

April 24, 2023 Northside Neighborhood Meeting

Martinsville City Council toured the North Side area on April 24, 2023 beginning at 5:30pm. Those present for the tour were Council Member Kathy Lawson, Council Member Lawrence Mitchell, City Manager Leon Towarnicki, Building Inspector Kris Bridges, Inspector Mark Price, Inspector Andy Powers, Police Chief Rob Fincher, Officer Coretha Gravely, and Martinsville Bulletin Reporter Holly Kozelsky.

The tour began at 5:30 pm from the rear of the City Municipal Building and traveled to Liberty Street, Franklin Street on to Dillard Street where they inspected several houses and properties. The tour continued to Warren Court, back out to Dillard where attendees noted houses under repair and shared that the general condition of neighborhood looked good. The tour traveled to Liberty Street, up Stultz Road to Perdue Street, Quincy Street, back out to Stultz to Melody Lane and Commerce Court, back to Stultz where it was noted that the high grass at the 700 block had already been posted. The tour continue to Liberty Street, up to Greyson Street then to Greyson where attendees discussed the condition of various properties that had been reported in the past. The tour continued on Greyson to Barrows Mill Road, and over to Burgess where two houses on demo list were viewed. Attendees continued to Ainsley, down Ainsley past Clearview School and back down to BMR, then down to Clearview; turning left on Clearview then right on Mica to Glendale where houses were being repaired. The tour continued back to Clearview and cut through Tanglewood over to Chatham Road; down Chatham Road to Banks Road, over the Myrtle Road, observing properties/houses that had been on previous inspections' lists; from Myrtle back to Chatham Road and down to Blankenship Road to the townhouses at the end and the Pebble Creek subdivision, back out to Chatham Road, Commonwealth Boulevard and Bethel Lane. Tall grass on Banner Street will be reported to Public Works. The tour traveled back to Commonwealth Boulevard, Liberty, Moss and back to the rear of City Hall where the tour concluded at approximately 6:30 pm. Attendees generally noted that most areas were clean and well-kept, houses or properties noted as possible code violation were indicated to already be in the system, and noted several houses under repair that previously were on the demolition list.

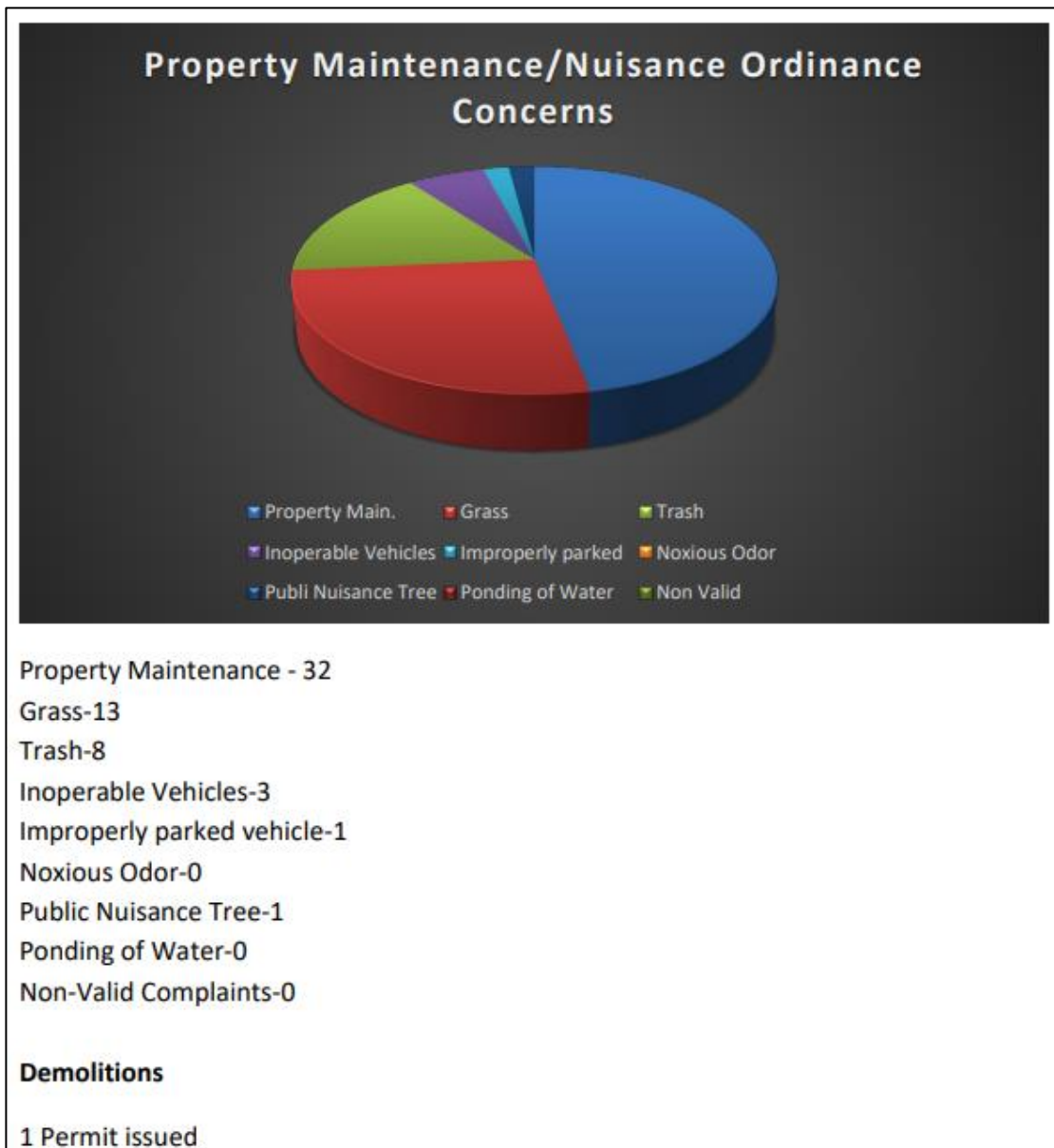
Neighborhood Meeting, Monday, 7:00 pm, Chatham Heights Baptist Church, 1235 Chatham Heights Road – Those who attended the neighborhood tour were present for the meeting along with Mayor LC Jones, Vice Mayor Aaron Rawls, Council Member Tammy Pearson, Clerk of Council Karen Roberts, Public Information Officer Kendall Davis, Hannah Powell of Community Development, several Police officers, and approximately 15 residents from the area.

