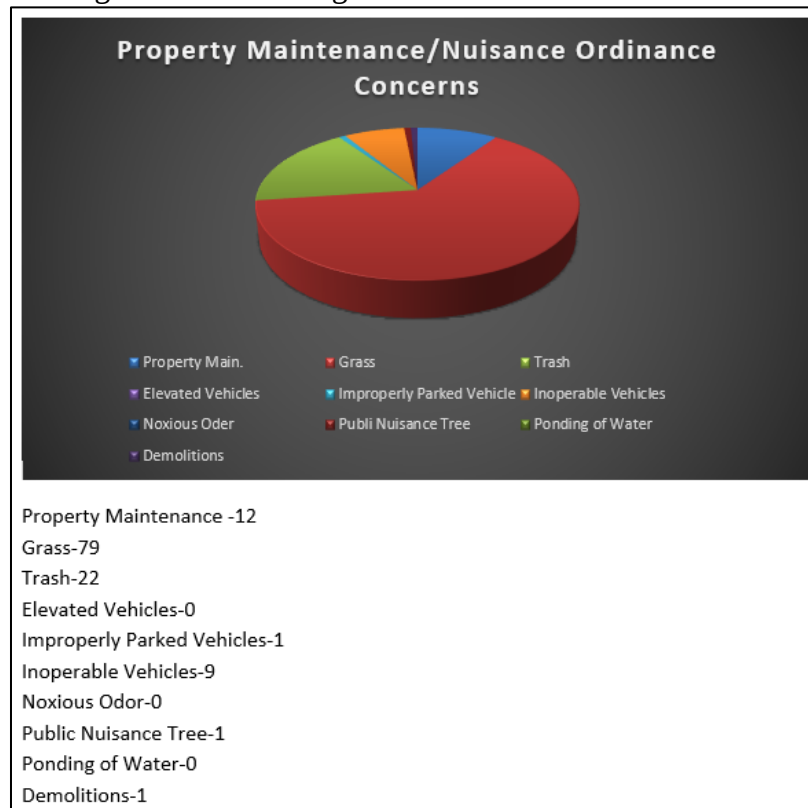


May 23, 2022 WestEnd Neighborhood Meeting

Martinsville City Council toured the West End area on May 23, 2022 beginning at 5:30pm. Those present for the tour were Mayor Kathy Lawson, Vice-Mayor Jennifer Bowles, and Council Members Chad Martin, and Danny Turner. Staff present included City Manager Leon Towarnicki, City Attorney Eric Monday, Inspector Mark Price, Police Chief Eddie Cassidy, Officer Coretha Gravely, Deputy Police Chief Rob Fincher, Community Development Director Mark McCaskill, Hannah Powell of Community Development, Inspector Jeff Alderman and Bill Wyatt of the Martinsville Bulletin.

The neighborhood tour began at 5:30 from the rear of the Municipal Building and traveled to Bridge Street, Market Street, West Church Street; looped through the Massey Street neighborhood where Council briefly discussed the vacant V. M. Draper property. The tour traveled back out to West Church, crossing Memorial Blvd to Fayette Street, down First Street where they looked at a fire damaged structure. They then went over to Second Street and end of the street at Peoples Cemetery where they noted the area where railroad access occurs; then back to Third Street, A Street, Roundabout Road, Pony Place, and Cardinal Lane where a large tree end of the street was discussed then they traveled by West End Park. The tour viewed Crestwood Court, Pony Place to Fayette, Pine Hall Road, Top Street, Yorkshire, Carver Court, back out to Fayette and Beaver Street, turned south on Memorial Blvd to Katherine Street to Smith Road, New York Avenue, to Swanson Street, out Armstead Avenue to the end, out Amy Avenue, and then back to the Municipal Building where the tour concluded at approximately 6:30 pm. Along the route, Council noticed a number of properties needing attention, property maintenance issues such as abandoned houses, etc. In every case, Mark Price noted the property had already been posted. There are some cases where demolition will be required so the City is currently working through that process. Any Property Maintenance concerns had already been turned over to Public Works for handling. Attendees observed several inoperative vehicles and a number of locations with basketball goals in the street, but it was generally noted that most areas were clean. Any houses or properties observed as possible code violations were indicated to already be in the system.

