



MINUTES
Committee on Public Safety
Tuesday, May 14, 2024 @ 4:00 p.m.
City Council Conference Room, 10th Floor City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Kost called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm

PRESENT

Council Member Ryan Kost, Chair
Council Member Trini Pehlivanoglu, Vice Chair
Council Member Peter Spadafore, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA
Rawley VanFossen, EDP
Nick Montry, EDP
Joe Vitale, Demo Board
Dave Muylle, Demo Board
Walter Allen, Code Compliance
Andy Kilpatrick, Public Service
Nancy Mahlow
Howard Casey
Tom Hickson
Bob Sands
Joe Neller, SIMTOB
Norma Bauer

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHILIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM APRIL 23, 2024 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment on the time.

PRESENTATION

Demolition Board Processes and Practices

Council Member Kost noted that they were invited to speak to the overview of the Demo Board from start to process.

Mr. Muylle and Mr. Vitale explained that they are a piece of the process and there are a lot of steps before it gets to the Board. There is a period of time where the Code officer has been through the house, compiled a list of corrections, and then the Board reviews before the meeting. The Board also

visits the site and occasionally speaks to the neighbors. The case is then presented to the Board by the staff with violations and cost determinations. The Board feel that during their public hearing is a great time for the owners to speak. The policy is to give the owners the time to bring them up to speed. Based on that conversation, if they propose a plan, it will then get tabled. They look at the process as an opportunity to get the house safe, and if the owner cannot provide a timeline or plan, then they proceed down the make safe process. Non fire are 60 days make safe and non-fire is 30 days. As long as the owner is making progress they work with them to see that through. They believe that a majority get taken off because of the rehab, and it is a small percentage that go through for make safe or demolish. If there is a financial hardship situation they can fall to the County for unpaid taxes.

Council Member Pehlivanoglu noted they work with the owner if they are making incremental progress, and asked how long they work with the owners; is there an average or depends on the situation. Mr. Muylle explained that to understand the process would be to attend the meetings, and encouraged the Committee to attend. Mr. Muylle believes their process is to review the packet of all the homes that are being considered, and they are not the final arbitrary of that. Mr. Muylle then referred to his case tools including a map, and noted they split the cases between the members when they go to look at the properties. At the hearing of the Demo Board, they listen to the case and how they plan to facilitate the repairs of the building. The look to see if the owners have the capacity, provide them resources, etc. Regarding tabling of the projects, they have tabled them over and over again, but feels once the house is gone the City loses another house.

Mr. Vitale stated when they look at sites, they look at the reason it is owned; investment, family, etc. With only one building official in the City currently, they try to be lenient, and if they come back and show progress their intention is to always work. They have not policies from Council on how to do this.

Mr. Van Fossen it is unique, and the policy is to table it or vote out to make safe or demolish. Every property is unique, and it helps who is picked as their Demo Board that they have the experience in what they are looking at.

Mr. Vitale added that for the most part they are not in the building, they rely on the photos from the Code officer.

Council Member Kost acknowledged the Board and referred to a list of 17 properties that are tabled. For example, is 1612 Martin, and the time line, and asked why it is still standing. Mr. Muylle stated in April 2024 was the first time they heard it, and the family was present and was told at the time the house was hit by the tree and they were waiting for assistance on the removal. Mr. Montry stated there is a portion of a tree on the house for safety. Council Member Kost stated the site is unsafe, and Mr. Muylle stated that it was tabled for 30 days because owners want to resolve, but they do not have the resources to remove the tree, and they feel untreated, so the Board felt 30 more days is not a lot. If it is not changed it will be moved on. Mr. Vitale stated they try to give people their dignity to address the property, they table for 30 days, and if they can't they move forward. Council Member Kost spoke on the 1612 Martin address and that the neighborhood is frustrated with what they have to continue to look at it. Mr. Muylle stated the Demo Board meetings are public, and they do not get any public to attend. Mr. Van Fossen stated when this fell in August, the Building Official did not deem as danger, so it was red tagged by Code Enforcement, so it was red tagged. Also the family was working through probate court and was why it took so long. As a Board, the Demo board does not vote, they are hearing officers. Each officer assigned to the case has the decision, so the three talk but who ever has been assigned the case makes the decision. Mr. Vitale state if the building official deemed it imminent danger it would not have come to the demo board.

The Committee acknowledged the Demo Board members who attended.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

RESOLUTION – Joint Appointment; Becky Pena; Affirm Communications Media Member to the Ingham County/City of Lansing Community Corrections Advisory Board; Term to expire September 17, 2025
MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE AFFIRMATION OF BECKY PENA TO THE JOINT MEMBERSHIP ON THE COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS ADVISORY BOARD. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

RESOLUTION- Orders to Make Safe or Demolish 3301 Turner Street
MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO REMOVE THE TOPIC FROM THE TABLE.
MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

Mr. Van Fossen stated EDP extended an invite, and asked for the Committee to table for another 30 days. The owner pulled permit in early April, the NEAT team is monitoring.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO TABLE FOR 30 DAYS. MOTION CARRIED 2-1.

RESOLUTION –Make Safe or Demolish; 1519 Linval Street
MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO REMOVE THE TOPIC FROM THE TABLE.
MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

Council Member Kost noted he did visit site, and outside is in good condition and the inside is not good. Mr. Van Fossen stated rough electrical was done April 30th, and the NEAT Team noted the outside. They asked for the Committee to continue to table.

