

**Public Hearing on the proposed Plastic Bag Reduction Ordinance****Meeting** 9/30/2015 6:30 PM**September 30, 2015 6:30 PM**

The public hearing began at 6:45 PM with approximately 15 people in the audience. A list of those making comments is attached.

Chris Greeley spoke on behalf of the American Progressive Plastic Bag Alliance.

The owner of Sav Mor Liquors stated his concern about eliminating plastic bags and said that he was assured by his plastic bag supplier that he would not violate the ordinance. He inquired about the range of plastic bags and asked if the proposed ordinance included trash bags.

Other speakers talked about bags being made out of fossil fuel and strongly supported the ban. One speaker praised Market Basket for offering cardboard boxes for customers to carry their groceries and would like to encourage other establishments to do the same.

Steve Mackey, from the Somerville Chamber of Commerce, stated that he would like to continue working with the committee and Board of Aldermen on this issue and suggested that the committee consider the effective date when implementing the ban and how it might affect small businesses.

Karl Thidemann applauded the aldermen for taking up this issue and suggested that businesses should promote local manufacturers for reusable bags. Maureen Barillaro is in favor of the plastic bag ban and does not agree that small businesses should be exempt.

Jen Buckingham, a volunteer at the New England Aquarium, spoke about how many animals are eating plastic. She supports ocean health.

One resident, who just found out about the public hearing tonight, said there are many people missing that should be here for the hearing. He is an environmental safety officer and understands a lot of the impact about plastic bags. He, too, is concerned about how the ordinance will be implemented.

Alderman Gewirtz stated that she hopes the board will move soon on this issue and she mentioned an ordinance regarding moderate sized stores to provide a way for the community to drop off their plastic bags.

Chairman Rossetti asked those in attendance to spread the word about this matter. The record to receive written comment on this matter will remain open until Friday, October 9, 2015 at 12 noon.

The Legislative Matter Committee will meet on October 15<sup>th</sup>, as a Committee of the Whole, to discuss the plastic bag issue and the matter of pervious surfaces.

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