

**MEETING WITH MAYOR MARC J. GAROFALO, BOARD OF ALDERMEN, CITY OFFICIALS  
AND  
RESIDENTS OF CAROLINE STREET**

**JANUARY 24, 2005 - DERBY CITY HALL, ALDERMANIC CHAMBERS – 7:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

Mayor Marc J. Garofalo called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m. All rose and pledged allegiance to the flag.

**Roll Call**

Present: Alderwoman Linda Fusco, Alderwoman Sherry Pflugh, Alderman Bruce Sill, Alderman Ronald Sill, Alderman John Oraziotti, Alderman Joseph Bassi, Alderman Robert Gabianelli, Alderman Samuel Rizzitelli, Jr., Alderman Michael Flora, Sr.

Also Present: David L. Kopjanski, Building Official/Zoning Enforcement Officer  
Philip A. Hawks, Fire Marshal  
Chief Andrew L. Cota, Jr., Derby Police Department  
John Kowarik, Derby Police Commissioner  
David Ahearn, Derby Police Commissioner  
David Rogers, Environment Health Director, Naugatuck Valley Health District  
Richard Lutz, Mayoral Assistant  
Warren Holcomb, Esq. (arrived at 7:45 p.m.)

**SWEARING IN OF SHERRY PFLUGH AS ALDERWOMAN TO FILL VACANCY IN FIRST WARD**

Mayor Garofalo administered the oath of office to Sherry Pflugh to fill the vacancy in the first ward.

Mayor Garofalo then asked all the aldermen and City officials to identify themselves to the assembly.

Mayor Garofalo also asked that everyone complete the sign up sheet in order for us to have a record of who attended the meeting so we can contact everyone back in the future.

**DISCUSSION REGARDING CONCERNS PERTAINING TO THE CAROLINE STREET AREA**

Mayor Garofalo – I want to thank everybody for coming tonight. We know we have some issues in the Caroline Street area that we want to come up with a collective solution. Many of the problems we've tried to address in various ways. But we really need the help of the residents and the owners of the houses and we want to work together to come up with a solution to have a long-term solution to this problem, and a permanent solution to whatever problems exist. We're going to count on input from the residents to help us identify the problems. We expect that everybody will be courteous tonight and will listen to each other. We'll give everybody a chance to speak – who ever would like to speak. We'll stay here as long as you like to listen to everyone's concerns. Most of what we're going to be doing tonight is listening to the concerns that you have. We're going to keep a record of everything that is said here and it will be distributed to all the decision makers, it will be posted on our web site and available via that way or you may get a copy here at City Hall. And the whole purpose of this is to take all these solutions and have the

Board of Aldermen and the different staff areas look at these and employ a strategy to comprehensively address all the issues that we do have in the neighborhood. So we encourage your input tonight so that we can take all these ideas and put them together for an action plan. It's our hope that everybody will be part of the solution. Those that are part of the problem we want to get to the root of them and if we can, get them out of the neighborhood and the ones that are here, everybody that's here, become part of the solution. We look forward to a constructive dialogue tonight. At this point I would call upon briefly our staff people from the City, starting with the Chief who has prepared a brief presentation. Then if the Health Department, Building Department and Fire Marshal's Office would like to add anything to that I would have you add that for the benefit of everybody here including the means by which we may enforce any of the codes that we do have. At that point then we'll ask for public comments. So like I said anybody who would like to speak we'll take everybody who would like to speak and we'll stay as long as we're able to do that so that everybody can have their say. We ask that you be courteous. If a point has been raised previously you know we would like to have those be done in order. So Chief Cota if you would come forward.

Chief Andrew L. Cota, Jr., Derby Police Department – Actually we already have the success here the fact that all of these people that are here live in that particular area and are concerned about what is going on. And that in and of itself is going to be a big thing as we go forward with this stuff because we have reached successes before when we've been able to form neighborhood crime watches. It's amazing the amount of stuff you can accomplish together as a team. And that's what we have to do and we have to maintain that though. And I think that together that's going to be the best way to go. What I wanted to do was I wanted to take a look at all the activity that had occurred in the particular area in question. Some of the things are actually not so good – some of the things ended up being a little better than what we had originally anticipated. I personally went back and read almost all the reports for the both streets of concern. And I remember right from the beginning that Minerva Street had a major series of events going on with burglaries, thefts – it had that robbery – it had the incident where the person was robbed and lost his car and then ultimately he ended up dying and we investigated that also. So luckily the person that was perpetrating most of those crimes – right in this area of 207, 209 – the people that are familiar what was going on in that area – there were burglaries, there were thefts – there were a whole number of things. They were perpetrated mostly by one person, which in a lot of cases is what happens. It only takes a few people to ruin a whole neighborhood. And this particular case this person is in jail and will be in jail for a very long time because he was arrested for a whole series of events – not just in Derby but every place that he went. He was ultimately caught in Waterbury and he's going to do a lot of time. So for that Minerva Street area things have really quieted down. Now I remember it was very fearful for the people that lived on Minerva Street when we were investigating an untimely death. We've never changed the word "untimely death" of that particular individual, which was a Mr. Charles Long that everybody remembers. Now what happened with that particular thing is that there are no indications, even though it looked like a crime scene, that that was a homicide in any means. Sometimes things happen to human beings that look different than what they really are. If anybody ever watches C.S.I. – I think they got two or three of those – you look at things some times and say jeez it looks just like this but after you get through with your investigative aspect of it, and we use the best experts in the State – we used the State Major Crime Squad – they came down, they worked with us and we were able to determine that we do not have a homicide unless there's something so far outside of our knowledge that we would miss and I don't believe that that's the case. So Minerva Street and that whole area is not really too bad. There were several arrests that were made and

some of those arrests were directly related to those incidents that were happening there. So to the people that were living in that area it was a little fearful, but actually most of this stuff – we had a lot of the kids in the school playing that's resolved now because now we're lucky enough to have the construction going on. So that's going to help that particular area. Other than that there were some incidents in some of the local businesses where there were some burglaries and thefts. And during the construction time there were a couple of buildings – there was a burglary and theft of tools. So that in itself on Minerva Street wasn't very serious. There weren't a lot of things going on – there were calls for services – that's what these little white pins are (*on chart that Chief Cota displayed.*) When I say call for services they didn't require reports. That could be that somebody is out front of your house making noise, a neighbor may be disputing with you – a minor dispute – things were no arrests are generated or anything. So you can see there's not a lot of that – and this is a year and a half by the way if anybody wants to know the timeline. There's not a lot of that going on here. We had a little problem down in this section. We're dealing with that, we've been dealing with #45. There was a lot of stuff going on but that is actually (inaudible) now because some of the people that were causing the problems are in jail or are gone from that particular area. So that's quieted down immensely. There was questions about the shelter – the shelter in the last year and a half we've only had about five calls where we actually needed police intervention. But there were no arrests in that year and a half but there were a lot of medical calls. So that really isn't too much of an issue. So I think that we can pretty safely say that Minerva Street is doing pretty well. There were people that were in this area during our investigations that were commenting on this – they go all over the State – they were commenting that this particular area is really going to be a grand place when it's completed. And you can see when you're coming through Minerva Street you can start to see all of these homes are starting to look like they're new again. And for people that come from the outside that can appreciate architecture they're saying this is going to be a beautiful area. So I hope that makes you feel good about your neighborhood. These are people that do not even live in Derby that are making those kind of comments. Now we get over here onto Caroline Street and I don't know if we can nail down exactly why all of the things happen but we do get a lot of calls for service. We do know that there's trouble spots. Everybody in here knows where those spots are. The question is what are we going to do about them and how are we going to deal with them? We've made a lot of arrests in certain areas – we went to a lot of calls. There's been a fair amount of crime in a couple of the homes. A lot of these homes are multi-families – four, six families. That doesn't mean that the people that live in them are criminals by any stretch of the imagination. What it means is what you have is you have a lot of people living in the same places and sometimes they get aggravated with each other inside the home – too much noise in the hallways outside and stuff like that. That's the general kind of stuff that people in the neighborhood can take care of just by learning to get along with each other. Sometimes it gets a little out of hand and you have to take some action. We are working in several areas of concern. We thought maybe that everything that we were looking at was in one area but it's really spread out. There was a lot of things that happened in a year and a half on Caroline Street. There was a couple of assaults but there were no major, major things except for the shots being fired. Now of course that is of major concern. That's a major concern for us and obviously it's a major concern for you. We have continued to work in those particular areas to determine what it is that these people are doing. We have recovered several firearms in the neighborhood by doing search warrants. We've made several arrests because actually some of the crime that has happened elsewhere had funneled down to the street, but we came up with the suspects on that particular street. So that tells us something is going on there of major proportions. We do patrol it frequently, but we also still realize that there's problems. The fact that a house is shot up – that's bad - and that we're trying to figure out. I see

one of the people here – the one from the year before. There's been four incidents of shooting over a period of a little over a year. And a house was hit once and several rounds went into the house and that particular time what it seemed to be was it looked like there were people that shooting out like the ok corral in opposite directions. So that made rounds go in both directions and that was a year ago. The most recent one a house was shot up. We had a series of events four nights in a row for the people that live in that area where every night for four nights somebody went out and shot a firearm in the air and of course that's pretty taxing to your mind – is it fireworks, is it a gun? Well it was a firearm and we ended up making an arrest on that one – finally on that one. But it doesn't seem to be the same people that were doing this other shooting. We're still working on that. We have other departments other than just the Derby Police Department that work on these things. We're also starting to work with the State Nuisance Abatement Unit out of the Prosecutor's Office in the State of Connecticut. What our determination is if the landlords that live in the area do not want to do something to make their homes better, to make the building that they own better, then we will intervene through these special units and we will give all the information that they could possibly need to take those homes if these landlords that own them don't want to take action to make it a proper living home for other people around them. So I hope that that makes you feel good. At one time we work in different areas throughout the community even in the Valley with the Drug Enforcement Agency. If we could show there were drugs in a certain area and there were several times that drugs were – people were arrested for drugs – we could take the home under the Seized Asset Forfeiture. But in some cases that doesn't work but it's still a nuisance. So because the nuisance could be just as serious as drug dealing in some cases, we now feel it behooves us to work with the State of Connecticut and to target the buildings that are causing nuisances – unnecessary nuisances in your neighborhood. And I hope that that is going to be a success. Right now we're working with one – I think it's really going to be that way. There were quite a few calls over the year and a half. Interestingly and when I went through and looked at all these reports I also know pretty much what's going on in the City. And for whatever reason on Caroline Street we had towed away thirty-one abandoned motor vehicles and we added four more to those the other day – you know the stairs were it goes down to the Police Department? Well they're gone now too. The only thing that is still there is the camper. Thirty-one abandoned vehicles tells me something. People are just buying stuff – they think they can fix it and they just leave it there. That's not good for the neighborhood. That's why we towed so many. We got to make sure that that kind of stuff it may seem petty but it's not petty if you had all thirty-one of those cars sitting in your neighborhood. It's terrible – windows broken out, flat tires – it really looks bad. So we've worked hard over a period of time to try to get that taken care of. So you will not find a lot of abandoned cars there. You may find several but there may be different reasons why we have not moved them yet. So that's one of the things that we have been working on and will continue to work on. I did also note that when I was looking through here that we recovered seven stolen cars on the street. Now I don't know about anybody else but seven stolen cars dropped off on a street tells me somebody in my neighborhood steals cars. So we need to look at that kind of stuff – that's pretty important. Somebody steals cars and drops them there. Why? Probably because they live some place in that neighborhood. We need to identify those kinds of things. And believe it or not you probably see it and don't even realize it sometimes that right in front of your noses that stuff like that is happening. I know that often times people say the police go by and they don't see drug dealing and stuff like that. Well sometimes we may not. We're not omnipresent you know so that doesn't mean we can be someplace and we won't know everything that is going on. But keep in mind that we need to prove when we take somebody to court we can't (inaudible). What we have to do is prove beyond the benefit of the doubt that people are committing a crime. And that's why

