

## South Watch: The South Side Flats and Slopes Code Enforcement Project Meeting Minutes

September 13, 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.)

### Introductions

Barbara Rudiak shared the mission of South Watch. She also pointed out that the recorder is on in the center of the room to catch meeting minutes. Lastly she reminded the group about the meeting norms. Attendees introduced themselves.

### Attendees:

Barbara Rudiak	South Watch, SS Community Council
Neil Manganaro	Chief of Staff, City Council President
Roberta Jameson	Dept of Environmental Services
Bill Klimovich	Dept of Environmental Services
Shawn Wigle	Dept. of Public Works
Liz Gray	Resident, Oakwatch
Kyle Miller	Economic Development South
Adrian Smith	SS Community Council
Candice Gonzalez	SS Chamber

Betty Kripp	South Watch
Ernest Rajakone	Mayor's Office
Kitty Vagley	Resident
Jeff Neubauer	Resident
Teri Fazio	Sen. Jay Costa's office
Anna Marie Kyjanka	South Watch
Michelle Schoenhardt	Public Safety Director's office
Shatara Murphy	Public Safety Director's office
Grant Gittlen	Mayor's office
Liz Style	South Watch
Tim Lewis	Duquesne University
Bruce Kraus	Pgh City Council President
Dan Shek	Dept. of Public Safety

Officer Nathan Auvril	Pgh Police, Zone 3
Commander Karen Dixon	Pgh Police, Zone 3
Wendell Hissrich	Public Safety Director
Caitlyn Penprak	

**Presentation: Office of Public safety**

Barbara Rudiak

Barbara introduced the topic and stated that this was a follow up discussion to the Rowdy Buck shooting.

Director Wendell Hissrich

Director Hissrich stated that the Rowdy Buck shooting was not random but targeted and appropriate action was taken against the bar by zone 3 and the district attorney. There was a lengthy meeting with bar owners, the LCE, police and other entities about 6 weeks ago. The dialogue included lots of topics from better screening of bar patrons to clogged sewers and parking issues.

There is a camera upgrade in place. The old cameras were not sufficient and one-third did not work. With the new vendor, 98% -100% are running throughout the city and they hope to increase this number by 30% to 75 cameras.

Officer Auvril has trained officers all over the city in the use of footage and how to do an inventory of both private and city cameras for automatic contact when crime occurs.

Director Hissrich said there are not enough good words to describe the police response after an incident. He commended Commander Dixon for her work here. The saturation has made a difference and the statistics bear that out.

Dan Shek stated that Carson St. is well covered with 15 cameras from the 10<sup>th</sup> bridge to the Hot Metal bridge.

Director Hissrich said the cameras are very good, not cheap, high resolution with good zoom and low light capabilities. WH has a monitor in his office.

In response to a question about specifying camera location...or not..WH answered that it is well known that there are 200 cameras in the city but specific locations shouldn't be revealed. However he noted that there are never enough and they can't be put on private property. Cameras can be moved, within 24 hours, in case of a special event. Bruce Kraus stated that the current camera policy was done in 2008 and he and Dir. Hissrich are looking at revisions.

Officer Auvril is in the process of locating private cameras now and may reach out later to ask the public where cameras are located. This is a national trend started in 2011.

Liz Gray mentioned that when she drives down Carson St. every Friday night around 2 am., she notices how dark it is. From 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>, it's ok but very dark from 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>.

B. Kraus responded that there is an RFP out for updating the led lighting. It used to be worse but still needs more lighting. There is a problem with drunks walking into vehicles. Adrian Smith said that some bar owners will talk to building owners about better lighting. The last call is an issue as many drunk kids are walking to and into cars. Barbara R. shared that some residents asked for more residential lighting for safety reasons at a capital budget meeting. Overgrown trees also contribute to lack of light. Hissrich told the group to email him about any concerns related to public safety and he will respond. A 311 call is also good. He talks with Bill Crean from Public Works every day.

Bruce Kraus reminded all that the 2<sup>nd</sup> avenue parking lot is an excellent option for both visitors and employees in the South Side. More business owners are starting to take advantage of it.

Commander Dixon added that there is an increased number of plain clothed cops and they have had success in breaking up after hours parties.

Liz Gray asked about tower lighting, similar to what is done in South Beach and Dir. Hissrich responded that the sidewalks are too small to accommodate that. Liz added that the "no parking" seems to be working well.

Bruce made the observation that most of the conversation is on the "back end" after incidents have occurred. But he reminded us that we also need to focus on the "front end" in that licensed bar owners have standards to adhere to. A comment from the group informed us that a brochure is being prepared to educate bar owners about their responsibilities. Barbara added that this lines up with south watch...education, accountability and remediation.

Grant Gittlen stated that Rep. Gordon Harris is introducing house bill 1547 that will be a positive move for more enforcement and will make a case to focus on certain areas where issues have occurred. Right now it is stalled because of the state budget situation but the reps are not blind to the situation.

