

**East Forest Park Civic Association  
Minutes for December 10, 2008 Meeting**

**Attendance (board members in bold):** **Richard & Darlene Acchione**, Bruce Adams, Fred & Katherine Allan, Steven & B.J. Berian, Jim & Joyce Carty, Gary Danforth, Cory & Barbara Douglas, Ron & Martha Duquette, Councilor James Ferrera III, Fran & Margaret Fratini, Raymond & Leona Gebo, James Kennedy, Officer Mark Kenney, **Sally Markey**, Joan McCaffrey, Gwen McKeown, Thomas & Kathleen Murphy, Melissa Richter (PeoplesBank), Darlene Ryan, Gertrude Ryzewicz, **Shawn Sheehan**, Wendy Somes, **Ellen Walmer**, Seamus Warwick (Rep. Puppolo's Office), Jan & Buddy Web, Janis Wise, Keith Wright

### **General Session: New Business**

There was not a quorum of Officers to vote on accepting the November 12, 2008 minutes.

Shawn Sheehan, Co-President, administered the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 7:12 pm. Our scheduled guest speaker Officer Keith Fleming from the Ordinance Flex Squad was not able to attend. The Police Department sent Officer Mark Kenney from the Ordinance Flex Squad to speak about the mission of his division, which was created under Mayor Sarno.

Shawn introduced City Councilor Jimmy Ferrera who spoke about the city's current financial situation during the economic downturn. Councilor Ferrera said that we should expect at least a 10% reduction in State Aid for Fiscal Year 2010. The city has already been preparing for this by being conservative in hiring practices. Ferrera said that it is difficult for Springfield since it is the third largest city in the Commonwealth yet it ranks thirty-five on the list for local aid, which means that smaller communities receive more aid than Springfield. Councilor Ferrera also updated the group on the budget gap with the school transportation account. We were also warned that the governor could make a midyear cut in local aid, which could affect city services such as education since some of the money is already spent.

Shawn introduced Officer Mark Kenney.

Officer Kenney stated that four officers make up the Ordinance Flex Squad. His job is a bit more difficult now because there are lots of vacant houses in Springfield with the economic downturn. Many of the houses now are owned by banks such as Bank of America and unfortunately the city just cannot go in and board up and secure a house, without the permission of the landowner.

The audience was also familiarized with some of the ordinances in the Good Neighbor Handbook; Officer Kenney reminded us of:

- If lawn is not cut \$50 a day citation.
- If walk is not plowed or shoveled, \$50 a day citation.
- Putting snow into the street is a \$300 fine.
- Not picking up after your dog is a \$50 fine.
- Owners cannot have more than three (3) dogs or your considered a kennel.
- Dogs cannot bark or they are in violation of the city ordinance.

When we see a violation, we should first contact code enforcement. If nothing is done or the problem is getting worse then the Ordinance Flex Squad should be contacted at 413-787-6341. It is a good idea to document the violation with a photo but to only do it if it is safe to do so. Residents should realize that if they contact the Flex Squad at an odd hour, they may not get an immediate response. Also if the call is of an emergency nature then 911 should be dialed immediately. The non-emergency number is 787-6302.

The traffic situation along Overlook Drive was brought up and the police department has been ticketing drivers who speed excessively along this street. It was suggested to contact Gil Peron of the Traffic Commission to try to address the problems with traffic flow along the General Edwards Bridge.

New Business - Rise in Crime

- 244 Arcadia Blvd there was a break-in in the evening.

- St. Anthony's on Island Pond Rd had a break-in.
- Break in at Allen Street and Wexford.
- A thief was thwarted from stealing a handbag at Holy Cross Church during Sunday Mass.

57 Hartford Terrace they came and mowed lawn and raked leaves. Some leave waste was left on the tree belt.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 14, 2009 at 7:00 pm in the Holy Cross School Meeting Room. City Councilor Jimmy Ferrera has invited Gil Peron from the Traffic Commission to speak with us. We will also have Ed Lambert who is the director of the UMASS Dartmouth Urban Economic Growth Initiative, speak to us about this new study underway in Springfield.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm. The minutes were submitted by Shawn Sheehan, Co-President on December 29, 2008.