we need your help in order to do that. But I think that some of the things that I read in the paper were a little disturbing to me because personally I wouldn't want it to happen where people who want to give us confidential information that that gets out to be made public – we don't want that. We want the information so that we can work with this and we can help the neighborhood. We want the people that are causing problems for you to be caught or to conform to the neighborhood. It's as simple as that. It's two things – be gone or conform to what the people in the neighborhood want to live like. Nobody wants to live in a place where shots are fired. We understand it – we feel for that. I never left the west side of town. They say the west side of town you know you live close to Anson Street and Hawkins Street – sure I do. Sure I do and what's wrong with that? There's nothing wrong with living on this side of town. The neighborhood is pretty good where I live. Everybody knows each other - we take of each other. We make sure that if anything gets run down or something is going on that we show concern for each other in the particular area where I live. And I don't live that far out of the center of town. And we have a pretty good neighborhood there. I think that Anson Street, although there's a lot of people in that particular area – Lafayette Street, Hawkins Street – there's still an amount of problems there but we have gotten enough assistance that a lot of those problems are gone. I grant you there's a lot of people but a lot of people in a neighborhood don't necessarily mean there's crimes being committed. When you have density areas there's a certain amount of stuff that you have to learn to live with providing that they're not causing such a nuisance to everybody that lives there that they can't stand them anymore. And that's sometimes what happens. So what my goal would be if I had the choice, and I'm going to leave the choice up to the community at large also, what I would do is I would immediately try to form a neighborhood crime watch. We have a person that works in that particular area that can school you in everything you need to know and then all you really have to do after that is form up a few captains and let the captains deal directly with us. And we can also have a hotline for people that don't think that they're getting the information. There's a hotline that you can call for the Valley Street Crime Unit. But sometimes people say they're not happy with it, even though they do look at all the calls that come in, maybe we can form another confidential line where we can get additional information. So we do have quite a few patrols there and I know that in some cases they say there's not a lot of patrol. But they go through there quite a bit. We don't punch a card for every time that we go through, but we drive through there a lot. And it's not always in marked cars by the way. Very frequently you'll see unmarked cars and two people in those particular cars. So we are serious and there has been a lot of things that have been on going in that area. But we want help – we want to help you and we need you to help us also. And I think that we can really go a long way at making things happen. I know there's been concerns with the Building Department, the Fire Marshal's Office, the Mayor's Office and the Board of Aldermen about some of the buildings and stuff there and they can address that - because to me that is a concern. Just like to me if I could do something about it with those abandoned cars that to me is an issue. When you have stuff that looks like that on your street it's a problem and I think that holds true and they'll speak at that about buildings. So I think that combination of things that the City will be able to do will be very successful for the neighborhood. It's probably time that we work as a team to get this done. We can't do it all alone. Sometimes we think we can go out there and obviously if we could do it all alone we wouldn't all be sitting here today. So I think we could form a really good partnership and get some serious things done. Thank you.

Mayor Garofalo – Thank you Chief. Mr. Building Official...

David L. Kopjanski, Building Official/Zoning Enforcement Officer – Yes Mr. Mayor. I would like to thank the Chief for doing a great job in explaining the pursuit (inaudible) tactics in the neighborhood. My office, the Building Department, addresses enforcement of the building code. It's more of a quality of life issue with the condition of your buildings and your grounds themselves. How many people in the room are aware that the City of Derby has an apartment occupancy ordinance? Less than half. The City of Derby has had an ordinance since 1990 requiring all multi-family apartments, that's buildings with three units or greater that's not owner occupied to be inspected by the Building Department prior to the occupancy of a tenant. The landlord has to receive an occupancy permit from the City. That occupancy permit pretty much certifies that the condition of that unit is livable. That it's for the most part free of code violations – building code violations, fire code violations, and housing code violations. Your landlord is required to show you this occupancy permit if he has one. But he doesn't have to show it to you if you don't ask. You need to ask is there an occupancy permit for this unit? If there's not, then the chances are that the building and that your unit is substandard. And that's going to affect your living conditions. How many in the room are aware that the City of Derby has an ordinance concerning blighted premises? About the same number. Again, the City has had an ordinance for blighted premises since the mid-1990's. If the condition of the grounds, if the condition of the outside of the building, more than one abandoned vehicles on the property – if those types of conditions exist you need to contact the Building Department and make a complaint. We follow up with a letter to the property owner then we follow up with legal action if that's not complied with. These are things that are for the benefit of residents of the neighborhood. They make your quality of life better. It's an avenue that you can pursue when you find that things in the neighborhood are going awry. It doesn't cost you anything for a telephone call and it's a great service I think that the City provides. There's a number of property owners here in the room that I recognize that take advantage of things here. I don't think that we got 50% compliance on the Caroline Street neighborhood; maybe about 25% compliance. So that's something again that everyone here can strive for. Like I said it doesn't cost you a dime to make a telephone call.

Mayor Garofalo – Thank you Mr. Building Official. Mr. Fire Marshal...

Philip A. Hawks, Fire Marshal – The Fire Marshal's Office enforces life safety codes – the Connecticut State Life Safety Codes of all buildings – multi-family buildings. We do go through the buildings. We're in the process right now of going up Caroline Street and inspecting the buildings for code compliance. To make sure they do meet the minimum standards of the State code and have the owners bring the buildings up to meet those codes. If anybody should have any questions that they feel that they have a question on a particular building that they're living in – their apartment, feel free to give my office a call. Myself or one of my staff members will come out and take a look at it and tell you if it is a violation or not. If it is then we'll pursue it through the avenues that we have set up through the State Fire Marshal's Office to bring it into compliance with the codes.

Mayor Garofalo – Thank you.

Mr. Kopjanski – Mr. Mayor I would just like to add that I do have copies here of the Occupancy Ordinance if anyone is interested in having a copy of it. It's not long; it's easy to understand.

Mayor Garofalo – Mr. Rogers...

David Rogers, Environmental Health Director, Naugatuck Valley Health District – My department is charged with enforcing the public health code of the State of Connecticut, the housing codes and the property maintenance codes in the City of Derby. The one big benefit that Derby has is that a couple of years ago they adopted the BOCA, which is the Building Official's International Property Maintenance Code, which is very comprehensive, it's very up to date and it's probably the best housing code in the Valley. We operate – I have two staff that work on housing matters and then I have a couple of others that do general nuisances. We investigate all kinds of things like garbage and trash complaints, a whole host of housing violations in conjunction with the Fire Marshal and the Building Official and all manner of other types of complaints that you might think of. We operate strictly on a complaint basis. We do not have the staff to go out and canvass the neighborhood and look for violations. We cover six towns and have a very small staff so we're pretty pressed for time. My two housing code inspectors are very good – they work very hard with the landlords and tenants to get voluntary compliance. Ultimately our method of enforcement is to take people to court and if you've ever taken anybody to court it's a very long drawn out process. It takes forever and it doesn't help the people that need the code violations taken care of very quickly. So we work very hard on working with the landlords and the property owners to get these things taken care of very quickly. All I can say is if you see problems or if you have problems I encourage you to call our office. We're in transition right now – we're moving to Seymour on Wednesday. We're not going to have any phones for a couple of days. I don't have business cards but if you contact the Mayor's Office as soon as we get that information we'll make it public but we don't have it right now. Right now we're currently just across the bridge in Shelton but we're moving up the valley just a little bit to some new space. In a nutshell that's pretty much what we did. I had my staff put together a list of what's really gaudy – it goes back almost twenty years so she was pretty comprehensive when she put the list together. I think currently we only have two housing cases pending – one on Caroline Street and one on Minerva. So I think we've done a pretty good job of getting compliance and getting these closed out. It doesn't mean they won't come back tomorrow, but we take care of the violations that are in force when we receive the complaint.

Mayor Garofalo – Great, thank you.

? – Have you had any complaints in reference to the garbage pick up that's been going on on Caroline Street?

Mr. Rogers – You mean the City pick up?

? – Yes when the City picks up.

Mr. Rogers – No. We don't have any control over the City pick up. That's handled by the City. They're contracted by the City to do that.

Mayor Garofalo – At this point we'll open up the public portion so if anybody wants to come forward – one at a time – just come forward and state your name and address for the record so we can get it on the tape. And we ask you to be courteous and one at a time address the board – the members of the board are here and the staff people are here for questions or whatever.

## PUBLIC PORTION

Dominick Thomas, Esq., Cohen & Thomas, 315 Main Street, Derby, CT – Representing HOME, Inc. – HOME, Inc. is an entity that is part of a supportive housing program for the State of Connecticut, and has purchased three properties. They purchased 175 Caroline Street – a three-family with currently three, three-bedroom apartments; 225 Caroline Street, which is a six-family that I think is broken down by four two's and two three's; and 16 Fourth Street, which I think has one three and five two-bedroom apartments. They are part of a supporting housing program. They own the properties and will be managing and taking care of the properties. And it's supportive housing. It's mainly geared towards providing housing for some of those individuals for instance that are clients of the Birmingham Group or something like, but also to the general public. They intend on spending \$200,000 per address to renovate these apartments. We have shown the Mayor the proposals. Completely redoing the siding, completely bringing it up to code – fire code, building code. And the reason I'm talking here is because I think that there has to be at some level and I think any improvement when you get these kind of buildings to be completely redone and improvement our position is that that type of improvement becomes infectious throughout a neighborhood. And I know a little bit about it – not from that, but from the fact that I live on the last block of Olivia Street. And it's where I grew up – after twenty-one years up in Oxford I moved back there and our whole street, one after the other, I was commenting to Linda earlier in the evening and in the last two years we've had six new porches on our street. People may laugh and say what's new porches. But that's something that improves your street. And when you improve it in any way, shape or form and you as homemakers are going to do spend that much money to bring the things up it increases the value of the entire area. The one thing I want to point out really is directed more towards the building part of it. There are some rules and regulations on the books and I would like to offer the opportunity, as I have to sit down and discuss them. Because I think the way they're being interpreted right now they are discouraging renovation. Specifically there's a – these buildings – this entire area, almost the entire area is in the Center Design Development District. When they changed the zone they changed it to twelve units per acre, which makes every single – just about – every single multi-family home in there non-conforming – a non-conformity. Not a non-conforming use as Dave and I will argue about it all the time – because residential uses are permitted. But twelve units per acre means that on an eighth of an acre lot, which a lot of these are – 5,000 square feet – you can only have a one and a half families, which means a single family, which means that most of them are multi-family. You should not – a landowner who wants to improve and renovate should not have to be required to go to ZBA. And I think that this is not the sole answer, but when you are approaching the renovation of these streets, upgrading the existing apartments, getting the landowners to upgrade them so that it's economically beneficial for them to improve the whole street. As you increase the value of these buildings and you increase the number of buildings that are renovated, brought up to code, you bring in a better quality of tenant, you bring in a better quality of owner, and eventually you cut crime.

Mayor Garofalo – Is that what you're suggesting that the HOME, Inc. program is going to do?

Mr. Thomas – I think that the HOME, Inc. program is going to renovate three buildings that are in horrible shape. The most important thing that they're going to do is take thirty-six bedrooms and reduce them to eighteen. Most of them are going to be single family. Some will be rented to the public. Many will be rented as supportive housing. It's a program that the State is pushing throughout the entire State. And those buildings, which are in some disarray and have been and

people still live in them – most of the apartments – will be completely renovated. All I'm saying is this is one step. But the step has to be to start renovating the entire area. And I think there has to be as part and parcel of a global approach to it a look at how to encourage all landlords to improve their buildings. And gladly since I represent HOME, Inc. would gladly volunteer to be part and parcel of any discussion that takes place on that. And I think that's beneficial especially when you have somebody that's going to be putting \$200,000 per building into renovating it. Thank you. I don't mean to run but I do have to go to a Land Use Board in Seymour. But I'll answer any questions that you have.

Mayor Garofalo – Well my question or my comment is that the reason why the plans were shown were because I exposed this project that was being done by HOME, Inc., prior to your representing them because they were purposely trying to deceive everybody – the residents, the City and everybody. And they have specifically said that they did not want to publicly discuss this – they were not ready to publicly discuss it. But that has been raised here tonight, respectfully to you Mr. Thomas because I know you represent them, but you're not them. HOME, Inc. and Birmingham Group Health Services I would respectfully request that if we're going to discuss this at length then if you have other things to do that we save that conversation so that everybody could be notified specifically for that particular matter.

Mr. Thomas – We would be very happy to.

