

**CITY OF NORWALK
COMMON COUNCIL ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 19, 2024
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Lisa Shanahan; Chair, Josh Goldstein, Heather Dunn, Johan Lopez, Anne Wennerstrand, Nora Niedzielski-Eichner, Jalin T. Sead

STAFF: Brian Candela

OTHER: Nicole Eaddy

CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Shanahan called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Ms. Shanahan called the roll as reflected above.

PUBLIC HEARING (possible action on):

- Discuss and vote on Chapter 58A, Blight Prevention, Sections 58A-1 and 58A-4.

Diane Cece
37 Olmstead Place

Ms. Cece complained about this committee's lack of an overview of items presented for public hearings. She pointed out the effort required to find the necessary information. She felt an overview would serve the public better. Mr. Candela provided the requested overview emphasizing changes made by the legislature. He noted the fine amounts and defined various structures and properties. Ms. Cece enquired whether the fines discussed based on the size and type of property were exactly from the statute. She also wanted to know if blight as part of a structure or just part of a parcel has been addressed. She then asked if fines before the changes would be retroactive. She expressed concern that the city may not

be able to take full advantage of imposing fines.

Mr. Candela explained the nature of retroactive fines. He describes the general statutes they have to follow for the fining process. He noted fines are taken directly from the statute. He stated there was nothing in the legislative history that discussed the property or just the building. He said that would need to be litigated going forward.

Kristin Olsen
3 Herin Court

Ms. Olsen had questions about how the fines are applied. She was confused as to why blight was tied only to building size and not the entire property. She also asked what happens when fines aren't paid. She then brought up the issue of properties being used as storage yards.

Mr. Candela noted many of the issues in question were defined by the state statute and beyond their control. He stated they were fining the maximum as defined by the state statute.

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO TAKE CHAPTER 58A ON TO THE
COMMON COUNCIL.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner Left the Meeting at 7:20 p.m.

- Discuss and vote on Chapter 90, Department of Operations and Public Works, Sections 90-1 through 90- 12.

Diane Lauricella
21 Fox Lane

Ms. Lauricella was disappointed that none of her suggestions were not used to change the language. She explained her issues and requested a change based on her previous suggestions. She then discussed record-keeping and the need for oversight and accountability. She again brought up her suggestions on the topic and requested the committee include them.

Diane Cece
37 Olmstead Place

Ms. Cece shared her concerns about the description of the Chief of Operations. She reiterated Ms. Lauricella's feelings about the reduction of qualifications and the skill set for the position. Her other concern involved the duties and responsibilities of the chief. Her final concern was changes in reporting and record-keeping.

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Ms. Shanahan described what they were doing in Chapter 90 and why they need to coordinate with certain departments. Ms. Shanahan then explained the process of hiring the chiefs. She stated they were broadening the qualifications. She noted the requirements would be addressed in the job description and not put in the ordinance. She agreed that applicants should have engineering experience. Ms. Shanahan discussed the collaboration with the Complete Streets Ordinance. She then noted that record keeping was now the job of the CFO so the ordinance was being changed to reflect that.

Mr. Candela noted that the DPW would continue sending out notices for public hearings in compliance with the charter.

Someone noted they were voting no because they felt that the qualifications for Chief of Operations should not be removed from the ordinance.

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO TAKE THE CHANGES TO
CHAPTER 90 ON TO THE COMMON COUNCIL.
** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR AND ONE NO
VOTE (?)**

Mr. Goldstein left the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING DISCUSSION:

There was no public hearing discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Diane Lauricella
21 Little Fox Lane.

Ms. Lauricella wished to comment on what she experienced in this public hearing. She stated she would do so in writing.

Diane Cece
37 Olmstead Place

Ms. Cece wanted to know if the changes in Chapter 95 were a clean-up of the language. She

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noted it was long overdue and would make it easier for the public.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

- October 29, 2024 - special meeting of the ordinance committee

**** MS. WENNERSTRAND MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS FILED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR AND ONE ABSTENTION (MR. SEAD).**

OLD BUSINESS:

- Discuss and vote on Chapter 95, Streets and Sidewalks, Sections 95-0 through 95-39.

Ms. Shanahan explained the reasoning behind reviewing Chapter 95. She discussed the changes in the language designed to bring it in line with the current standards for ordinance writing. She noted the need for 95 to coordinate with the Complete Streets Ordinance. Ms. Shanahan went through the ordinance citing the changes, and definitions. She also explain what departments would be involved and clarified titles. She described the collaboration between the various departments, what types of projects would be done, and the responsibilities of the various coordinators and chiefs.

Ms. Dunn had some question s about confusing language and titles being used multiple titles throughout the ordinance. Mr. Candela explained that the titles of chief and director in question were for the same position. He noted titles and department names changed after the reorganization and that the documents would have to be brought into line with those changes. He made it clear that the positions aren't changing only how they will be referred to. Mr. Candela proposed several options for cleaning up the language but noted they could move it to public hearing without making changes. He stated the changes wouldn't change the context. Mr. Candela offered to go through the ordinance and clean it up. Ms. Shanahan suggested keeping the word director due to the number of times it shows up.

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO TAKE CHAPTER 95 TO A PUBLIC HEARING.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOUR. MR. SEAD DID NOT**

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VOTE.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business to discuss.

DISCUSSION ITEM:

There were no discussion items.

ADJOURNMENT:

**** MS. DUNN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
** THE MOTION PASSED WITH 4 AND FAVOUR. MR.SEAD DID NOT
VOTE.**

The meeting ended at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services