Bruce added that he has talked to the DA about more cameras and an announcement will be made at a press conference. The DA will be bringing 15 additional cameras to supplement city cameras.

### **South Side Property Progress Report**

Barbara Rudiak

Barbara reported that Julie Reiland from PLI told her that all of Davin's Mary St. properties are up for Treasurer's sale. Barbara said that community members were asked if they wanted sheriff's sale or treasurer's sale and the choice for the latter was made because that gives more control over who buys them. The hope is that community members could promote to the right people.

Bridget Vyas

Bridget presented the monthly update of the 311 trash reports and noted that we will attempt to focus on "hot spot" areas.

Betty K. added that the "hot spots" idea was something that Bill K. had suggested a few years ago.

Roberta Jameson

Roberta reported the following:

136 Pius – no violations

911/913 Arlington – citation issued to owner and now cleaned

154/1541/2 – warning issued

185 Pius – verbally warned and it was cleaned up later

1819 Larkins – warning

1821 Larkins – property empty...lock box

1823 Larkins – warnings

1821 Edwards – warnings

Bill Klimovich

Bill asked that members of our group meet with him to walk through some problem (hot spot) areas soon. Barbara said we would and added that she thinks some progress is being made

The city will be issuing new recycle cans in a few months in partnership with PRC. They will need a big enough space for a tractor trailer to park and for cars to park to allow for distribution. Barbara said that this is an opportunity to make it an event. Bridget asked about the size and the response is there is only one size. Liz asked about rental units but that is not yet known.

Shawn Wigle

Shawn announced that curbside waste pickup will be held on November 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **South Side Crime Report**

Commander Karen Dixon

Saturation Patrol Statistics for August

Officers worked on detail	168
Cycle officers on detail	8
Supervisors on detail	26
Physical arrests	118
non-traffic citations	58
Traffic citations	148
Vehicles towed	52
Zone assists	77

Commander Dixon commended Duquesne University for coming out hard this semester. They have taken care of some issues even before the police could get there.

Commander Dixon said that this summer seemed calmer and asked if attendees agreed. She also asked what else she can do for the community. Barbara R. responded that the summer did seem calmer. Commander Dixon said that she can't get rid of the train people but access to camping is limited. Adrian Smith said that she noticed a much bigger police presence especially when she leaves her job at Fat Heads. Candice Gonzalez described the Carson St. problems: storefronts and the brick wall are still hangouts for transients, plants removed from Welcome Center and when employees at Jimmy D's asked them to move they were mad and made it known. Dixon said that some property owners have given permission to hang out. The police may reach out and ask them not to do that. Officer Auvril announced that there would be a class on procedural justice, Saturday, the 16<sup>th</sup> from 2pm -6pm. It is meant to bridge the gap between citizens and police.

**Pittsburgh Parking Authority**

John Fournier

John shared the enforcement statistics for August

Plates read	RPP tix	Non RPP tix
CC 5481	93	27
DD 3283	16	10
II 4280	58	2
KK 4237	184	15

John added:

Issuing so many tix in KK does slow things down.

Many permits processed and also denied

Most rental units do not exceed the 3 person limit

Barbara R. asked about the best way to share RPP results with the neighborhood so residents know that it is effective. John replied that the number of plate reads is important info for the community and if other data is needed, John can help. John also shared that Pgh has a good model and has been contacted by several other cities including NYC because they are interested in implementing.

### **News from Duquesne University**

Tim Lewis

Tim stated that he has received 5 calls from the SS and is dealing with those (which is just about normal) Word is traveling fast about conduct expectations. Betty Kripp thanked Tim for acting so quickly to a problem on Pius St.

Tim also said that DU is working on the SS community event.

Barbara R. reported from residents that some students are defensive and state that their parents will take care of the situations. Barbara thinks the students may not understand that it doesn't work that way at the college level.

Liz S. added that her neighborhood seems quiet so far.

### **News from the Mayor's Office**

Ernest Rajakone

Ernest reported that Bill Crean from DPW attended the Planning forum meeting this month and presented information about the smart litter can roll out. The sensor can saves time and money and enables a better design of pick up routes. The cans are no more expensive than cans we have now. Jeff asked if the program will help with a better distribution of cans on Carson and the response was yes...in the future.

There is an issue with pizza boxes however because if a box is placed on top the can. It was also stated that there are weekend crews to empty trash cans and if you notice cans are overflowing, make it known.

Anna Marie Kijanka asked if we had cost savings info and Ernest said he would find out.

Candice asked about broken cans and Ernest replied that they would be listed in the inventory and taken care of.

## **News from State Offices**

Teri Fazio

Teri said that everyone is waiting for the budget to pass. She also said that the Port Authority budget issue #1547 is one to watch. Important to encourage reps from rural areas to support in order to avoid cutting services. The most impacted areas are Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Barbara R. asked that Teri share names of those reps who would be responsive. Barbara also stated that she appreciates Teri's attendance and attention to South Watch.

Teri announced that there will be a Penn Dot meeting on pedestrian safety at a later date.