Mayor Garofalo – Because that's a major area where there's, as you know, there's serious concern among the neighbors, some of whom were never notified and had to find this out through digging and going around the system. And I think that would certainly merit a separate meeting so that we may focus properly on that. Mr. Kopjanski is well aware of the matter – well versed in the matter I might say as well. And those are issues that I don't want to hold you here and (inaudible). I saw a lot of hands go up and I saw a lot of expressions and the body language that were with (inaudible) and we're going to deal with this thing aggressively. But in fairness to that issue that deserves it's specifically...

Mr. Thomas – And we've been requesting one...

Mayor Garofalo – You requested a staff meeting...

Mr. Thomas – No we requested also a meeting with the (inaudible) to communicate with them, but you're right it's a different point. But I think that should not overshadow the fact that to improve the neighborhood there has to be some discussion on the way the City approaches how improvements are made within this zone. Because the more you force them – landlords, any landlords to go through unnecessary steps, the less likely you are going to have improvements made and physically improvements made to neighborhoods are an important part of reducing crimes in the neighborhoods. And I think the Chief pointed that out when he talked about removing the abandoned cars, which is another part and parcel of that. But I would be glad to offer any time to have a public meeting with respect to it. Thank you – unfortunately I've got to run to Seymour.

Mayor Garofalo – The issues regarding this we'll hold those questions.

? – I just want to make one comment to him. Would you like it if I opened up three bars in your neighborhood without notifying you?

Mr. Thomas – Say what?

? – Would you like it if I opened up three bars (inaudible) from your house?

Mayor Garofalo – Excuse me – there will be ample time to address that project specifically. I want to just try to stay focused on the Caroline Street. We're not going to lose sight of that and they know it and their interest in having a meeting is subject to, respectfully to the counselor, but the people that he represents are in question here and that matter will – we will stand united together on that, believe me. The next person – your name and address for the record.

Keith Voll, 178 Minerva Street, Derby, CT – I just want to say something that is very positive. I just want to thank the Mayor – congratulations and good luck Sherry – and Sam and all you guys – all the representatives of us, the people, and Officer Cota – everybody here who came together to do something about something that means so much to just a taxpayer with children it means a lot to me. And this – I've never seen this – and it just – I think there's going to be changes that are going to be made and I hope everybody works together to get it done with the people and all of you make a difference. Thank you and let's keep it up and I appreciate it.

Vanessa Bryant, 266 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – This question is directed to the Police Chief. In 2003 I moved to Derby in 2003 – May of 2003. In July of 2003 I received a summons to go to court. I was like my name was on it but it wasn't me. I called Derby Police they said just make the court date and explain it to them. I went to the Derby court and I explained it to them and they said you have to speak to the prosecutor. I went to the prosecutor and said this is not me. Well you have to go to the ticket office. I went to the there and they went oh – everybody passed the buck. They said you have to go to Orange where wherever this was happened at and talk to them. I went to the Orange Police Department and I explained everything to them and he was like I know this person, this is not you. He gave me a copy of the ticket that stemmed from the warrant or whatever and he said the person lived in New York. He don't know how they got my address – he said we know that person because they still on the Boston Post Road – they're a regular. We know her very well and all that. So he said I'll take care of it – don't worry about it. And he gave me a copy of the ticket – I asked him for it just for my records I kept everything. On the fifth of this month I was ready to go to PTO and somebody banged on my door. I had my grandson and my granddaughter and I was like who is it? He was like Derby Police. I was like yes? Is Vanessa Bryant there? I was like yes. Open up the door – he was like oh I have a warrant for your arrest. I was like my grandson is crying because he's like five months old and my granddaughter is hysterical. He's like are you the only one here? I was like yeah, but what's going on? He's said we have a warrant for your arrest. I said for what? He likes oh well who's here with you? I said nobody – it's just me and the kids. He was like go get your I.D. Then I said I remember something happened a couple of years ago that it wasn't me and I fixed this. I went and gave him my I.D. and he took my I.D. he left and came back and he was like sorry. So what I did in turn I went to the Derby Police Department to give them a copy of the ticket that says a twenty-year old, hundred and forty pound white female. NUMEROUS LAUGHTER FROM THE ASSEMBLY. Excuse me unless I'm Houdini it's not me.

Mayor Garofalo – Who said you don't look twenty?

Ms. Bryant – He said oh our copier machine is broke you got to come another day. He said I said sorry. So rude for their mistake. And what I said to him in return this cannot happen again. (Inaudible) upon getting this fixed I called Derby I got it rectified – I explained everything to them. I said 2003 for I guess it was a \$60 ticket and they came to my house to arrest me in 2005? Wrong person and I thought it was rectified and evidently it wasn't. So who's to say it won't happen again because I tried to give them a copy of the ticket so they could have it for their records to know maybe they didn't have the ticket. They didn't know it was a white female. But they should have if I have a copy of it. Why did they bang on my door?

Chief Cota – When you have an arrest warrant in your hand you go to somebody's home you're supposed to identify that that's the person. In this case obviously you were not that person. But sometimes there's mistakes in identity – we cannot pull out somebody else's arrest warrant. So if the arrest warrant is not fixed in the community that it was initiated, we have no way of knowing if it's an active warrant or not. So we will attempt to serve those warrants. That's what happened in that case. There should never be rudeness. I'm very interested when somebody says that somebody is rude, especially if there's been communication over the telephone and stuff.

Ms. Bryant – Exactly.

Chief Cota – Because I have access to all the three occasions. And if I have a time and a date that these things happened I can take a look at that.

Ms. Bryant – It was the fifth of this month. It was on a Wednesday around 6:30 p.m. – around that timeframe. It was a young police officer and he was really rude, which made me in turn be rude back. Because it was unnecessary. I was like you came to my house and disrupted it and to be rude – and it was like I offered – it wasn't even that. I understand everything that you're saying but if you have a mistaken identity and I'm willing to offer you something so that it won't happen again – my copier machine is broke, come back another day.

Chief Cota – Here's the problem. Here's the problem with that. Even if we had that there's no specific place to put it. Those kind of things have to be (inaudible). In other words that's got to come out of the computer if it's not you. If it's your date of birth and it's your address...

Ms. Bryant – It's not my date of birth. We don't know how they got...

Chief Cota – That's not uncommon by the way. To have somebody to the Police Department with the same kind of a situation. In New York you can be filmed and get a ticket. And about a month and a half ago they kept saying we keep getting this guy's mail saying that you have to appear in court in New York – the problem was they had the address, they had the type of car but one of the numbers were off. So the whole situation was it was not the same person, but nobody in New York or Connecticut could rectify the situation. Somehow it's caught in a computer system someplace and the only thing that we can recommend to that particular person is we know it's not you, it's not the same name just the same address, the same kind of car but we can't make an arrest unless you can legitimately show that's the person you're looking for. I would like to see you afterwards before you leave because maybe we can do something to help you with that.

Ms. Bryant – I would appreciate it.

Chief Cota – It's too bad that they missed the mark on that. Because we don't want somebody falsely getting arrested.

Ms. Bryant – Thank you.

Mayor Garofalo – I would just ask if anybody has like specific issues like this one, the individual people from the staff will stay afterwards to take care of those kind of individual issues that are equally as important but that is probably better to address that specifically – not just you but if anybody else has a type of complaint like that we can best address that with the Chief directly and we'll take time for that afterwards. I just want to ask is please don't forget the idea here too is if you have ideas of how you think we can improve the situation in addition to whatever other concerns you have. Don't forget we want to hear those ideas and thoughts of what is the best way that you think we can address these issues on Caroline Street. So please don't forget those issues as well.

Edward Morales, 158 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – I have lived on Caroline Street close to six years. I've done a lot of repairs on my house. You know different things happen through the years. And some remember me; I found a bomb in my house a few years back. At the same time another house got hit by lightening on the same street. And I called the Police Department and if you check my records at the Health Department my name must be on there at least a dozen times making complaints of people leaving trash out. I clean up trash on my street many, many times. My neighbor's have helped me go across the street – we bagged up ten bags of trash. I've made complaints about the house across the street at least four times. They're doing something about it now but if you go back there you still see the staircase full of trash, ok? That mobile home that they're talking about is across the street from me has been tagged over a year ago – it's still not moved. They got rid of the other cars – that's still there, ok? I've been to your office, I personally talked to you. Your comment to me was please go down and get the landlord's names and bring them to me. I'm sorry about that but I didn't think that was part of my job since you have access to City Hall better than I do. So I've done this through the years. I've attended several meetings (inaudible) more meetings. I've been going to college and working full time and raising a child so my time was limited. I'm now taking college off for the next five months so I can focus on my son and focus on my neighborhood. You know ideas – I've got one fantastic idea. I don't like my privacy invaded like anybody over here by anyone or any means or form. But I'm willing to give up some of it by placing a camera on each end of Caroline Street. You know I think that will solve it. Don't even notify anybody they're being – you know let them be photogenic on their own. Hey, smile you're on Candid Camera. But in court let them know that. (Inaudible) I don't mind (inaudible) like that. I would give the rights to see that focused. The camera is going to catch me cleaning my street and cleaning my leaves and maybe giving my son a little pat once in a while on the behind for doing something wrong, ok? But that's (inaudible). Put some cameras there – if they want to keep this quiet, low key and get these people I would give up some of my rights temporarily on this. I don't want the cameras permanently there but just let the folks (inaudible) and reduce it. Thank you Mr. Mayor, thank you gentlemen, ladies.

Mayor Garofalo – Thank you.

Chief Cota – Mayor if I may for one second it might be interesting to note that on several occasions the large amounts of trash that were put out in front of the houses that were not called to the Public Works for removal and we did contact the landlords and they had to remove it immediately or we would have arrested them for illegal dumping in front of their homes. I've noticed there's not a lot of (inaudible) trash in front of the houses – that's the reason why.

? – How long is that going to stay?

Chief Cota – That's permanent as far as we're concerned. They put that stuff out there without calling ahead to the Public Works that's an illegal act. We'll issue summonses on that.

? – How about the cans? They don't put the cans back. The cans stay out so they continue bringing the trash out to the front.

Chief Cota – Our concern was the vehicles and trash on the road. That was the two things we went after in a big way. We really weren't concerned about the barrels as much as we were actually pieces of trash.

*NUMEROUS VOICES COULD NOT DISTINGUISH. MAYOR GAROFALO CALLED FOR ORDER AND ASKED EVERYONE TO SPEAK ONE AT A TIME IN ORDER TO KEEP THE RECORD STRAIGHT.*

Ms. Lavonia Cously, 178 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – I am one that's been there two years and I believe every three days I'm outside cleaning the streets – I mean really, really cleaning the streets – sweating. And we did have this house that was across the street, which is not – that's not going on anymore because the couple that lives there now they do take their barrels and they put them back – you know what I'm saying? But it's this empty lot down the street and all the trash blows down so there's problems still going on with this trash. And it's blowing all in the yard and you go out there and you're coming home from work and it's – I can't even get into it. But it's a mess – it really is.

Mayor Garofalo – Okay. You live at 178?

Ms. Cously – Yeah, 178.

Mayor Garofalo – Is that the blue one?

Ms. Cously – I've done a whole lot of work. No I'm the black and white one. We just redid the whole front.

Mayor Garofalo – I'm just trying to get it in my mind. It looks nice.

Ms. Cously – I chopped down about three trees. I chopped them down.

Mayor Garofalo – By yourself?

Ms. Cously – Yes. So the house is opened up. I did put a lot of work into this house and I'm planning on putting a whole lot more there because I love where I stay. But I think we just need a little bit of help with the City trying to keep it clean for us – helping us out. We're cleaning it. And

this racing up and down the street with these cars at night – because I do have my grandkids there – my kids are there. I hate to say it but you can see the police officer sitting right there and a car will go zooming right by and it was just like they didn't even see it. And I mean I have called quite a few times at three o'clock in the morning because I have to be to work at – well I was at seven but now I'm at eight and they would tell me to come outside and point who's outside making the noise. And I'm like sir, all I want to do is go back to sleep so I can go to work, you know what I'm saying? Well you got to come on out and – and what makes it so bad they would walk through my yard for me to come to the door and go outside at three, four o'clock in the morning to point out who's making the noise, which I don't know who it is. All I want them to do is cut down the noise so I can go back to sleep. And they're outside in their cars with their music turned up. So that's what we were told from the police officers to come outside and point out whoever is out there making the noise. I thought that was – I mean...

Mayor Garofalo – We're here to listen so we'll do the listening for now. Thank you.

