

MINUTES of the NEWTON UPPER FALLS AREA COUNCIL

August 17, 2023 7:00 p.m.

Pursuant to *An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations*, Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, signed into law by Governor Baker on July 16, 2022, this will be an Online/Telephone Meeting

Participation Details: Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/714158912>

Meeting ID: 714 158 912

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Upper Falls Area Council Members in Attendance

Kathaleen Brearley(Secretary)
Patty Connolly
Julie Irish
Matt Lai
Jack Neville
Jeffrey Riklin (acting President)
Jay Werb (Treasurer)

1) Approval of Minutes from July Mtg (5 mins)

Jay Werb motioned to approve the minutes as submitted and Patricia Connolly seconded this motion. All members in attendance voted to approve the July Minutes as submitted.

2) Treasurer's Report (5 mins) The Treasurer, Jay Werb reported that there was no changes to the balance in the account.

3) Public Comment/Questions?

4) Draft Letter in support of the Traffic Council's Proposal (Public Facilities) for Traffic mitigation at Mechanic St @Elliot (10 min)

Julie Irish drafted a letter with the support of NUFAC members and submitted this letter to the City Council. The letter specified the benefits to the project as proposed by the Public Facilities Committee for traffic calming on Elliot St. @ Mechanic St.

Councilor Humphrey confirmed that the project proposed did pass the entire City Council vote, but he does not know when the project will begin.

Kathaleen Brearley motioned to approve Julie's letter as submitted with minimal edits and Jeff Riklin seconded this motion. All Area Council members voted in favor to move forward with the submission of this letter to the Newton City Council.

5) Village Center Zoning: Letter from NUFAC March 10, 2023 (10 min)

Jay Werb shared a letter from the Newton City Council to the Mayor requesting a pause on the proposed Zoning changes until current projects take effect. Councilor Crossley reported that ZAP is currently meeting twice a month to continually amend the proposal and edit the maps. She reported that ZAP moved to eliminate the VC1 along the stretch of Rt 9 (as was listed in the previously proposed zoning maps) and replace that area with an MRT district, along with other minor changes. She confirmed that the goal would still be to send the proposal to the full city council for a vote in October. She did not anticipate many further changes at this point. She reminded everyone that if a parcel/lot size is 30k sq ft or greater, it will require a special permit in any case. She also reported that small and medium size zoning recommendations were still being discussed.

6) Google Doc of uses for Northland Transportation Fund

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OchGo8Mfcx4ukK79a_i051GcmXzHGEiiv8LsHPSV_LfU/edit?usp=sharing

Jay Werb led the discussion regarding potential uses for this fund, in particular focusing on the connection from the Greenway to the planned park on the Northland site.

Jeff motioned to circulate this google document to NUFAC members to please add specific items and vote on the suggestions in September so that Northland and the City can begin budgeting for each item and its feasibility.

7) Paper Signing Event for Area Council nominations Sept 4th (10 min)

Jay Werb motioned that members of NUFAC meet in Pettee Square at 5pm on Labor Day to sign each other's papers and Jeff seconded this motion.

8) Village Day Planning Updates (10 min): Logistics and Volunteers

Julie Irish confirmed that DPW and Parks and Recreation have both approved the event for October 1st 11am-2:00pm

Patty volunteered to contact Newton South and Newton Conservators to seek out musicians for Village Day

9) Letter from Roundwood Road resident re: Easement Path (Sue Eisen)

Susan Eisen presented her case in response to the fence built by the abutting property owner Sandra Lee. Pedestrians have been using this easement at 68 Roundwood Road (going down to Circuit Ave via a parcel of conservation land) has been used for at least five decades and has been an integral part of the Elliot Hill neighborhood and access to the Elliot MBTA stop.

Councilor Crossley confirmed that this easement is only legally valid for the water utilities regardless of the time it had been used as a 'public way'. Jeff Riklin offered to represent the Upper Falls Area Council and reach out to the homeowner to open up a line of discussion in the hopes of a possible resolution given that so many nearby residents are upset at the loss of this pedestrian access route.

10) Upper Falls News, Public Comments, questions

Jeff Riklin reported that the 300 Elliot St project is moving forward but there are still no clear resolutions yet to some of the Historic Commission's concerns

He also reported that the renovation of 13-19 Winter St is 99% complete and that units are already on the market for sale.

Councilor Bill Humphrey reported that after several months with no activity on their project, Nuestra has now submitted an application for building permits and are in the process of filing for their building permits with the City.

Jeff Riklin reported from the Historic Commission that 14 Summer St is on hold due to lack of approvals on the renovations proposed by the current owner (developer)

Also, the renovation project at 8 Chestnut St (@Sullivan Ave) ran into issues with rot but other than that, the project seems to be moving forward.

11) Adjourn

The location of this meeting is wheelchair accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Sec. 504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253.