



CITY COUNCIL

Public Safety Committee

**Monday, October 15, 2007
Meeting Report**

Committee Members in Attendance: D. Sterner, Chair, S. Marmarou

Others Attending: L. Churchill, R. Hottenstein, C. Younger, J. Khokhar, S. Franco, L. Kelleher, V. Spencer

Public Safety Committee Chair, Dennis Sterner, called the meeting order.

RESIDENTIAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REVIEW ORDINANCE

The Public Safety Committee reviewed the latest draft of the Health and Safety Review Ordinance. Ms. Kelleher stated that the changes reflect the discussion at the October work session. She explained that the inspection procedure defined in Section 10-1203 was changed to exclude concrete surfaces. She also noted that other additions were made after reviewing the criteria in the Housing Permit Ordinance criteria and further research into requirements used by other cities, both in Berks County and across the nation.

The Committee members made further amendment requests.

Mr. Khokhar stated that to begin this program, the Codes Department will need to add three inspectors and one clerk. He explained that the clerk and three inspectors added to implement the Public Safety Review Ordinance repealed last October were reassigned to other duties within the Codes Division. Reassigning those three inspectors enabled the Codes Division to add three Codes districts, moving from 10 to 13 districts.

As the Public Works Committee meeting ended, the Public Safety Committee was joined by the remainder of Council.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that all properties on each City block should be inspected which would bring all properties up to speed. He suggested incorporating these inspections in with the duties of the district codes officers.

There was next a discussion on the City's ability to undertake the rehabilitation of street, curb, and sidewalk surfaces across the City. Mr. Sterner noted the City's ability

to use CDBG funds in fundable areas. Ms. Kelleher reminded all that 70%-75% of the City is CDBG eligible. Ms. Kelleher also stated that applications for Ice-T and T-21 funds can assist with sidewalk and curb repairs. Mr. Khokhar noted that homeowners older than 65 are eligible for Major System Repair Grants.

The Public Safety Committee will hold a special meeting in November to review the changes made to the Health and Safety Review Ordinance. The Committee wishes to have the ordinance enacted by the end of 2007.

The Public Safety Committee adjourned.