Dawn Barnes, 195 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – I have a comment because he was saying that they're interested in knowing about the barrels with the garbage. I've been there for seven years and it seems like since the area got worse as far as crime that the garbage has gotten worse. And in my opinion it's not just the trash blowing around it's the garbage men. They are disgusting. I work eleven to seven and just this past week I came home Saturday morning and they left the garbage barrels in the street, ok? I don't know how many times everybody takes the time to bring their garbage to the front and by the morning time all you see is trash everywhere. They give no regard to the fact that they've thrown garbage everywhere. And everybody else is up and down the street always sweeping and picking up after them and they're the ones – it's in the garbage can – why is there garbage all over the place? Just Saturday morning if you would have seen what happened it was ridiculous – barrels on the street. All they have to do is put them back on the sidewalk. And this is not (inaudible) this is all the time – that's one thing.

Mayor Garofalo – Let me just say that's not just Caroline Street. It's all over.

Ms. Barnes – The other question I have and it's about the cars racing – it's not a question it's a comment. With the cameras on Anson Street they didn't have any cameras they just kept an officer around and it kept it down. Anson Street is cleaner than Caroline Street. Now they might have their problems but you would never know as far as I'm concerned. We always have – there's always something going on on the street. Why don't they just keep a cop there? There's always racing. This is always happening. By the time we call it's always too late so keep somebody on the street until things start dying down. Keep an officer sitting around in the car or whatever. There's always somebody racing down. There's always somebody blowing past the stop sign. This is a constant thing. And every time somebody complains by the time the cops come it's already too late. That always happens with the racing. There's kids all up and down Caroline Street and every time a call is placed it's always after the fact. And even with the cameras by the time you get to it it's always after the fact. So why don't they just keep somebody on the street if there's so many things going on? I used to see officers on each corner of Anson. And then you know what else I noticed sometimes (inaudible) there's a problem some of the officers are very nasty. And we're the residents. We're not the ones making trouble. But they are – some of them are very, very nasty. And some of them are nice. They speak to you like you should be spoken to. And others they just talk down to you. I live there – I'm sorry, forgive me. But I don't agree with some of the ways they handle – the way they talk to you and the way they treat you. We're all on the

street but we're not all – you know what I'm saying that type of person. But the garbage is just disgusting. There's garbage up and down the street and most of the time it's always after the garbage men pick it up. Because they spill it and just leave it there – it doesn't matter. Thank you.

Mayor Garofalo – Thank you.

Brenda Reid, 184 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – My issue is the parking ban. I live at 184 Caroline Street and the parking ban is on one side for the winter for cleaning. I leave out at 5:30 a.m. on the weekends to go to work. My landlord has room for me to park, but I'm not allowed to park there. So me leaving out at 5:30 in the morning I got to walk all the way down one morning, 5:30 in the morning, by the Spooner House to get my car to warm it up to go to work. Every time I go out in the morning I'm the only one outside besides whoever is walking on the other end of Caroline Street (inaudible) up around the corner it's not safe. But I'm not allowed to park on the property because my landlord said that I can't – but there's room. I'm not the only tenant on the street that has to park on the street but there's room on the property where you pay rent at but you're not allowed to park there. Another thing is (inaudible) I called the Police Department on Thursday night regarding the issue with my landlord and the parking issue. So the Police came by and made everybody move their car – there was nowhere for me to park – not even on my own (inaudible) I couldn't park there and there was room there. The police said there was nothing that could be done. But if I get robbed and killed on my way to work because there was no place to park at but a whole block from my house to warm up the car and get to work on time who's fault is it then? Who's going to explain it to my kids? My landlord or the police?

Mr. Kopjanski – Miss, you said there's parking on your property but your landlord won't allow you to park there?

Ms. Reid – No. She can park there and she also has two cars in the back.

Mr. Kopjanski – That she leases?

Ms. Reid – I don't know if she leases or not but they're not moveable. But there's room for three cars and more cars but she's allowed to park there but not me.

Mayor Garofalo – In front of the house? On the street do you mean?

Ms. Reid – In the back. (Inaudible) on your front grass. But give me somewhere to park on the safe side.

Mayor Garofalo – Ma'am the parking on the property – that's between you and the landlord. The parking on the street itself...

Ms. Barnes – That's the problem – because you just said there's all these multi-family houses. A lot of those houses have kids – where are we supposed to park? We're not going to drive in -3° weather to park around the corner just so I could get home. There's no snow – half the time that's (inaudible). Whenever the cops around it's always when they're giving out the tickets. And there's no snow. Right now I understand there's snow. But half the time there's no snow and that's when the street is being riddled with tickets. And there's nowhere to park. There's too many

people on the street for you to just say you can only park on that side. When it's snowing I understand.

Mayor Garofalo – Part of the practical reality is most of, not every one, of the homes that are on Caroline Street were built before there were cars. So that's one of the issues. The winter parking has been in effect for thirty years or more. But the issue is – the whole issue of some of these houses that are either abandoned or could be taken down to put off-street parking on is the reason why we don't want to jam that many more people into that neighborhood. The idea is to thin it out so that there is adequate off-street parking so you don't have to be worrying about the parking ban if you had enough parking off-street you really wouldn't have these problems.

Ms. Barnes – I understand the parking ban...

Mayor Garofalo – What I'm saying is you know I think that's one of the issues that we have to look at.

Ms. Barnes – I don't understand what you're trying to say. Are you saying that if they minimize how many people who are on the street?

Mayor Garofalo – No, what I'm saying is if some of the houses were torn down say, the ones that are really in bad shape or abandoned or whatever, you could put parking on that property instead of having houses in there that would take some of the pressure off the parking on the street.

Ms. Barnes – In the meanwhile what can they do?

Mayor Garofalo – In the meanwhile that's something that we have to look at.

Mr. Kopjanski – Mr. Mayor if there are abandoned cars that are parked on that lot or they're unregistered and they're taking up legitimate parking spaces, that constitutes a zoning violation. And that property owner can be cited and fined for a zoning violation.

Ms. Barnes – If those cars are fined or a zoning violation am I going to be able to park there? In the meanwhile where am I going to park at?

Mr. Kopjanski – Well that's what parking spaces are for. For the residents with units on the premises. Not for strangers, not for tenants of other properties – not to lease for parking spaces or garages to people off premises. Those parking spaces are for the residents of that building and that building alone.

Ms. Barnes – Thank you.

Frances Tracz, 152 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – There's an abandoned parking lot right across the street from my house. Can't the chains be taken off so maybe people could park there for off-street parking? It needs some repairs – it's kind of neglected.

Mayor Garofalo – It's something that can be looked at. The City owns it – we acquired it from the bank and it's adjacent to the Spooner House property.

George Kostopoulos, United Home Properties, Representing 274 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – I would like to understand a couple of things about the garbage collection rules so I can get the tenants to conform there. I bought new garbage cans with wheels that close. Some of them have lasted a whole two weeks – it looks like they've been broken open on the garbage trucks. I've had a crew go out there and clean three times. I've also had somebody anonymously leave us a message at the office telling us that there's garbage out in the street. Unfortunately they didn't leave us a number or a name for us to call back so that we could work with them to try to clean it up. Because I'm perplexed as to how I have garbage that's put out there – it doesn't seem to get all picked up. I don't know if there's too many cans there, I don't know if the cans are supposed to stay at the curb. The company has only acquired the property in April and I would like to know what the rules are? What you would like us to do?

Mayor Garofalo – The property that you're talking about if you're looking at the back of the old school are they to the right?

Mr. Kostopoulos – This is immediately to the right.

Mayor Garofalo – Yeah, those are a problem.

Mr. Kostopoulos – Yeah, well how do we – I don't know how our tenants are even going to bring the stuff (inaudible).

Mayor Garofalo – If you leave us your telephone number we'll be happy to get that straight. Because I anticipated that that issue would probably come up. From the people across the street – we don't want anybody punching anyone out, but...

Mr. Kostopoulos – Personally from an outsider looking in I think the street is great. It wasn't what I expected when the company acquired it. I go out at ten o'clock at night – it's a very nice street. I think it's got room to improve but everybody's talking here about the street going downhill – I see people working, I see people cleaning. I paid to have people go there three times to pick up the garbage. If people think there's a lot of garbage there you should have seen what it cost to take the garbage that the previous owner had stored in the basement out. I think the street has a lot of potential. The access is great to the railroad station and I see a lot of people putting a lot of effort into it. So please if any of you have a problem with what's going on at that property please leave your name, please leave your number. We want it to get better and we'll do whatever it takes to make it better.

Mayor Garofalo – If you would just leave your number with the clerk I think we could clarify whatever miscommunication there is on that, if there is.

Mr. Kostopoulos – Sure.

Mayor Garofalo – The other thing is for the people who may not have been here at the beginning we do have a sign up sheet that should be going around. So make sure that you sign that sheet with your name, address, telephone number, email so that we may contact you to follow up on this particular meeting.

Richard Kastens – I own the property right across the street and I'm glad to see that this gentleman is here tonight. And I'm glad to hear that he's been doing something about it. I had taken some pictures on Saturday – I didn't get a chance to develop them unfortunately.

Mayor Garofalo – What's the numbers of your property?

Mr. Kastens – 269 and 279. It's the six-family row house brick. (Inaudible) we're constantly doing work to and we have some other work we're going to be doing to those porches – dressing it up. Our tenants at the present time are very good. They're out there and they do pick up. They do clean up. They have thrown stuff out there as of recently and I say within the past month I have picked it up and taken it to the dump because they're not going to do it. If we wait for the City to do it, it's a long time in coming. You call for a pickup and it's maybe a month a way and unfortunately the tenants will put it out today - they don't care. And I've gotten the call from the Police Department in the past on a couple of – no, from the City, I'm sorry from the (Inaudible) have called me in the past and we've gone over there and probably taken the stuff away only to divert the problem. Because we can't get the tenant to take it back in. I think you should have some kind of fining system that you could fine the tenant rather than the landlord. My experience is when you reach into somebody's pocket they pay attention. And more so if a tenant is fined and we don't have the – we can't do it unfortunately. We have late charges and stuff. They break some of these rules there's nothing we can do about it. But the – his garbage situation has been there long before him. I've complained on it. I think you know I've been down to your office with pictures on several occasions in regards to it. Because we try to show that property and we're not going to get a decent tenant. They look across the street they don't care how ours look and they see this horrendous amount of garbage. You know those cans – I don't think he realizes it – those cans don't belong on the street. Those cans do not belong up on the sidewalk behind the fence. They don't belong on the sidewalk. They have to be taken back in and you know put in the yard by the house in the backyard – whatever he dictates at that point. He's asking for that clarification. And I think that's because our tenants bring them back in and they put them down the staircase or close to the house on the side, whatever. And I'd like to see the stuff there. And when I see this kind of garbage I knock on these tenant's doors and tell them to get rid of it and if they can't then I have my man throw it on the truck. But I don't want to do that every day of the week for them. It's an unnecessary thing.

Mayor Garofalo – I think we hopefully solved one issue here.

Mr. Kostopoulos – I do the same thing. I've had that three times already.

Mr. Kastens – I think you should create an ordinance to fine the tenant and go after – you know the Chief indicated when there's a problem with this stuff being put out early they issue warrants and rightfully so because that's the law. I think there should be some leeway in there to come after the tenant who is causing it because sometimes we can't do it. I mean we just don't have the power to control – we can try to evict them – you get into court and try to evict them because of that the judge is going to give them six months. You're fighting a losing battle on that end of it. And that garbage is a real problem that I'm very concerned with and have been. Thank you.

Ron Palumbo, 209-211 and 207 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – Regarding bulk trash – I mean I live in Milford and what they do is starting around March or April every other month they have a specified day for bulk trash pick up. And you wouldn't have to call the Department of Public

Works or anything. They'd have it – you would know when it would be. Like I say March 15 you know they're going to have bulk trash pick up. You could put everything out for bulk trash on that date and the City comes along and takes it. Then two months later they do the same thing. Instead of having to call the Department of Public Works and say you're going to put something out and they don't come and they don't take it and it sits out there then you have another problem.

Mayor Garofalo – Well that – usually what happens is – what the procedure is you call up and you get a date – they give you an appointment – whatever, however it is. And then you put it out the weekend before. But usually it's ahead. I mean you have to schedule - it's usually probably it could be anywhere from two weeks or a month ahead.

