

March 25, 2019 Northside / Chatham Heights Neighborhood Meeting

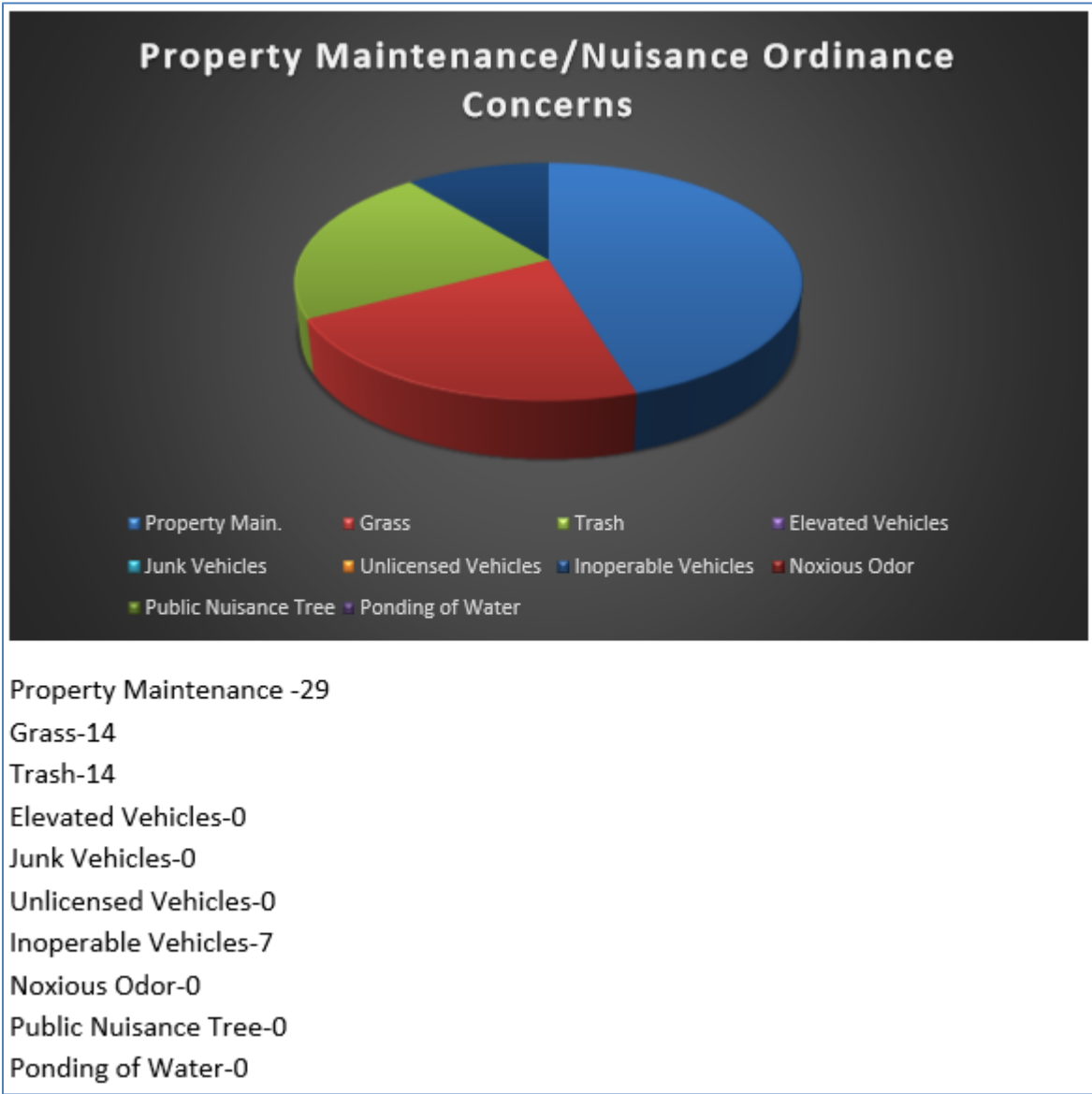
Martinsville City Council toured the Northside / Chatham Heights area on March 25, 2019 beginning at 5:30pm. Those present for the tour were Mayor Lawson, Vice Mayor Martin, Council Member Turner, and Council Member Woods. Council Member Bowles did not attend. Staff participating included City Manager Leon Towarnicki, Assistant City Manager Wayne Knox, Police Chief Eddie Cassady, Officer Coretha Gravely, Inspector Andy Powers, Building Inspector Kris Bridges and WSET reporter Kyle Wilcox.

The tour began at 5:30 from the rear of the Municipal Building. Attendees traveled to Franklin Street, Dillard Street, and Warren Court where they discussed the recent Northside CDBG Project, various homes that were rebuilt or repaired; and storage issue at one residence near the cul-de-sac. From there they travelled to Rahlway Street and looked at a house scheduled for demolition, also noticing vehicles stored or parked at several locations, which needed follow-up. The tour traveled back to Stultz Road, Liberty Street and to Greyson Street. There was discussion about several properties in regard to possible property maintenance issues; attendees observed deteriorated conditions at a property on the left with accumulated trash at the street. The tour continued out Greyson then north on Barrows Mill Road to the Barrows Mill Road Apartments. There they observed conditions at the complex, which was clean, well maintained, and it was noted there is a waiting list for residency. Attendees went back down Barrows Mill to Clearview Drive, out to Progress Drive and to the site of the First Piedmont project. They crossed Clearview to Royal Drive and Palace Court where poor conditions and maintenance needs were noted at the complex. The tour went over to Castle Lane and back to Clearview then out to Mica Street. From there they traveled to the City Landfill for a brief review of the remediation project currently underway, and then back to Clearview and to Chatham Heights Road, Banks Road, Myrtle Road, then back to Chatham Heights Road. The tour traveled to Bethel Lane and circulated around several of the water tank properties. There was discussion about another possible group home in that area. Attendees traveled back to Chatham Road and to East Church where there were comments noted about the condition and appearance of a car lot across from the East Church and Chatham Road intersection. The tour concluded at City Hall at 6:35 pm.