Mayor Jones opened the meeting at 7:00pm and welcomed attendees. Rev. Tim Hatfield, pastor at the church offered invocation.

Mayor Jones called on City Manager Towarnicki to summarize the neighborhood tour from earlier in the evening and to also review issues brought up at the previous Northside neighborhood meeting.

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Inspector Mark Price summarized the property maintenance report, stating that the Community Development office works diligently to address all resident concerns and shared contact information and the location of the office.



Police Chief Rob Fincher updated residents on the crime report in the North Side area and how it compared to the previous year. Fincher pointed out that a third of the calls for this area are from the hospital, he assumes because of the short staff of hospital security. Fincher said the Police Department is at capacity of what they are allowed to hire but he still considers them understaffed. Vice Mayor Rawls requested a total amount spent at hospital calls. Fincher said in the past year there were 803 hours related to hospital calls. Chief Fincher introduced members of his staff who were in attendance.

Mayor Jones opened the floor to questions and comments from residents.

Doug Sharpe, Clearview Drive expressed concern about trash on the side of the road towards the transfer station that blows or falls off of vehicles, stating that trucks should be properly tarped. At Northside and Clearview, there has been a water leak at this location for

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some time and residents would like to know what's being done. There was a leak repair in the east bound lane on Clearview near Liberty Street; the road there is starting to "washboard" and Sharpe would like to know when that can be repaired. He used to mow and maintain the Midget Market parking lot but trucks have rutted the ground so he cannot use his mower there anymore; the grass is overgrown and the area needs to be cleaned up. People are hanging out, throwing out their trash, etc. City Manager Towarnicki said the City is aware of the water leak and it is on the Water Resources' list to repair. Towarnicki was familiar with the patched area and his guess is that repair was made during the cold time of year when regular asphalt materials are not available and he will follow up on that. Towarnicki questioned which trucks were parking at the Midget Market; that is private property so until it reaches a code violation, there's not much the City can do. Mr. Sharpe asked if there is a City Code about backing into a parking spot.

Woody McCain of Augusta Street lives in the County and he drives through the City to get to his house. The house across the street from him is in the City. His concern is that people in this area enjoy parking on the wrong side of the street which almost caused a head-on collision with him recently. He has lived in the area 53 years and he has noticed especially during the Summer, that people are walking on the opposite side of the street from the sidewalk along Chatham Road, often wearing dark clothing so they are hard to see after dark. Vice Mayor Rawls said they will follow up with the parking concern but residents not using the sidewalk could be a little trickier. Fincher said his officers will try to address that issue. Sgt. Chase Bennet is in charge of the Neighborhood Resource officers and will be forwarding resident concerns tonight to those officers. Fincher explained that cars should park on the correct side of the road because the reflectors are on the back and not the front, making it easier to see a parked car after dark. PD indicated tickets can be issued for violators.

Larue Powers of 905 Luck Street said on Glade Street, there are cars parked with no tags or expired tags as well as junk cars. There are also cars traveling that area with loud mufflers and people riding 4-wheelers. Powers said that the house at the corner of Glade and Wren Court needs attention and looks terrible.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

Karen Roberts
Clerk of Council

LC Jones
Mayor