

Public Works Committee August 24 at 5:00-6:15

Committee members present: Alds. DePoy, Skates, Donahue, Siliski.

Others: Ettori, Notte, Davis, Allaire, Bloomer.

Admin.: Comm. Wennberg, Jim Rotondo, City Atty Romeo.

People from the public:

Jessica Langois 7 North St., Michelle Irish 9 North St., Lisa Bassett 15 North St., Deb Poplawski 12 North St., Robert Johnson 16 North St., Susan Bassett 17 Melrose Ave., and the Howards from 18 North St, and the Strangeways from 14 North ST.

The committee began by listening to Susan Bassett and Deb Poplawski about the history of events over the last several months since the amount of water in the backyards between Melrose and North greatly increased in February and March. Water was seen running like a river in the back yards even though every thing was frozen at the time. Basements were flooding and icebergs were building as the water continued to run. DPW got out there to find what was initially thought to possibly be a broken water main. However, to this day, city water lines in the area are not leaking. Attention was then focused on a drainage pipe that was found to be in the ground which led to a pre 1900 sewer line. A camera was put into the line to find where it went and where it may have come from. A couple of pictures were presented to the committee to view.

The conversation then turned from the water problems to the gas spill at a nearby auto service station. Gas fumes were detected in the storm water catch basins shortly after the spill. The amount of gas vapors in the catch basins was high enough to be considered explosive. The leak was then traced back to the service station. The question became why would gas vapors be showing up in the catch basins if the floor drain was connected to the sanitary sewer? Also, where does the drain actually lead to? The committee asked that Comm. Wennberg ask the owner of the service station for permission to do dye testing and possibly camera scoping of the drain to see if it can answer any of the questions about the water problems in the neighborhood.

Deb Poplawski told the committee about the problems in her basement at 12 North St. and how at one end of her basement there is an oily substance that accompanies the water. She also has a gas like film on top of the water. Many of the resident's yards are so wet they cannot even mow some portions of it. The contention is that something happened in the ground during this past winter's deep freeze and we as a city need to figure out the source of the excessive amount of water which is plaguing the area. DPW has done an enormous amount of work in the area and ECS, Environmental Consulting Services, is working to find the source and what the effects of the gas and oil substances are in the area.

No motions were made and this report is for information only.