Neighborhood Meeting, Monday, 7:30 pm, Albert Harris Elementary School Library - All Council members were present along with the same staff members who attended the tour. Kendall Davis, Public Information Officer was also present along with approximately 25 residents from the area who attended. Mayor Lawson opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. City Manager Towarnicki summarized the neighborhood tour from earlier in the evening. Inspector Mark Price then reviewed the Inspection Report for the West End area and talked briefly about “special consultation inspections”, height of uncut grass that triggers a violation, and then gave contact information for his department.



Mayor then opened the floor to public comments/questions.

Leroy “Toolie” Hairston, 109 Terry Street talked about trash/litter next to the Church at 218 Fayette and stated that no one would pick it up. Mark Price responded that the property behind the Church was posted and everything that needed to be removed, had been. Mayor Lawson emphasized the need to continue to report such matters. Price clarified that he can only enforce what he can see from the right of way.

Ryan Burgess, 1109 A Street noted that the grass across from his house is too tall and has not been mowed. Burgess complained about trash cans and lids being “thrown everywhere” and asked that trashcans be put back in the edge of the yard. He complained about traffic speeding and loud music along his street. Burgess expressed concern that the basketball rims at West End Park are too high and that there is no park shelter, no picnic tables, and the neighbors have to keep parks clean themselves. Council Member Turner inquired about a pro-active approach to loud music and Police Chief Cassady indicated if he had specific times and locations of the complaints that would be helpful.

Glendola Price, 408 5th Street complained about people riding mopeds and 4-wheelers in the street, some was seen carrying a baby and wearing no helmets. She expressed frustration that in spite of complaints nothing is done. She also made comments about reversion. Officer Coretha Gravely spoke about 4-wheelers on sidewalks and Vice Mayor Bowles asked Kendall Davis if he could add information on City’s Facebook page.

Malvester Mohammed, 625 Watt Street agreed with Price’s comments and felt that the Five Points houses were too close to the street.

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Jimmy Williams, 600 3rd Street talked about the small park next to the former Housing Office at 4th/D Streets. Williams mentioned a drain pipe that channels water to the back of his property and talked about the trees falling from the park property over the fence onto his property. He expressed concern about speeding traffic on 3rd Street; tall grass alongside of the 600 block of First Street; and stated that he was not pleased with his efforts to work with staff in the Commissioner of Revenue's office.

Darlene Dandridge, 108 Massey Street complained about rats in her neighborhood and under the houses. City staff will look into smoke testing sewer lines. Dandridge also noted that they need another way out of their neighborhood.

Natalie Hall, 1213 Roundabout Road complained about 4-wheelers and dirt bikes. She had questions about a historic district letter sent out from Community Development. Hannah Powell of the Community Development Department addressed questions on the letter.

Harold Timberlake, 209 Apache Drive stated that he recently moved to this area and would like to volunteer with litter pickup, etc. Timberlake agreed with comments from some of the other speakers.

Zelma Flood, 825 Forest Lake Drive would like to see more street lighting along Rives Road and asked about replacing the Massey Street sign. Mayor Lawson noted that a new sign has been made, they are just waiting for the crane to finish setting houses at Five Points before installing that.

Council Member Martin asked for a show of hands of how many people would attend a reversion information session if handled by someone independently; about half those in attendance raised hands.

Martina Manns, 205 Massey Street expressed concern about lack of parking for the Five Points project and the impact that traffic could have on the Massey Street neighborhood.

Police Chief Cassady indicated that issues of 4-wheelers and dirt bikes will be addressed City-wide. Speeding in the area will be addressed by implementing extra patrols and use of speed/radar units.

Being respectful of everyone's time, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 9:00pm. Small group conversations and discussions carried on for another 20 to 30 minutes.

With no further questions, the meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

Karen Roberts
Clerk of Council

Kathy Lawson
Mayor