Mr. Palumbo – Two weeks it looks terrible.

Mayor Garofalo – No you call first and then you put it out. I mean it could be looked at. It's an issue that could be looked at. It's an issue that goes back and forth. Because what happens is – I think they used to do that before from what I understand from Public Works – the Commissioner is not here tonight. But they used to do it that way and then people would put it out whatever – say it was the last two weeks in March for an example – and they would pick it up and then people would start putting stuff out anyway and then it would be chasing it all over the place – doubling back to where they were supposed to go. And we have certain areas where they just put out garbage – just put it out without calling. And it's a problem and frankly the problem is relegated to certain areas. And is it the tenants, is it the landlords? I mean that's kind of like a ping-pong – you can go back and forth. But you know we'll have the Aldermen look at what is the most efficient way to do it. A lot of towns don't even do bulk pick up. It's the responsibility, in a lot of towns, it's the responsibility – you know you call somebody with a truck and they bring it to the landfill. That's another option because frankly it's very expensive for us. We have two guys – at least two to four guys every Tuesday, that's the day they come and pick up for six to eight months a year. Well that's a lot of man-hours with the dump truck, with the Payloader, and so forth that really as the budget gets tighter and things – we really have to look at it. Because a lot of times we do have a charge for multiple pick-ups but it really is a very expensive proposition for the City to look at that. So there's a whole bunch of different ways to look at it. And one of the ways that some of the other towns have, like they have a preferred vendor that you can call who does it. It's outside of the City you call them up and whoever the tenant or the landlord pays them whatever it is - \$50.00, \$100.00 and you just take all the stuff away. That's how they do it in other towns so that's not a problem that way. But that's a matter that we will take under advisement and have them look at it.

Leo Moscato, 34 Lewis Street, Derby, CT – I don't necessarily live down in the neighborhood. I do have business there. I'm quite concerned about the crime problem. Trash problem I think we can get by that. Now, if you're going – I'm going to suggest a suggestion on how to stop some crime. I think everybody knows who their neighbors are. I think everybody could call their neighbor if there is a guy that they see outside and want to get rid of them. The police now you say maybe they don't care about what they're doing. I think the police will be there in the nick of time if you call them. Neighborhood crime watch is what I think it's all about. I think the people should know that this is what it's all about working together with their own neighbors. I think we should buckle down – we're here tonight. I see people from all over Caroline Street so let's do it man. Get the crime out of the neighborhood.

John Izzo, 12 Shortell Drive, Ansonia, CT / Owner of 91-93 Caroline Street, Derby, CT and five other properties in Derby, CT – I want to thank the City for calling this meeting tonight. Unfortunately it took an isolated shooting to bring everyone together but I hope this is the first of several open dialogues between the City Officials and the residents of Caroline Street and the owners, be it an absentee owner or not. Perhaps the City can consider quarterly meetings until things turn around as a show of the City's commitment to solving the problems that are there. I don't believe the problems on Caroline Street occurred overnight; I don't think they will be fixed overnight. I think it's going to be a combination of an effort between all of the people in this room and others. But again I think and I appreciate the on going dialogue. With respect to the suggestion that many of the problems on Caroline Street are the result of absentee landlords or landlords who fail to screen their tenants properly or the tenants that are subsidized are the worst tenants, I can tell you that most of my tenants are subsidized and my best tenants are the subsidized tenants. I would suggest and hope that the City would consider some sensitivity training for certain departments. I've been doing this eight years in the City of Derby now and I can tell you most of the people that I contact are very professional and very cordial - if I have a problem with a tenant or a property or trash pick up, whatever the case may be. However, there are incidences where clearly when you make a call and indicate it's Caroline Street or one of my properties on Hawkins Street or one of my properties on Hawthorne Avenue – the tend to be rougher areas of town, I don't get the same response I do as if my mother-in-law calls who happens to live on the hilltop of Derby.

Mayor Garofalo – Yeah, but she knows the inside track.

Mr. Izzo – I think it's...

Mayor Garofalo – That was – she called with a problem and I took care of it for her.

Mr. Izzo – I understand. I just think it's more of a perception problem than anything. Yes there's some drug activity and some criminal activity. I see there's a blue pin on my property for a felony arrest I believe last year. I'm very happy that pin is there. It was a tenant that I inherited when I bought the property – it was a gentleman who I didn't know who he was until I saw his name. But I knew (inaudible) because I got a call from a friend of mine on Derby P.D. – he was living with his girlfriend – he was not on the lease. I was not aware that he was even there. But I was very pleased to see his name in the paper when he was arrested and he's where he needs to be and I commend the Police Department for that and I hope they continue to do the good job that they do. But I just wanted to say I appreciate the dialogue and I hope the City makes this the first of many, as I said, maybe quarterly meetings to keep the dialogue going until things can get turned around. But I certainly appreciate it as a non-resident.

Mayor Garofalo – You said there were three issues that were – one was about the screening, one was about the absentee landlords – those two, I made those two comments so – I mean clearly we're having a productive dialogue but I think that clearly there is a pattern that there are some landlords who clearly don't screen and clearly are absentee in a sense that they don't take care of those properties. I'm not saying that it's you but if the shoe –

Mr. Izzo – And there's plenty of them...

Mayor Garofalo – Frankly and lovingly to everybody, if the shoe fits put it on. I did not hear, however, anybody say anything about the subsidized tenants or whatever. I don't know where that came from because I haven't heard that said publicly. He said it but I...

? – Inaudible.

Mayor Garofalo – I understand that but...

Mr. Izzo – Maybe it's not – no City Official mentioned the subsidized thing it's just again one of those perception things. And I just think – personally I've had a very good experience with my subsidized tenants. I tend to have more problems with cash tenants. My subsidized tenants tend to appreciate the assistance they get from the federal government. They realize they have strict guidelines they have to abide by. I've evicted many of them having said that because they did not follow the guidelines. And we do get some bad tenants and I'll be the first to admit that. Mr. Sill called me last year – he witnessed some of my tenants throwing trash over the back porch. I didn't want to believe it, then I got numerous calls – people witnessed them throwing the trash over the bank. I had paid to clean up that property and subsequently evicted three of the four tenants a couple of years ago as a result of that incident. So I believe many landlords will do their job as evidence that they are not law-abiding tenants and sometimes that's what it takes. Thank you.

Chris Peterson, Director of Real Estate for HOME, Inc. – We have three properties – 116 Fourth Street, 125 Caroline Street and one at 175 Caroline Street. I think that it's unfortunate that there's some misunderstanding about HOME, Inc. and it's mission. I don't know where that comes from, but I would look forward to discussing that with you and anyone else. I would say that HOME, Inc., has a very good history of working collaboratively both with the City and their neighborhoods. And we look very much forward to doing that. I'm very encouraged that there are some of the other people here in this neighborhood. We're looking forward to a big investment in this neighborhood and therefore we're very concerned about the neighborhood and we would very much look forward to, as one gentleman over here suggested, immediately getting to work on block watches and anything else that we can do to help. So I just want to go on record that we very much look forward to working with you.

Mayor Garofalo – Anybody else that did not speak?

Erwin Williams, 125 Bradley Terrace, Derby, CT (Commander of the American Legion Post – 230 Caroline Street, Derby, CT) – I've been active down there for many years. I spend a few hours probably a day down there – see a lot of activity – what goes on in the neighborhood. I try to do my best to keep it up and clean and I'm here tonight mainly to learn about the neighborhood watch. And I would hope that when the neighborhood watch gets started – gets set up – that they make the American Legion part of that so that we can become involved in our community and do our share of our part. And we will offer the building down there on the downstairs so they have a meeting room for the neighborhood watch program if it gets started. Thank you.

Mayor Garofalo – Thank you.

Joe Arruzza, 263-267 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – I am the owner of the building. I was owner-occupied there for two years. When I moved in there in 2001, the neighborhood was a little rough

– you had some troublemakers out there. I moved out about a year ago and I saw some big improvements. But there are still issues with crime, theft. I think that – and drugs and all that stuff – I think that part of that is a combination of neighborhood watch – I think they would greatly help. I also think that perhaps having two officers that would patrol by feet, a foot patrol of the neighborhood just going up and down Caroline and up and down Minerva, getting to know the neighbors, getting to know who's in the neighborhood, and actually interacting with them so then while they're there initially they may not know anybody, but over a period of time they'll know who belongs in that neighborhood and who doesn't. So then the person who's not there regularly stands out like an oddball and they can spot them like that. Regarding codes and fixing up and home improvement, I'm for the building. I believe that's one key aspect in renovating this City. This City has tremendous potential, especially Caroline and Minerva Streets. I know I have to set up an appointment with the Fire Marshal for an inspection and I'm going to do that tonight. But my issue is (inaudible) for like the apartments for the Fire Marshal is one smoke detector – the Building Inspector one per bedroom, and the State may have another code. I don't know all the codes. But I think there should be uniformity on those codes because if you have a State code that says one thing, a Fire Marshal code saying another and then the Building Inspector having another set of codes that supercedes everybody...

Mayor Garofalo – Well there's two codes – there's the Building Code and the Life Safety Code and believe me our lives – everybody's lives – yours, ours, would be a lot easier if it was all just put in to be the same so you know one shot – what is it? But that's not us though.

Mr. Arruzza – Right.

Mayor Garofalo – That's something that has to happen at the State level and you have the Fire Marshal lobby, and the Building Official lobby...

Mr. Arruzza – (Inaudible) you want to go and do something on the building and it comes almost to the point where it's cost prohibitive.

Mayor Garofalo – It's tricky.

Mr. Arruzza – Because you get (inaudible) the red tape. And I've done a lot of things – I've went in and renovated the inside of the apartment – nothing structurally – but cosmetics – like such as like ripping up linoleum and putting down ceramic floors because I would like to have the quality of tenant and create a neighborhood where everybody enjoys living on that street. And I think that comes into play when it comes time to fix or renovate and say well the State code says this, but I say it needs to be this way per Derby Ordinance. So I mean I don't know all the regulations and I don't state to know, but I try to keep it as clean as possible. Sometimes you get messes and as far as like the blight issues with people leaving stuff on the property, I think the landlord has to take some responsibility as well as the tenant, and it should be the landlord's responsibility to mention to the tenant – listen this is not the designated pick up. They should know, but even if not, the landlord should take care of it if it's not being handled correctly. Because if it's going to cost the landlord money then in turn pass it on to the tenant that caused the problem. You can give him a warning the first time but if it's a constant issue, then you charge him. If it's going to cost me \$50.00 to dump it now it's going to cost you \$50.00 to dump it because I'm the one handling it or \$75.00. When I was living two years on Caroline Street one of the buildings to the left was just in horrific shape. I mean it's a great building, it's got character, but once a year that lawn was just a total

shambles. As far as the blight issue is concerned, and at the time also the building to the right but that's cleaned up tremendously, and that's because I built a dialogue with that landlord and that owner of that property and we're looking for the same common goals for Caroline Street. So if we can get a mutual relationship between tenants and landlords and what the City is looking to do with that street we can more quickly get there. And I also agree with Joe we should have quarterly meetings and keep the dialogue open as the improvements come to pass. Because then you can at least monitor the actions taken place and seeing if there's a result with what you're trying to accomplish so you want to know if you're moving forward and not backwards. I think that's key.

Mr. Kostopoulos – Excuse me Mayor could I say something quickly?

Mayor Garofalo – Sure. I just want to have the Fire Marshal or the Building Official respond to those and then we'll...

Mr. Hawks – I concur with you with the conflicts. They're very frustrating as Code Officials with the conflict there between the codes. Fortunately the State is in the process of finally getting off their keister and straightening out a lot of that stuff. The building code has been voted on and approved, the fire code looks like this year it's finally going to be adopted and new regulations. And they have gone and pulled out those conflicting issues that's always frustrating to us as Code Officials. (Inaudible) when I say my code the State Fire Code says one thing, the building code says something else and there's another statute that says most restrictive applies. And it's very frustrating on our end too when we have that conflict. So hopefully that's going to be resolved by the end of this year.

