeting – May 9th

XI. Meeting adjournment

Next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 10th at noon at Brashear Association.