Council Member Kost asked OCA if there is another option. Ms. Hagen-Lawrence stated that Committee could vote the resolution out of Committee and then at the Council meeting during their report to Council on the item they can make a formal recommendation that the Order to Make Safe or Demolish be rejected.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE MAKE SAFE OR DEMOLISH IN 30 DAYS FOR 1519 LINVAL WITH THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION AT COUNCIL FOR REJECTION. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

RESOLUTION- Orders to Make Safe or Demolish 3301 Turner Street
MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO RECONSIDER THE ACTION TAKEN. MOTION TO RECONSIDER APPROVED 3-0.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE MAKE SAFE OR DEMOLISH IN 30 DAYS FOR 3301 TURNER WITH THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION AT COUNCIL FOR REJECTION. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

It was confirmed that this will now close the “loop” at the current demolition board process.

RESOLUTION – Make Safe or Demolish; 1115 Regent
Mr. Van Fossen stated a building permit was issued on May 7th, and other permits were pulled in February and April. He spoke in support of the new owner and stated the Department recommended tabling.

Mr. Casey asked how the property was deemed unsafe because it is vacant, and he was not able to find any rules that note it unsafe, and to his knowledge nothing on property is a danger to the neighborhood. He acknowledged it has been a long term but was not fire damaged and they are making the repairs with the intent to reside in it. He then spoke briefly on the garage condition.

Council Member Kost asked EDP why it was red tagged and Mr. Van Fossen was not able to provide that answer. He stated he would follow up with Mr. Casey on the next steps and provide direction.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE MAKE SAFE OR DEMOLISH IN 60 DAYS FOR 1115 REGENT WITH THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION AT COUNCIL FOR REJECTION. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

Mr. Van Fossen stated the \$2,000 fine that Mr. Casey paid that he was not aware of was because the demo process started before he purchased and it was for that process. He stated the fine could be appeal, and Ms. Hagen-Lawrence corrected that statement by clarifying it cannot be appealed at the Council or claims review.

DISCUSSION- Draft Parking Ordinance Amendment - OCA

Ms. Hagen-Lawrence spoke briefly on the charge given to OCA based on concerns and inquiries into odd/even street parking. She added that there are currently a number of TCO's that regulate parking on one side only for safety reasons and that cannot be overwritten. Ms. Hagen-Lawrence acknowledged the odd/even option is legal, it is not the recommendation between OCA and the Public Service Department. Ms. Hagen-Lawrence then spoke on the options a group of departments (OCA, Public Service, EDP and Parking).

- Maintain current frame work for regulating parking safety issues via TCO
- Permit system established by ordinance, allowing those that need to park ability to do so. Enforcement would not have to be multiple visits; can write ticket at first visit, and can be implemented with other restriction options-duration, locations. The negative to this is that there is a fee associated to cover the cost for issuing the permits and will not be a revenue generator. This will also require signage.
- Daytime prohibition which is a positive option that would restrict during a set time for services. Could be limited to 8-4 weekdays and could also speak to long term. The negative could create issues with businesses who park on the street (landscaping where there is more than one client in the block, etc.) also could require revisions to the right of way permits for construction companies.
- Extended limit - no parking for more than 48 hours. Unlike what is on the books already for abandoned vehicles, this would be a civil infraction and if parked for more than 48 hours they would get a ticket. This would require multiple visits for enforcement and would address concern on long term parking on streets. This option would also require a revision to the right of way permits.
- Duration time limit enforcement and would require multiple visits and signage, and revise right of way permits. If Council considered this, Council would need to provide OCA direction on the duration timeline. This could be a TCO-resolution.

Council Member Kost acknowledged that there is currently not a lot of pressure from neighborhoods that want complete prohibition. There are tough subject and options are hard to follow. Keep on the drawing board and this might be too big, and solutions have a lot of negatives, especially with businesses that need on street parking. The consensus of the Committee was to push the continue discussion on the topic out and focue potentially on individual TCO's, commercial vehicles on streets, and abandoned vehicles.

Ms. Mahlow spoke on parking issues in her neighborhood with the abandoned vehicles or people leaving vehicles on the street for an extended period of time.

Ms. Hagen-Lawrence outlined the process for enforcing those violations, and that Code Enforcement is not authorize, by State law they report them to LPD.

Mr. Hickson spoke on what the Public Service Board has done based on what they have heard from neighborhoods, knowing the option could be TCO.

Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed Westchester and East Westchester will be coming to Council soon for a TCO.

OTHER

Economic Development & Planning Department Updates –

Council Member Kost added the topic of Sycamore Apartment Update to the agenda.

Mr. Van Fossen stated there was a large amount of demolition debris dumped at the property and LPD had responded deeming illegal dumping and the City is currently speaking to them. A fencing company was contacted and the pile was fenced off. Currently there is pending litigation with the owners of Sycamore in Judge Flores Court. At this time Mr. VanFossen could not confirm inspections had been called on the rentals so they cannot verify or deny any repairs had been made. To his knowledge, Mr. Van Fossen stated there is water in the apartments, and if something happens to evict they will work with Red Cross, and shelters but hope that it does not get to that point.

Consensus of the Committee to move the following items to the next meeting.

- SIMTOB
- List of Open ACTION Letters
- Progress on Dormant Properties

Mr. Van Fossen informed the Committee that from June 5th – June 7th they will be switching from BS&A to BS&A Cloud and during that time will not have a program to utilize so they are creating an “old-school” working program to continue on status quo.

Ms. Bauer spoke on traffic enforcement being assigned to other officers.

ADJOURN

Adjourned 5:06 p.m.

Submitted by

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on July 9, 2024