Mr. Arruzza – Right. And that also applies to – like say like I have some Section 8 or subsidized housing and Derby Housing has their own set of rules to what's normal. So I'm dealing with three different things and it's like – you know – which is which? And Derby Housing says my inspection passes you, you're fine, you don't need a C.O. But the Building Inspector is saying you need a C.O. And it gets to the point where it gets frustrating and prohibitive for the landlord to say hey, I don't want to invest in Derby. And I think Derby is a great town. It's just such a pain to be in Derby I'll go find property elsewhere. And I think if you can make it easier for the landlord to do what needs to be done in the best interest of Derby I think you'll get the business coming to Derby. I think you'll get people that want to invest in Derby. But because it's almost to the point where someone as an investor comes in and looks and says hey Derby's got great potential but man it's a nightmare to deal with all the red tape. They tend to bypass Derby and go elsewhere.

Mayor Garofalo – But these codes are not Derby's codes. It's the State Building Code; it's the State Fire Code and the Housing Authority Code, which is the Federal Housing Statute. If the other – I mean – if the other towns don't enforce them that's not – I mean – the codes that they're enforcing they're standard codes for everybody. The only one that locally, which has been a problem for the Health District is they enforce the Housing Code, which is separate of the Building and the Life Safety. The Housing Code – each town in the Valley I think has a different one. We adopted the same standards as the Building so that it's the standard thing – you would look in the book it's not – but some of the other ones that they have in the other towns they're homemade codes that could go back God knows how many years, right?

Mr. Kopjanski – Right.

Mayor Garofalo – So it's really a mess for them to even put forth but that's (inaudible) for renovations its more these guys. But those are the codes that should be in every town.

Mr. Arruzza – Right. And two questions not regarding particularly Caroline Street or Minerva but indirectly the rehabilitation of downtown Main Street – as far as the status of what's going on? I noticed they're knocking down some buildings and then all of a sudden work stopped. Also there was supposedly a HALO Project that was going on for a while that seems to be in limbo. I was kind of wondering if those were ever going to come to fruition?

Mayor Garofalo – Both are on the books. The Redevelopment Agency is going to be meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup> and there's going to be a design workshop on February 16<sup>th</sup>, which will be on a Wednesday night that's going to talk about in great detail the South Side of Main Street Project.

Mr. Arruzza – Okay, great. Is it going to be open to the public as well?

Mayor Garofalo – I'm sorry I made a mistake – I made the same mistake last week. February 9<sup>th</sup> is the Redevelopment Agency meeting – the second Wednesday. The third Wednesday is the 16<sup>th</sup>, which is the design charrette. Both meetings – any and all meetings are open to the public.

Mr. Arruzza – Okay, great. Thank you.

Mayor Garofalo – Both are going to start at 6:30 p.m. The Redevelopment is going to be here, the design workshop the location has not been decided yet. But you can check on our web page or call City Hall and they'll let you know.

Mr. Arruzza – Thank you.

Mayor Garofalo – Anybody else that has not had a chance to speak yet?

John McColl, 255-257 Caroline Street (Owner), Derby, CT – I own 255-257 Caroline Street. Mr. Cota lived in that building for a while. I have constructive criticism. I think a block watch is bad. You've got people driving through there that are shooting at each other. I don't care how well you train them; somebody is going to get hurt. The problem in that area is escalating to a point where it is beyond a block watch. Also, I want to apologize – I have three pins in my building, I had no idea. If you have a problem with a tenant why don't you notify the landlord? You want to blame the absentee landlords we can't fix what we don't know is going on.

Mayor Garofalo – Isn't it your job to know though?

Mr. McColl – It's my job to know you got arrested?

Mayor Garofalo – If I got arrested it would be on the front page of the paper.

Mr. McColl – You know what I mean. You know what I mean.

Mayor Garofalo – Well I mean we don't know...

Mr. McColl – I'm not throwing daggers here.

Mayor Garofalo – No, no, no – none taken. But we don't – I don't read each police report. A lot of times those pins – what color pin is on his building that you lived in Chief?

Chief Cota – When you see these pins they don't mean that there's always major crime. It could be a crime to the building. Misdemeanors were with red pins...

Mayor Garofalo – What color pins are in his?

Chief Cota – The red pins are misdemeanors, the blue pins and I believe if I'm not mistaken that – and I would have to look it up – I have a list of all of the – if you have a house in particular that you own and you want to know what happened on that property and you don't know, we can tell you what you need to know. What I'm saying it may not necessarily be the person in there, it could be crimes perpetrated on the people living there.

Mr. McColl – What I'm saying is this, if you know there is a problem tenant why don't you notify the landlord?

Mayor Garofalo – Well in some cases we have. Perhaps in your – I mean perhaps in your case it wasn't, but I think it's a point well taken. Perhaps we can quantify what these issues are and let you know. At least for the last...

Mr. McColl – You have all the tools on your side. You can either make it or break it, okay? You've got the Building Inspector, you've got the Chief of Police, you guys have all these laws and regulations. Why don't you enforce them?

Chief Cota – Let me – can I say this - we do enforce a lot of them. There's been a lot of arrests...

Mr. McColl – Not a lot – why not all?

Chief Cota – Hold on please – let me explain this. Just because you see all this stuff, that's the activity. I was actually more surprised that there was less activity than what I thought we would see once we reviewed all these. I really was very surprised to find out that there are some spots that are hot spots, so to speak, but the majority of those streets – the street is not bad. When you see only one or two pins in a house where you have six families in a year and a half that's not really so bad. That's not really bad at all. It's the type of activity you have and it's where the hot spots are. You see in one area here you see where there's a whole bunch of white ones. That means it could be disputes. A neighbor might say hey I can't sleep during the day – somebody is making noise. It could be a noise complaint. I mean it could be neighbors hollering at each other. It could be domestic disputes, minor disturbances and stuff like that. A couple of red pins those could be thefts or something of that nature. It's not always a criminal element that's happening. But you need to know that there's a lot of calls for services. When you see a (inaudible) that many times in these areas I would want to know why I see a police car that many times. It may not be that there's a large amount of crime – it just may be there's a lot of calls for service. When I checked the medical emergency response for that area I was astonished. One house had eighteen ambulance calls to it. And that doesn't mean somebody isn't ill, but that's call volume. That's what we work with all the time – call volume. Another area had twenty-five medical emergencies – another one thirty. So that's how many times if you live in that particular

neighborhood that you see ambulances or police cars respond with lights on and stuff. And somebody spoke about accidents. There was seven accidents – two of them with injuries in a year and a half. Now I grant you that there is speeding, but unfortunately it's everywhere. It's very hard to grasp the fact that we live in a community that have older roads and we have cars that can run on the Autobahn. That's part of our problem. It's something that's a police issue but it's like this nightmare for every cop in the entire country. Because we have cars go faster than roads. I mean it's not excusable, but that's part of the issue. And the multitude of cars – everybody's got two, three cars in their house. So people that live in a six-family home that's twelve cars. I don't know where you park – in the house – I don't know. Because where you put that many cars those are real issues. But then the City had the real issue. (Inaudible) - dangerous I didn't say that.

Mr. McColl – I didn't say that.

Chief Cota – Never would we want anyone to get involved with something that would injure them. We only want information – we want the information. We don't want to share the information with anybody. We don't want anyone running outside and getting themselves shot – by no stretch of the imagination. The neighborhood crime watch, if you listen to our presentation – you'll have the opportunity to come to it – we'll send somebody out there – we'll have plenty of material. They'll explain everything you need to know in detail. How to protect yourself from not having anything happen to you. And you might be surprised that neighbors getting together and determining that they want to make their neighborhood better is really the way to go – it really is. If you go down Anson Street during the day – remember everybody used to have this big thing – Anson Street is terrible – you know there's still as many people on Anson Street as there always was. When you go down there during the daytime it's clean – you don't see trash out there, you don't see abandoned cars out there anymore. Because people have decided to take it upon themselves to have a little action there. There's problems – they say a lot of active on Hawkins Street – there's still a lot of activity on these streets but it's mostly people. There's nothing wrong with people motion. The issue is do we have crime motion? That's what I worry about. And if the neighborhood feels that that's the way it is on Caroline Street and Minerva Street, then that's what we want to deal with and we want to be able to give you the tools to work with that too. Because sometimes something so simple – I think I know a lot – I know nothing because every time I think I know something somebody tells me something and I say how didn't I know that? My whole life why didn't I know that? That's all we're looking to do. Maybe we can give you tools and you can say that is so simple how come I didn't know that? It doesn't mean we're dumb; it just means that we don't pay attention to everything and sometimes it just takes a little help to fix it. And maybe that's what will happen there.

Mr. McColl – Well here's a for instance – and your point is well taken – I had the opportunity a little while back to work on one of my apartments and Dave can witness what I'm going to say. I stood on the corner and watched drug dealers for over three hours work right out in the open. There was an officer that came down the street – I stopped him and I told this officer you got drug dealing going on down there. Okay, I'll take care of it - in the other direction. I had during the summer months I talked to a friend of mine and I asked him what's going on with all these drugs and shooting on Caroline Street? His response to me was there's nothing we can do. We move one out, they move another one in. With an attitude like that you're already dead before you even start. You made a comment before when you were talking about the shootings – you said they're shooting at each other, correct?

Chief Cota – Well at one occasion, yes.

Mr. McColl – It looked like that.

Chief Cota – Yes it did.

Mr. McColl – That's what you said, right?

Chief Cota – Yes it did.

Mr. McColl – You think if I stood between them they're going to stop shooting?

Chief Cota – I just said...

Mr. McColl – If I stand between them would they stop shooting? Absolutely not.

Chief Cota – Why would you stand between two people that are shooting?

Mr. McColl – Suppose I'm standing there when it starts?

Chief Cota – What you're asking there is we want to resolve these issues as much as the people do. Why would we not want to resolve that particular issue? In a year and a half period there were four shootings. Two of them actually hit buildings – the other two we don't know what it hit except for one where the guy was just shooting in the air for whatever reason – I guess he thought he was hot stuff – he ended up getting arrested. But the others there's reasons for those but we've got to nail them down.

Mr. McColl – Wait a minute. I think you're mistaking what I'm saying here. I'm not throwing stones at nobody. I think you're all doing a hell of a job. But I think right now the situation on Caroline Street is so far out of hand that you can't get a handle on it.

Mayor Garofalo – What do you suggest?

Mr. McColl – I don't know.

Mayor Garofalo – Okay.

Mr. McColl – I'm not going to lie and tell you I have the answers – I don't.

Mayor Garofalo – That's fair.

Mr. McColl – I personally feel in my heart that a block watch is wrong. Somebody is going to get hurt.

Mayor Garofalo – Fair enough.

Mr. Izzo – I would say a block watch is a good idea.

Mayor Garofalo – Everybody had a chance to talk...

Mr. McColl – (Inaudible) as far as what I brought up before if there's a problem in the building – for instance I have three pins in my building how long would it take him to find a landlord and call him? If I know I have three pins – as far as I'm concerned one pin is too many, okay? If I got three pins in my building I should have been informed. What he can't do as an officer I can do as an individual. I'm not bound by the same laws and regulations he is. I can do things that he can't.

Mr. Izzo – Yeah but you got to get involved. It's your business...

Mr. McColl – I am involved...

Mayor Garofalo – One at a time.

Mr. Izzo – It's your business to know who lives in your building...

Mayor Garofalo – John...

Mr. McColl – I do know who lives in my building.

Mr. Izzo – Don't blame it on the police because they...

Mr. McColl – I'm not blaming anybody.

Mayor Garofalo – John – he's got the floor. I understand – we're not commenting who can follow the law and who can't follow the law. My recommendation is everybody follow the law.

Mr. McColl – That's not what I meant. What I'm saying is if I knew those were happening I guarantee you those people wouldn't be there anymore because I'd have them out.

Mayor Garofalo – Well I think your point is well taken and I think what we'll do is we'll put together these incidences and inform all the landlords or the owners of the property. But it might be that somebody might – a crime could be as the Chief said before – what I heard you say is it could have been committed against one of the people that lives in that house. Is that correct Chief?

Chief Cota – Yes, that's correct.

Mayor Garofalo – So whatever it is we'll inform everybody. And it will probably give us, you know, quantifying the...

Mr. McColl – See I'm an absentee landlord and I take it personal when somebody tells me that I'm part of a problem – I'm not. But I can't work on something I have no knowledge of.

Mayor Garofalo – That's fair. We're going to get you the information.

Mr. McColl – Thank you.

Mr. Izzo – Mayor, may I speak to block watch?

