



**Newtonville Area Council - Meeting Agenda**  
**Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:00 PM**  
**Meeting Location: Online via Zoom**

**Attendees:**

**NAC:** Jennifer Bentley (President), Martina Jackson (Vice President), Dana D'Agostino (Treasurer), Carolyn Jacoby Gabbay (Secretary), Nancy Greenberg, Timothy LeBlanc

**City Government:** City Councilors Albright, Lukas, Malakie & Norton

**Council on Aging:** Joan Belle Isle

**Public:** Approximately 5 members of the public

Jennifer called the meeting to order and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

**1. Update on Albemarle Park Planning and Reconfiguration and Gath Pool Projects**

Jennifer summarized the proposals for improvements to Albemarle Park and the Gath pool projects, displaying slides prepared by consultants Weston & Sampson Design Studio (W&S), presented to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Key goals of the project include: reconfiguring the fields at Albemarle to allow for multiple simultaneous activities (such as baseball/softball, pickle ball and multipurpose fields), accessibility, connection with the trails in Avery Park, and retaining trees and adding new trees. Utility infrastructure for possible sports lighting is also being evaluated. W&S is also working with the team addressing the Gath pool improvements for integration of both projects. Following user group activities, the design efforts are mid-way through the process.

She also reported that Mayor Fuller added feasibility study for a year-round pool to the CIP. Public meetings have been held and presentations have been made to the Conservation Commission, the Commission on Disabilities and the Design Review Committee. Matters under study include accessibility, traffic, sewerage, etc. Based on the W&S configurations, Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype (BH+A), the pool architect, has designed an 8-lane competition, a diving pool, a lap pool, a shallow area with a sprinkler and a splash park, a walking lane section that will accommodate water aerobics, a lift chair and an entry ramp, as well as stairs. The designs also provide for increased seating areas and a staging area for swim teams during meets. The bath house is also being renovated with a ramp in a new area, an accessible door, a check in area and a manager's area, as well as reconfigured women's and men's room and a gender-neutral bathroom.

Jennifer will send out an email announcement publicizing the next community zoom meeting, which is to be held on June 2 at 6 pm. Jennifer encouraged public participation in the process leading up the selection of a plan.

Discussion that followed focused on the potential for a year-round pool (i.e., potential costs, issues with the bath house structure), potential loss of tennis courts versus the addition of pickleball courts, and the addition of an additional bridge crossings over Cheesecake Brook.

## **2. Discussion on Resuming In-Person Meetings**

Noting that several NAC members and others have expressed concerns about the safety of resuming in-person meetings while others have expressed interest in holding face-to-face meetings, Jennifer reported that she has a call in to the Law Department about the requirements of the Open Meeting Laws and the possibility of the state legislature extending the option for continuing fully remote meetings for another full year. President Albright said that the City can make equipment for hybrid meetings available in various rooms in City Hall and that the technology has worked well for meeting of the City Council and its committees. Jennifer confirmed that the City Clerk assured her of the ability to accommodate the NAC if hybrid meetings are required. When polled, all members of the NAC expressed concerns about attending meetings in person, and added that attending remotely is more convenient. The situation will be re-assessed at the June meeting.

## **3. Other Business**

Trash on Streets: A community members sent the NAC an email today regarding a pile of household items on Washington Street near Eddy Street. Jennifer sent this email to all of the Councilors in attendance for their assistance. Councilor Norton noted that this has been a periodic problem in various locations, including with unauthorized use of the Newton Housing Authority dumpsters which the City has been working to address. She said she would look into whether there is a fine or other applicable provision of City ordinances for remediation.

Changing the NAC's Monthly Meeting Date: The Waban Area Council and the NAC both hold their meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month, with Newton Highland and Upper Falls Area Council meetings held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, respectively. After discussion of whether to meet on another day of the week to resolve the conflict with the WAC meeting, noting that other week day nights would conflict with City Council or Committee meetings, the NAC decided to move the meetings to the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month, understanding that they would periodically conflict with certain holidays. Carolyn moved, Martina seconded, and it was unanimous:

**VOTED:** To change the NAC's regular monthly meeting day to the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month, starting June 23, 2022, and to authorize the NAC President select an alternate meeting date in those months when meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month falls on holiday (such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, a Jewish holy day, etc.) or the start of a long holiday weekend (such as Memorial Day).

Crafts Street Project: Carolyn reported that at the April 25<sup>th</sup> community meeting Mark Development announced two key changes to their proposal, namely: (1) to build to 5- and 6-story buildings, rather than the 6- and 7-story buildings originally proposed, and (2) to exercise the right under the applicable ordinance to

pay a “buy out” fee for ~\$11Million upon issuance of the certificate of occupancy, rather include “affordable” units in the project. Martina reported that Mark Development would hold a site walk, mainly for the benefit of abutters and to understand/address their concerns, on Saturday at 8:30 am with residents and a delegation from the City Council.

#### **4. Administrative Issues**

##### **a. Newtonville cleaning /maintenance funding**

This item was deferred as Aline was not present to give her report.

##### **b. Website Improvements**

Tim reported on his progress on the first phase of improving the NAC pages on the City website, namely revising the directory structure and creating directories for documents, meeting, reports and announcements and arranging documents for the last 5 years by year with a new naming convention and converting all documents to PDF format. During the next phase of his work, he will make further enhancements, such as voiding blank pages, working on the announcement page (which will be deferred until after September 18<sup>th</sup> due to technical limitations and the need to feature and provide links for Village Day), and other sections (Documents, Meetings, Reports, etc.), as well as the main landing page for the NAC.

Councilor Malakie noted that the City pays for unlimited Zoom storage that the NAC can use for recordings of its meetings by contacting Joe Mulvey for details.

##### **c. Promotions for Newtonville businesses**

Jennifer reported on discussions about getting more “PR” for Newtonville businesses, especially those that sponsor Village Day, including Dana and Martina investigating how to do a “Shop ‘n Stroll” and Jennifer and Aline working with Lauren Berman (of All Over Newton).

##### **d. Village Day update**

Dana and Martina reported that Village Day preparations are proceeding on schedule. Phase 1 activities have been accomplished, including filing for permits, arranging for the roaming railroad and the “touch-a-truck” with the Fire Department (to be located on the Walnut Street bridge), caricature artists and Leo the community resource dog. Martina is working on the sponsors to be committed by mid-June. During the summer vendors will be arranged. There is a good working group with 5 core members, including Dana, Martina and Nancy. Martina added that this year there will be a “push” with local food establishments asking them to put tables in front of their places and, if interest is there, to create a “Taste of Newtonville”. Instead of purchasing T-shirts, the caricature artists will be free this year, possibly with a box for voluntary donations to local food banks. The sheets on which the caricatures will be drawn will carry a logo for the NAC or Village Day. There will also again be free cupcakes and ceremonial cake. Sponsorship commitments are starting to come in, with Village Bank committing to a Platinum (\$2,500) sponsorship. The Gold sponsorship will cost \$1,000. Sign up for the 65 booths usually take place in August or early September, but 7 or 8 vendors have already have signed up.

**e. Approval of April 14 meeting minutes**

The draft minutes of the April 14, 2022 meeting having been circulated for review prior to the meeting, Carolyn moved, Martina seconded, and it was unanimous:

**VOTED:** To approve the minutes of the April 14, 2022 NAC meeting.

**5. Adjournment**

At approximately 8:37 PM, Carolyn moved, Martina seconded, and it was unanimous:

**VOTED:** To adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

*Carolyn Jacoby Gabbay*

Secretary