The Northside / Chatham Heights Neighborhood meeting was held at McCabe Church, 107 Clearview Drive in Martinsville beginning at 7:30pm. Those present for the tour attended along with Council Member Jennifer Bowles and Clerk of Council Karen Roberts.

Mayor Lawson called the meeting to order. City Manager Towarnicki summarized the tour.

Andy Powers, Property Inspector summarized inspections, notices and recognized those properties that required action. Powers explained that all complaints are posted to the City website, follow-up documented if the complaint is valid or invalid, and if any action is taken or needed.



Danny Turner questioned the numerous complaints regarding a residence on Greyson Street. Powers said the department is called to that residence on a regular basis but due to it being a rental property, when one concern is addressed and corrected, that tenant will move out and a new tenant will move in. Turner asked Police Chief Cassidy who said officers have been in the area and are familiar with those concerns and that those are being investigated. Cassidy explained that concerns related to drug investigations take time to put together which can be difficult when the property is a rental with a high turnover of tenants. Coretha Gravely has been working with residents at 216 Greyson Street and has provided them trash bags and reminded them of the ordinances on several occasions. When there is suspicious activity or increased traffic, the police department must have proof before an arrest can be made.

Michael Williams 922 Vine Street expressed concern about the apartments on the corner of Barrows Mill Road and Burgess Court, stating that there was a bus with Tennessee plates that sat at the apartments for over 24 hours. He said there was a man in the area who dropped his

March 25, 2019 Northside / Chatham Heights Neighborhood Meeting

pants, stared at residents and gave obscene gestures. Williams expressed concern about a local residence with trash and rats. He feels strongly that there is drug dealing at this location.

Denise Ingram of Glade Street said it is a nice area but there are concerns with traffic and speeding as well as suspected drug activity on Glade Street and it is dangerous for local children.

Jeff Lehrer, 617 Watt Street brought up concerns about vehicles parked on Watt Street, speeding traffic and cut-through traffic, asking about installation of speed bumps.

Jean Price, 935 Blankenship Road shared her concern about vehicles that sit at the complex with flat tires or that are used for storage. She asked how she would go about getting those vehicles removed since it is considered private property. She also shared concerns about landscaping.

Phillip Hairston, 934 Glade Street shared concerns about speeding traffic, loud music, and disrespectful behavior of some motorists.

Janet Mullins, Owens Road asked what would be considered nuisance other than overgrown grass. Andy Powers detailed what would be property maintenance issues and what would need to be reported to the Police Department. Mullins specifically questioned animals.

Lehrer mentioned an unmaintained private pool; Powers said while it would not fall under the nuisance policy since it was in the back yard, it would be an invasion of privacy. Those concerns could be addressed with the City Attorney's office.

Council Member Martin encouraged residents to record activity with time stamped photos or videos.

Stephanie Kuhr, 905 Glade Street has outdoor cameras and is concerned about the foot traffic near her residence, questioning if there would be a concern recording that activity if the cameras are pointed towards a neighbors home. Chief Cassady explained that as long as the cameras are on her property, there is no concern. Kuhr asked about the noise ordinance. Powers confirmed that the noise ordinance is in affect from 10pm-7am and includes dogs, loud music, etc.

Council Member Turner said the complaints each year are usually about the same residences. He asked resident not to wait until the yearly meeting but to reach out throughout the year to Council Members, the Facebook page or message the website. Lawson says she gets calls several times a week and she reports those concerns to the correct department. Turner asked if a virtual message box could be added to the website.

Eddie Cassady asked residents to notify him at 63CRIME / 632-7463 to report suspicious activity. The caller will be assigned a number and no names are recorded. Cassady said any public safety concern regarding streets, speeding, etc. to please contact the Police Department by phone or Facebook. Chad Martin suggested pictures be taken and sent by private message to the Police Department Facebook page.

March 25, 2019 Northside / Chatham Heights Neighborhood Meeting

Officer Chase Bennett, neighborhood resource officer for the area attended. His role is to be a direct middleman between the Police Department and the residents. He welcomes residents to contact him with concerns. Bennett offered his business card to those in attendance. Coretha Gravely thanked residents for attending as well as the neighborhood watch captains and encouraged residents to contact them with any concerns. Their information can be kept private but she encouraged them to be safe taking pictures or videos. Gravely stated that everyone wants the City and the residents to be safe.

Edward Arrington 806 Ainsley Street reports problems with traffic cutting across church property and damage to the church lot. Mayor Lawson advised him to contact Public Works to discuss signage to prohibit cut-throughs. Arrington described a pothole; however, the pothole is on private property.

With no further questions, the meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Karen Roberts
Clerk of Council

Kathy Lawson
Mayor