

CITY OF NORWALK
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 15, 2022

ATTENDANCE: Lisa Shanahan, Chair; Tom Livingston; Nora Niedzielski-Eichner; Tom Keegan; Dominique Johnson; Joshua Goldstein

STAFF: Atty. Brian Candela

OTHER: Richard Harris; Anthony R. Carr; Chris Torre; Drew Toher; Garrett Bolella; Kyle Benjamin; Sara Evans; Priscilla Feral; Louise Washer; Ken Hughes

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Shanahan called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M. There was a quorum present.

PUBLIC HEARING

(POSSIBLE ACTION ON): DISCUSS AND VOTE ON CHAPTER 98, SECTION 43 (CITY CODE SECTION 98-43)
– BLOCKING OF INTERSECTIONS.

The documents for Chapter 98, Section 43 were provided for those present. Mr. Keegan expressed concern that, when this item was put forward and in place, that the Police Department would be on-board with it. He asked if they knew how they would approach this item. He has spoken to the Traffic Authority previously about this item.

**** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO BRING THIS ITEM TO THE COMMON COUNCIL.**

Mr. Goldstein asked if the infraction fine was limited by state law and if there was any flexibility in it.

Mr. Bolella said that it was specified through the ordinance, and he believed the flexibility was there.

Mr. Livingston asked about the timing of the item.

Mr. Bolella said that they were hoping to do this as soon as the advanced utilities project for the Walk Bridge was out of the area of Olmsted. He reviewed the work that needed to be done.

Ms. Johnson expressed hope about getting the word out about the project.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC HEARING DISCUSSION

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Priscilla Feral came forward for comment. She wished to urge the Committee to ban toxic pesticides on public properties in favor of organic land-care practices. She recounted her efforts to combat the pesticides and the impact they have on the local fauna.

Ms. Louise Washer came forward for comment. She wished to advocate for a pesticide ban in Norwalk. She further discussed her issues with pesticides and pointed out that other towns in Connecticut had changed their pesticide practices.

Atty. Brian Candela said that he had received a statement from Ms. Mary Wilson about this item. She is writing on the behalf of her organization to applaud the attempt to reduce the amount of pesticides. She noted that there had been a decline in insect populations over the past decades.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

FEBRUARY 15, 2022 – REGULAR MEETING OF THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

Please change all references of ‘Chairman’ to ‘Chair’ in all instances referring to Chair Shanahan.

**** MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15, 2022 AS AMENDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSS THE USE OF PESTICIDES WITH PRESENTATIONS BY THE FOLLOWING

Stamford has passed an ordinance where they ban the use of toxic chemicals on their laws. Chair Shanahan reviewed this for the Committee. She welcomed the experts who were coming to speak on this item.

DREW TOHER, COMMUNITY RESOURCE AND POLICY DIRECTOR OF BEYOND PESTICIDES

Mr. Toher came forward to address the committee. He provided a PowerPoint presentation for the Committee. He provided the following points:

- An overview on the nature of pesticides.
- Problems with the chemicals and their effect on populations.
- Use in public spaces in cities.
- Effect on the local wildlife.
- Nationwide and community policies on pesticides.
- Potential positive effects of banning the pesticides.

SARAH EVANS, PHD MPH – CHILDREN’S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CENTER – DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH – ICAHN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT MOUNT SINAI

Ms. Sarah Evan's came forward to discuss this item. She provided a PowerPoint presentation. She provided the following points:

- Issues with child development, neurological disorders, and chronic diseases.
- Efforts to pass legislation in New York City to eliminate the use of toxic chemicals.
- Accessibility of toxic chemicals.
- Reproductive problems with the chemicals.

DICK HARRIS – MARINE SCIENTIST FOR WATER QUALITY AT COPPS ISLAND OYSTERS

Mr. Harris came forward to discuss this item. He provided a PowerPoint presentation. He provided the following points:

- Recounted the historical issues with DDT and local wildlife.
- Discussions with D.E.E.P. regarding the local wildlife and their history.
- Problems with storm runoff in Norwalk.
- There is currently a loophole that allows toxic pesticides to be used on some produce.

MEMBER(S) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Chris Torre came forward to discuss this item. He reported that they no longer used pesticides in Public Works and, when they did, it was for invasives.

Mr. Ken Hughes came forward to discuss this item. He reported that it's been three years since they used Roundup on their properties. They have also never mass treated. He reviewed the City's pesticide practices.

Mr. Keegan asked if the golf course uses these chemicals.

Mr. Hughes said he did not know.

Mr. Goldstein asked if the City had decided to stop using pesticides three years prior or if it had been decided internally.

Mr. Hughes said it was an internally made decision. Mr. Anthony Carr went into further detail about this. The question of why people desired pesticides in the first place as well as the effects of their use was brought up and discussed.

Mr. Livingston asked about the drafting and ordinances for synthetic pesticides, the proposed organic solution, and emergency use.

Mr. Tohar reviewed the laws and ordinances for both synthetic and organic pesticides for the Committee. Questions about the following were also asked:

- Control of pests such as ticks and mosquitos.
- Policies of other places in the U.S.
- What constitutes an emergency to use pesticides.

- How other communities had managed their golf courses.

DISCUSSION ITEM

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. JOHNSON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Ian A. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services.