Mayor Garofalo – Anyone who would like to speak again we would be happy to do that but anybody that did not speak yet.

Ronald Palumbo, Jr., 206-207 Caroline Street (owner with his father), Derby, CT – We have the most pins we're noticing. We inherited some people in the building and you know we're screening people. We take part in the State program as well. We have a good experience with it as well so we don't have anything against that. We're trying to clean up as much as possible. We received notice about the blight. We're not absentee, but we're not there every day either. I'm in sales so I drive by as often as I can. You know abandoned cars and things like that – I can't tow an abandoned car. I would love to get at it in my driveway or whatever if it was there if I had that problem sometimes I do, sometimes I don't. I can't tow an abandoned car if I don't own it, doesn't have plates on it, it's not registered to anybody I'm stealing it at that point. I can't empower myself – I can't even put it in my own lease to say if you have an abandoned car on the premises I can get rid of it. Maybe I can fine a tenant for garbage – you can write that in the lease I suppose – I don't even know how legal that is. But those are some things that I'm also dealing with. When I get a tenant about blight you're attacking me – you're not attacking you're saying hey you got a problem here, you know? And you're saying you're going to arrest me...

Mayor Garofalo – The blight is a civil (inaudible).

Mr. Palumbo – Right. But at the same standpoint I can only pass the word along. You know what I mean? I can't make somebody do something every month, you know? As much as I may try. But I mean I am making an effort – we are making an effort. We've put money into the property, you know, and we've dealt with the Building Inspector and the Fire Marshal and those codes those are everywhere. I'm a contractor and no matter where you go one code always supercedes another and another code supercedes another – it all has to come down from the top there's nothing you can do about it really. As far as the pins, you can go down to the Police Department and get a report on the activity at your home. If you went and said this is my address, this is the landlord, I went and got that (inaudible) activity report. Just give them the date and they'll tell you what dates they were there, why they were there and what happened. And mine was one of the worst and I'm in the process of cleaning it up. But the information is out there and I think a block watch may be a good idea and the more people looking at something the better. I think we're all here with the interest to make Caroline Street better and that's the important thing. You know everyone's here saying we want to make it better; we want to make it better. I think we can do that. My point is to say the information is out there. If you want to go look at it go to the Police Department and say how much activity has been at my apartment, at my place? And they'll tell you the dates and times. That's all I wanted to say.

Mayor Garofalo – Thank you. I think it's encouraging for everybody to know – not just by the people who have spoken here tonight but for the people that are owners that did not speak and tenants that are here clearly everybody has a sincere interest in trying to straighten this out and come up with different solutions that will make it a better situation for everybody. And I think that's been a positive part of this meeting. Anybody else who did not speak yet?

Virginia Russo, 203-205 Minerva Street, Derby, CT – Several years ago there was a drug bust on my second floor – I live on the first floor. I had no knowledge of it. I didn't know about it until it was in the paper. The tenant took care of it probably – the man left and that was fine. But I had no

knowledge. And I'm interested in the block watch, helping to inform people how to screen better and signs to look for.

Mayor Garofalo – Thank you. Anybody that did not speak yet?

Pamela Ortiz, 166 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – We're owners of a three-family. We did a screening process through a real estate agency. We paid \$18.00 and they did a background check, financial background and everything and that worked really well for us. So real estate agencies if you contact them they'll do that for a screening process. All of the issues that I was concerned about have been addressed and discussed. I do have a question still about the garbage pick up. And what can be done to improve that. I have pictures from this weekend (attached to minutes) and it is disgraceful the way that the garbage pick up is left. My daughter drove up and down the street ten, fifteen minutes after it was picked up and the garbage cans were thrown all over. There was still trash all over the ground. We've done before and after pictures and I don't know who to give it to to address the issue?

Mayor Garofalo – Well you can give it here and we'll get a copy for all the members of the board and the Street Department who manages the contractor who does the garbage pick up.

Alderwoman Sherry Pflugh – I just wanted to mention that I gave Mrs. Ortiz a package of information that I got off the Internet on neighborhood watch and setting up a community watch/block watch team. And (inaudible) give that information to anyone else who is interested – I just got it off of the Internet. But it's really a good introductory to what you should do, how you set it up, and where you go from there. How you communicate with your police (inaudible). So if anybody wants that – and I also have a copy for the record if you want that.

Chief Cota – We have a block watch person who is trained in that area – we sent him out to (inaudible) classes. He has everything we hope that anybody would need to (inaudible) plus take the input to them too. Tommy D'Onofrio is the person.

Phil Oraziotti, Water Street, Derby, CT – Marc, it's obvious, Mayor it's obvious the people here in the room tonight are concerned about the problem with Caroline Street. The absentee landlords are here and also the landlords who are trying to fix their buildings up. I think Dave Kopjanski had said something that all it takes is a phone call to his department to get these landlords who are not taking care of their property properly and it wouldn't cost them anything. But there's a possibility that there's a fear on some of the tenants that if they do call and complain about their buildings or whatever they might get a raised rent, or also possibly be evicted for whatever reasons. So I don't know if there's a law or whatever that protects them from making complaints to the Building Inspector to protect them so they don't get you know charged or...

Mayor Garofalo – I've heard that concern raised as it relates to the Police Department but I mean in terms of – and there's issues if the Police don't have witnesses or somebody to show that there's been an issue then there's concerns. However, that being aside, if there's issues of either the Housing Code or the Blight or the Fire Code or anything like that, they don't need a witness. If there's a complaint they can go out and check it out. I mean the blight has to do with the exterior of the building frankly.

Mr. Oraziotti – What I'm talking about is the violations in the house itself.

Mayor Garofalo – What I'm saying is he doesn't have to have a written complaint on that. It could be initiated by – it's in the code anybody can initiate that whether it's any of the public officials or the Building Official himself could look at that.

Mr. Kopjanski – I'm not bound to disclose the names of anyone. I just say there's been a complaint of a particular property.

Mr. Oraziotti – It's obvious like I said before the landlords here are definitely concerned about their properties. They are doing what they're supposed to be doing. Maybe there could be something sent out to the absentee landlords who didn't show up for the meeting tonight that there will be follow-up meetings and they would be obliged to attend.

Mayor Garofalo – We did send a letter to every property owner that we have their name on a card from the Assessor's Office. So everybody – the Caroline Street people...

Mr. Oraziotti – Maybe they can check into...

Mayor Garofalo – But also we tried to make sure that the people who were involved in distributing, which they did a good job, to the tenants because obviously we wouldn't automatically know who the tenants are. That's why I want everybody if they didn't sign with Mr. Lutz who is in the back there's a sheet – don't forget to sign your name, address, phone number and email so that we can communicate with you by whatever means is easiest. I'm sorry you were going to say...

Mr. Oraziotti – I was going to say that maybe Dave could follow up and maybe the houses that have problems on that street that are not here tonight and those are the ones that really have to be addressed to say look you know these people are concerned about their own street and properties – it's about making enforcement on those people.

Mayor Garofalo – And if somebody does not want to raise an issue here, we'll be here after the meeting. Everybody is going to stay so if you would like to address that privately and anytime you can call or email to get in touch with us. Anybody else?

Mr. Hawks – There's a lot of times that I receive phone calls at my office (inaudible) problem in their house or whatever and myself or one of my staff we have no problem, even if we've been through the house in the past six months, going back and taking a look at that. And a lot of times there are landlords that we can't get a hold of – they ignore our phone calls. And I actually go to the house and put a letter under the tenant's door asking them permission to go in and do the inspection because they have the right to let me into their apartment. Then I send the landlord the list of violations – now he's liable to fix that within a specified period of time. So I have no problem receiving phone calls.

Mr. Oraziotti – If they don't fix it?

Mr. Hawks – If they don't fix it they're subject to arrest.

Mr. Oraziotti – And how many people on Caroline Street have been arrested?

Mr. Hawks – There's five people in the City of Derby that they're landlords that have already been arrested.

Mr. Oraziotti – Caroline Street?

Mr. Hawks – Not Caroline Street. What I'm saying on Caroline Street we have been through a majority of the buildings and they have been brought up to code. We're going through right now again – we go through continuously all the stock and we have different changes of tenants and landlords and we go through again. And I'm just saying if anybody has any concerns and they feel that there may be a code violation in their particular apartment I urge them to call me. I do not tell the landlord a certain apartment called, I just go there during my regular inspection and request permission for the tenant to let me in.

Mayor Garofalo – Anybody else that did not speak yet? Commissioner...

Police Commissioner John Kowarik, 62 High Street, Derby, CT – I would just like to say a few things. The Chief is looking into surveillance cameras for Caroline Street – the feasibility of it. He is working on the pricing – what it would cost and how to hook it up to the Police Station. We will address foot patrol for Caroline Street. We will also do some sensitivity training for the officers – people are complaining about the way the officers talk to people on Caroline Street. We will look at sensitivity training. And trash pick up I would like to address trash pick up. People should know that they have to put trash out the night before – not a week before. And the cans have to go back. Another issue with trash pick up is I live on High Street – I have to pick up garbage on my street after the garbage men come and dump out the garbage barrels because it just blows all over the street. This company we have is the worst that we have ever had. So we should look at the new contract and get somebody else. But I'm sick and tired of picking up trash on High Street. It just blows – almost a thousand feet of frontage to clean up trash on High Street every week. And cardboard – if anybody puts out a cardboard box the garbage men won't take it. It just stays there and just blows all around. We've got to address these issues with the garbage people.

Mayor Garofalo – Believe me, we're addressing those...

Mr. Kowarik – Do they want to pick up garbage in Derby or they don't.

Mayor Garofalo – It's every street – it's not.

Mr. Kowarik – It's just blowing all over the town the cardboard.

Mayor Garofalo – Trust me Mr. Kowarik I know. If you want to hear my wife she's given me a rather lengthy lecture on it.

Mr. Kowarik – Again, we will work – the Police Department is working to get pricing on surveillance cameras. We'll do some sensitivity training for the officers and we'll also discuss foot patrol.

Mayor Garofalo – Anybody else that did not speak yet?

Mr. Kostopoulos – I've listened to a lot of very good ideas. I've heard a lot of passion behind the ideas. I think we started to generate some synergy. The problem however is we got forty or fifty

sets of eyes – not one group. How does the group communicate with each other? That's the real problem. Not if there's garbage or if there's this. Every person – the common denominator – everything that I've heard everybody say is you didn't tell me that I had a problem with my tenant. How do I tell the other person? The question I have for the town is will the town sponsor and I think the way to create a lot of interest in the neighborhood is would the town sponsor a web site for Caroline Street? And if the town won't do it I'll talk to my company to see if they will. But I think if we set up a web site – you can't call – everybody is too busy, everybody has a life – they're trying to raise kids, they're trying to do this. And if they're a landlord they're trying to run a piece of property. If we had a web site where a person could take five minutes – not everybody has time to shop or see what the news is or see what the weather is in Hawaii – if everybody put an idea out, we create a closed chat room and people just left even anonymous ideas there we could start to talk. And eventually maybe we could create an association. I think that there's a lot of ideas. It's the implementation that's always the problem with things like this as far as communication. So I ask the town is this something that you can do or should I...

Mayor Garofalo – We could include it – I have your name and number – we can include it as part of our web site. There's specific – we have the chat capability on the web site and we can do that. But I do want to be mindful the web site doesn't presume – it's one way – but we're always sensitive to the fact that not everybody has the capability to access the web site even though there are public web sites that they can access at TEAM and at the Public Library and so forth. But we don't mean to presume that's the only way. But it is certainly – for those that do have access it's certainly a lot easier. But we want to make certain not to make the presumption that that's necessarily an inclusive way to get everyone.

Mr. Kostopoulos – I think we have a lot of synergy and a lot of passion going...

Mayor Garofalo – Right – we want to harness that and certainly the web site will be a way for a lot of people – the ones that can't we can have a phone tree or snail mail...

Mr. Kostopoulos – You can start posting and if somebody feels to leave their name and to call me as I've heard a lot of people say leave it on the web site and that way if a person doesn't have a computer maybe you can print up this stuff once a month and send it.

Mayor Garofalo – And even if we set up a situation where people can leave the message and we can post it to the web site.

Mr. Kostopoulos – Absolutely.

Mayor Garofalo – Okay. There's a young lady in the back who did not speak yet.

