



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Bio-Safety Committee

MEETING MINUTES

October 9, 2014

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Linda Walsh
Interim Director – Health and
Human Services

Nancy Hyde
Economic Development
Director

Committee Members
Carl Cohen
Thekla Diehl
William Dietrich
Edward (Ted) Marple
Gary Moulin
Brenda Lulligan
Aric Parnes
Jay Schwartz

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<http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/lrplan/econdev/commission.asp>

Commissioners: Carl Cohen, Thekla Diehl, William Dietrich, Jay Schwartz

Staff: Linda Walsh - Interim Director, Health and Human Services, Nancy Hyde – Economic Development Director, Marie Lawlor – Legal Department and Steve Pantalone – Planning Department

Absent: Gary Moulin, Ted Marple, Aric Parnes, Brenda Mulligan

The meeting began at 7:30 PM in the Legal Department Conference Room, City Hall.

1. Status of Karyopharm rDNA permit– review requested material
 - a. Additional information requested from Karyopharm was forwarded to the committee members. The next step is special permit process. S. Pantalone explained the special permit application has been completed. The first step in the process is to appear before the land use committee.
 - b. There was a discussion about the possible presentation from Karyopharm to the Board of Alderman and the role the committee could take in assisting them in the effort to create an understandable and educational presentation. Information must be submitted to the Clerk's office the Friday before the Tuesday meeting for alderman to review. If the current timeline holds, the public hearing would be on Nov 18th. Stephen will be explaining this to the Karyopharm representatives. (Note: The hearing date was subsequently moved up to November 6).
 - c. It was noted that Karyopharm has hired an excellent safety consultant and therefore have set the bar high. The role of the Biosafety Committee is to anticipate any questions and support the application so that the approvals are obtained expeditiously.
2. Discussion of ordinance
 - a. Marie Lawlor explained the current ordinance, the requirements for the rDNA permit and the special permit process as currently laid out in the ordinance. She explained 'allowed uses by right' in certain districts according to current zoning districts. The committee members discussed the options for revising the ordinance that could make Newton a more desirable location for life science companies. The current ordinance is too narrow. Any ordinance revision needs to have a broader view to attract life science research. The committee could take an active role in education, outreach and inspection.
 - b. Other cities and towns have attracted biosafety companies and some have recently rewritten the bylaws and ordinance. The City of Cambridge has a current, active biosafety committee and a wonderful user friendly website. Linda will

ask the commissioner for Cambridge Health Department to join us at a future meeting so we can learn from their experience.

- c. There were 2 areas to explore in terms of changes to the existing ordinance;
1) broadening/expanding the scope beyond rDNA permits to a more life science research company and 2) deleting special permit requirements from the language in the ordinance
 - d. The ordinance changes would first be heard in sub-committee (probably public safety) then recommended and voted on by full board
 - e. Removal of special permit requirements would be a zoning change and would be heard by the zoning and planning committee before going before the full board
 - f. Other communities that appear to welcome life science companies were Lexington, Waltham, Bedford, Dartmouth, Worcester and Shrewsbury.
3. Roles and responsibilities
- a. Marie explained that members of the various committees and commissions are considered 'special municipal employees'
 - b. She verified that all members present were officially sworn in
 - c. She reviewed conflict of interest law and open meeting law
 - d. Any questions that arise from members of the commission should be directed to David Olson at the City of Newton Clerk's office of the City's Law Department
 - e. The question of 'who speaks for the commission?' was discussed at length. Linda explained that the best approach should be to coordinate the message and speak with a unified voice. Nancy spoke about the Economic Development Commission's (EDC) support to the Biosafety Committee's work. At a future point the EDC could be a great partner in attracting new businesses in the biotech field to Newton.
 - f. The group decided this will all take some time as we are just in the fact finding stage.
4. Other business
- a. Meeting minutes from Sept 3rd approved with no changes.
5. Next meeting date
- a. Next meeting date will be Wed, Dec 3rd. Location to be determined.