

**CITY OF NORWALK
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 20, 2018**

ATTENDANCE: Eloisa Melendez, Chair; Tom Livingston; Doug Hempstead;
Michael Corsello (7:30); Chris Yerinides; Beth Siegelbaum; Doug
Stern

STAFF: Attorney Brian Candela, Corporation Counsel

1. ROLL CALL

Ms. Melendez called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

2. PUBLIC HEARING (possible action on):

There was no public hearing this evening.

3. PUBLIC HEARING DISCUSSION

There was no public hearing discussion this evening.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Diane Lauricella

Ms. Lauricella stated that she commended the committee on taking up the ordinance related to carry out bags and that she looks forward to making suggestions on other environmental factors in the future. She noted that for people who say they can't afford to pay for bags, that grocery stores will surely be willing to instate a recycling program. She said that encouragement and education will be important. In addressing enforcement, she believed that the waste management manager should be the point person, but in the future that it should fall under the purview of the Conservation Commission. She reiterated that the key to success would be rigorous education program via traditional and social media and said that it would be important to make the ordinance "user friendly" for the public.

Betty Ball— Norwalk Skip the Plastic.

Ms. Ball presented an additional petition with 1300 signatures. She noted that she was unsure what to expect when she went out to collect signatures, but when she told people that 30 million bags a year are not recyclable and 100,000 end up in the sound each year, people are eager to sign. She also noted that Skip the Plastic Norwalk is working with local foodbanks to replace plastic bags with recyclable.

Ms. Melendez closed the public comments at 7:15

5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

OCTOBER 16, 2018

Mr. Candela shared an email with a request that it be added to the minutes and part of the public record.

** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Use of Carryout Bags by Retail Establishment (Plastic Bags)

Mr. Livingston noted the amendments to the ordinance language. In Section 4, adding a (c) about posting signs, in English and Spanish at or near the point of purchase. And added 6D that there would be no specific penalty noted for not posting, noting that the point of this ordinance is to educate and change patterns of behavior, not to penalize. He based both amendments on the New York City Ordinance.

Mr. Corsello arrived at 7:30.

Mr. Stern asked if behaviors will change if there are no consequences. Mr. Livingston said that the penalties are in place, but that his amendment took out the specific language in that section.

Mr. Yerinedes said that it seemed clear. There is still a penalty, but it isn't specified. clear.

Mr. Hempstead shared the ordinance from Suffolk County, New York where they had phased in the ordinance starting in January 2018. For the first six months there were no fines for noncompliance. That ordinance also calls for yearly study toward a goal of a 75% reduction in plastic in the Sound. He also noted that this slower introduction helped people of disparate income levels, it gave people time to change their habits toward solving a problem that everyone agrees on.

Mr. Stern asked how Suffolk County is executing on their study. Mr. Hempstead said he didn't get specifics, but assumed they asked retailers.

Mr. Candela addressed the issue of which department will enforce. Most other cities rely on Conservation Commissions, but Norwalk's is smaller. He spoke to police who suggested Weights and Measures, as did Bill Ireland.

Mr. Hempstead noted that the Health department is already in many of these establishments, so they could add it onto their checklist.

Mr. Livingston said he felt that the step of yearly reports was unnecessary, noting that taking a bag or two out of the Sound is a win.

Mr. Yerenides said he agreed, wouldn't want to miss the target by a bag or two and have the ordinance viewed as ineffective.

Mr. Hempstead said that it is impossible to know if the ordinance is working without yearly reporting. He noted that people are concentrating on grocery stores, but not on stores like the two Walmarts in the City. He said he didn't know how to set a goal, but that it was a different and interesting approach.

Mr. Stern said that he disagreed on phasing in because the goal is to protect the environment and make lives better.

Mr. Yerenides also said that it doesn't need a long phase in, no longer than six months, noting that there will be pushback no matter what.

Mr. Hempstead clarified that Suffolk County didn't phase in, they charged immediately, they had a six-month lag in penalties.

Mr. Livingston said that Stamford law will be in effect first, and that City Officials can use that time to start the education process and said that he'd like to move to a public

hearing. He noted that the language in paragraph 6A from "Department of Public Works" to "Department of Health".

****MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO AMEND THE ORDINANCE, CHANGING PARAGRAPH 6A FROM DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS TO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH; AND PARAGRAPH 6B TO REMOVE BRACKETS.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

****MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

b. Innovation District (Tabled until December 18, 2018)

7. NEW BUSINESS

Revisions to Chapter 74 - Recreation and Parks, Article 1

Chairman Melendez noted that the majority of changes were to clean up outdated language.

Mr. Ken Hughes from Recreations and Parks Department said that Section 74-1 now calls for "free admission for residents". He noted that it used to say, "property owners", but people who rent office space and pay minimal taxes were gaining access to parks and transfer statements. He noted that they had seen an increase in people doing this.

Ms. Siegelbaum noted that in paragraph 74-2, the heading says, "Season Sticker", but in the body it says "ticket", and that should be changed for continuity.

Ms. Siegelbaum also noted that vans are included in 74-4 A and B. Mr. Hughes said he would get clarification.

Ms. Siegelbaum noted that in 74-8B, change dogs and animal, that should be plural. Mr. Hughes explained that it was singular on purpose, to avoid people bringing multiple dogs.

****MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO EXTEND THE RECREATION AND PARKS REVISIONS TO PUBLIC HEARING AT THE NEXT MEETING.**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

8. DISCUSSION ITEM

There was no discussion this evening.

9. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 8:45PM

Respectfully submitted,

L. Grassilli
Telesco Secretarial Services