Candace Bryant McKay, 266 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – My comment as far as the web site – if you go to the library it's open Monday thru Wednesday until eight o'clock at night. And that way it can be anonymous because it's public access. Therefore if someone has a complaint they don't have to worry about, oh this person knows, because you'll never know who put what if they use a public (inaudible). And also you have the Derby Neck Library, which is open on Sunday. It's not that far. If everybody lives in the area they have to walk up the hill to get their kids from school they can stop by. I think that's a great idea and it can remain anonymous. Nobody will know who said what about nobody. That's what I think.

Mayor Garofalo – Anybody else that did not speak?

Mr. Izzo – Thank you. Again with respect to the block watch. In 1992 I organized the block watch on my street when I built my house, which is a fairly nice neighborhood on the hilltop of Ansonia. At that time in 1992 Kevin Hale was the block watch coordinator for Ansonia P.D. He's now the Chief of Police, as you know. And I can tell you that even though we've really never had a crime problem on our street, what it did for us we meet on a monthly basis and we still meet and what it has created is an awful lot of dialogue, a lot of friendships, a lot of communication. The Police Department has the material you will need to start the block watch. You develop the telephone link, which has everyone's name, address and telephone on it. It is predetermined who will call who in the event when you see suspicious activity. And there's parameters that are set up to determine what specific activity you classify as suspicious. I mean after all Dave and Phil and all these guys do a good job but they have 15,000 residents in Derby or there about that they have to serve and as a landlord I understand that they cannot service just me or my fellow landlords on Caroline Street. But I absolutely believe a block watch will do wonders for the street. Certainly it will open up the lines of communication. People will know who each other are. If you have these weekly, monthly meetings after a while they actually become social events and the only thing that can come out of it is more awareness, awareness, awareness for each other's properties. And I don't think you'll find a police department in the land that would not encourage that support and that help. So I just think a block watch, though it's not going to solve all the problems, would certainly help with the dialogue in communicating the information to the police.

Ms. Bryant – I want to know if the City of Derby had money in their petty cash? Who's responsible for the property like if it's across the street from you that there is no house and the grass is growing up? Because last summer my neighbors' kids got there and cut that, with him, they cut that grass – they cleaned. Because he cleans the front of his house, but all that high grass from the sidewalk makes his property look terrible because it's right across the street. There's no house there – right in back of the school and the grass kept growing up and those kids got up there and cut the grass and cleaned it and all that work and it's not his property – but nobody was coming. His wife made a couple of calls – she even called you a couple of times – and she got no response. They did it like a couple of times – so he's taken his time and energy and his children to cut that grass.

Mayor Garofalo – Behind the school?

Ms. Bryant – Yeah. And it looks terrible. But when they clean it, it brightens up our spot. If you're cleaning your house and there's a whole bunch of trash across the street from you there is no house so you can't contact a landlord. So what do we do? We take the kids to the Mayor's Office and I go okay we cleaned up – do you have any money in that petty cash? He had his kids out there and they're like in sixth grade and they're good kids. And they busted their hump with the kids cleaning all that stuff up – you know what I mean? Because his dad wants his house to look nice and he's out there and he's working a sixteen-hour day – but he's still getting out there cleaning up stuff that's not his property. But it makes his property look terrible by being a mess. Who's responsible for that?

Chief Cota – There were three abandoned vehicles parked right where that heavy grass was and Gary Parker was notified...

Ms. Bryant – That was after he cleaned it out one time.

Chief Cota – Yes, that's correct. And then we – the thing they use to cut that goes along side the hill so it took a couple of weeks before we got the cars out of there to have Public Works come and cut it.

Ms. Bryant – Well tell them they owe those kids. They're at 275 Caroline Street, first floor. They worked hard as heck cleaning up that. I commended them and then I had this big party and I made sure they all came. And I rented the big sky balloon and I made fried dough and stuff because it was like the end of the summer. But they worked hard all summer long and they deserve something. You got to give kids something back to let them know they did this and you appreciate it. Because they're children and it's not their responsibility. But they took pride in where they live, which is a good thing that's how we're trying to bring our children up to take pride in where they live.

Mayor Garofalo – Ms. Vanessa though if you – if I knew you were making fried dough I would have brought a big bag of money over there for you – there's no problem with that. But if you can get me the names of those kids we'll try to see what we can do.

Ms. Bryant – Okay. I'll have them before I leave. This is their dad.

Mr. Abrantes – Those are my kids.

Mayor Garofalo – Did you get some fried dough at least? Your name and address...

David Abrantes, 257 Caroline Street, Derby, CT – I brought my house about ten months ago on Caroline Street. I've taken out two forty-yard dumpsters of garbage from that property – it's the ugly green house on that road. I don't know how else to describe it. I've been trying to fix it up and I've already sunk about fifteen, twenty thousand dollars into the property. I work thirteen hours a day. You said that Derby came and cut the grass. I was the one who picked up all the grass after they cut it. I found car batteries in there, I found this in there I found that in there. No one came to clean up. I made five, six, seven trips to the dump. I mean I want to see the road do good. I want to take care of my house. I want to see property values go up. I just want to see good things for Caroline Street. I show my kids the same thing.

Mayor Garofalo – Well fortunately that property has been turned over to Lincoln Senior Housing and it's been renovated as you can see Minerva Street now probably through the hole. And that whole backside is going to be reconfigured. So we're happy about that and we were happy to really facilitate that because the Board of Education turned it back over to the City ten years ago. It should be a great addition and it should be done by the end of the year.

Mr. Kastens – I have several pieces of property in Derby but Caroline Street is one that I'm on. A couple of comments here and a suggestion that I would like to make – I'm glad there is so much – and the Mayor has taken interest –(inaudible) our garbage collectors they're brutal. And they've been brutal and I have not knocked them all night because other people are. Shelton has a – probably the same company, I'm not sure – I think it's ADS but I'm not sure – Shelton's garbage setup is excellent. They take everything. The only thing they will not take is stoves, refrigerators,

metal, a couch that's got the pull-out in it – but they will take from all kinds of furniture out there and it goes with the garbage men – it's part of their contract.

Mayor Garofalo – With the garbage pick up?

Mr. Kastens – Absolutely. Sometimes we get a tenant who has moved out and they leave truckloads of stuff. We fill the sidewalk and it's gone. Sometimes I have to take the truck right in once they leave some of our property unfortunately. That's every single week when they're picking up. We've put dressers out there – all kinds of stuff. And that might offset some of the expenses you're talking about from the City. I don't know what kind of contract – I don't know if it's cost prohibitive...

Mayor Garofalo – I'm sure they're paying.

Mr. Kastens – I'm sure they are. That's why I say if it's cost prohibitive...

Mayor Garofalo – We'll check their contract.

Mr. Kastens – The other thing I had on my list is there's a couple of houses on Caroline Street that might border in the blight area. Not to come on those two particular houses that are in the middle of Caroline Street is where they are. They need a coat of paint or siding basically. And from those houses down there's a lot of one and two families that are you know really nice pieces of property. I've seen them suddenly – I'm noticing as I go down Caroline Street that wow it must be a new owner or something. The houses are looking good. Of course these are little bit of a drawback – both of those two houses – one is on each side of the street – one's a six, the other may be a two or three I'm not even sure – are new owners and I'm sure they're struggling. I'm just wondering if there are programs the City has – Shelton has different programs available over the years of matching grants and no interest types of things – and if some of that is available maybe those landlords – you know they have to bring it up to code on top of it so it will keep Dave busy if he has any spare time. But if there are any programs that the City has you might want to try to advertise and look into them and hopefully these landlords would consider it, especially where there's a no interest type of thing or a matching grant, etc. on those. And the only other thing I would like to address is the screening that has (inaudible) from landlords. I can tell you from a professional viewpoint, and I've been at this since the mid-60's being a landlord, when you say landlords don't screen. If they do or they don't there's reasons for it. Some of the things is if you take a piece of property on a street that has problems you got to cut your screening down. You've got to break your rules down; you've got to drop your price of your rent. You have to be willing to take a lesser tenant than you would like to have because as I had mentioned earlier the garbage problem, people say I don't want to live on Caroline Street. And I've had people call and say where's the property? And I tell them and they say I don't want to live there because they've heard or seen or may have known something (inaudible). So the landlord has a tough thing on screening to get a good tenant in because he ends up probably taking a very low rent in some cases. I know this is true in one of the buildings – the rent is extremely low. But he's trying to keep his cash flow to exist and we've all been there as landlords. It's mainly because the tenant will not live on that street because of what they see. What's going on that street. These couple of houses that need a coat of paint it would do wonders for the rest of that street. And a lot of landlords to get maybe another \$10.00 or \$20.00 makes a big difference in a multi-dwelling on his cash flow. And that's

the only reason I bring that up in relationship to some kind of program or assistance that might help improve that setup over there. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

Mayor Garofalo – Anyone else? Mr. Ahearn.

Police Commissioner David Ahearn – I've been taking a lot of notes here tonight and it seems the big consensus is the block watch. Erwin Williams, the Commander of Post 24, which is a beautiful building because I am a member of that Post, offered the use of that nice hall there so the neighborhood could form a block watch. Call the Police Department – the Chief down there and he will get a hold of Officer D'Onofrio, the block watch patrolman, and get organized. Pick your local captains and once the neighborhood – many eyes focused on one thing will accomplish what you want to do to get the neighborhood clean. Don't forget everybody lives all over Caroline Street – I have a list of all the addresses here – from one end of the street to the other all you need is a pair of eyes, communicate with each other. You've got a beautiful meeting hall – all you have to do is just walk right down the street – you don't even have to drive there. We'll be glad to accommodate you in the American Legion Post there – have your meetings there and you'll discuss and before you know it you'll have a nice little club going. Thank you. I want to thank everyone for coming and giving their opinions.

Mayor Garofalo – Any further comment?

Mr. Peterson – I just want to echo what other people have said about block watches. We've had a lot of experience with block watches and they absolutely work – they're a very good tool. And I have a question – will you be doing something Mr. Mayor to implement that? Or we as residents or owners on the street need to (inaudible)? Are we going to get a communication about that?

Mayor Garofalo – Yeah – I think we would follow up with that through however whatever the consensus is but we would certainly be happy to facilitate that. And we have the training and what Mrs. Pflugh talked about – there's a lot of great information. The thing that stands out to me in the neighborhood is, and I've been done there a bunch of times in the last week or so to follow up on some of the issues, what stands out to me is that really the vast majority of the street people are taking care of their properties and it's very obvious the ones who are not. And that's a stark difference when we've had issues in other neighborhoods. It stands out I think to anybody – the average person who would go down there you can see where the problems are, where they are not. And I think really initiating the structure of the block watch – whatever you want to call it – just initiating that flow of information among the neighborhood itself is just helpful. And I think whatever we can do to jump start it and get it going and I think meeting right in the neighborhood makes it that much easier for everybody. So we will follow up from this meeting and we'll take it from there.

Mr. Izzo – I'll volunteer to pay for the signs for the block watch when it gets warm.

Chief Cota – We may have enough signs to cover that whole area already. We ordered some last year that we still have in stock.

Mayor Garofalo – I want to know if you're going to make fried dough for the first meeting of the block watch? That's the best way to ensure that a lot of people would show up. So anything further? So we're going to take all this information and put it all together – get the minutes. Make

sure that you sign the sign up sheet. If you would like to stop and talk to the Chief, Mr. Kopjanski, Mr. Hawks or Mr. Rogers after the meeting that's fine they'll be available. We have this brief meeting of the Board of Aldermen - we have to take care of a few housekeeping matters and we'll follow up with everybody who signed the list and obviously it will be in the press and the web site as well to have a meeting to follow this so everybody will be on the same page in terms of knowing what we're going to do and how we're going to do it. We're taking the bull by the horns and we've had a successful model with the Minerva Street School, with Anson Street area and I think that following that same course of action with your input – because we're all the same – we're all residents of Derby and we want the best and I think whatever way we can help – it's been a great meeting, a very productive meeting and I want to thank you for all the positive energy and clearly everybody's thoughts are sincere and we look forward to working together to improve the quality of life for Caroline Street, which means the quality of life for our whole beloved City of Derby. So thank you very much.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Without objection the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Finn  
Temporary Recording Secretary

/paf  
Attachment (Photos)

A TAPE RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS ON FILE IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE