

# **Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council Meeting Minutes, March 3, 2016**

Attending: Rodney Barker, Bob Burke, Steve Feinstein, Nathaniel Lichtin, Srdj Nedeljkovic, Julius Starkman, Amy Wayne

Ex Officio: City Councilor John Rice

Guests:

Mildred Hutchinson, 160 Lincoln Street

## **Secretary's Report and Treasurer's Report**

Srdj opened the meeting at 7:35 PM. The Secretary's Report for January was reviewed and approved.

The Treasurer's Report included the following. There was no change from the previous month. As of February 27, 2016, we had \$11,009.93 in our checking account, of which \$8,369.93 is currently available. \$120.00 is available in cash.

\$400.00 is still owed to us for Village Day activities and we still owe Steve \$300.00 for expenses related to that event.

## **Village Day Planning**

Steve provided a progress report on Village Day activities over the past month.

- A permit has been approved for the road race.
- Many of last year's staff of volunteers has stepped forward to help with this year's event.
- O'Hara's will be sponsoring a Beer Garden again this year, but they will be doing some things differently.
- We are organizing musical groups and other performers, games, booths and event sponsors. We need everyone's help and ideas to make this year's Village day the best ever.
- We will be selling new T shirts as well as unsold ones from previous years.

### **Newton Highlands Local Historic District Update**

Rodney and Bob distributed a copy of the draft letter and information sheet that will be mailed to every household and business within the proposed Local historic District. We will have to mail out more letters than originally anticipated because it's often impossible to tell who owners, head of household and renters at many of the addresses. We have also completed a final street list of the proposed district and are awaiting the final draft map from Doug Greenfield at the City's IT Office.

We are still on for a fundraiser at the Newton Highlands Congregational Church on the afternoon of Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> for a community fundraising event to support documentation requirements for the Local Historic District. We are following up on Amy's suggestion that we include an item about the April 3<sup>rd</sup> event in the final letter along with an envelope requesting donations from those that can't attend.

### **Planning for a New Crystal Lake Bathhouse**

Srdj next brought up a proposal to plan for a new Crystal Lake Bathhouse by 2020. The current bathhouse is in terrible condition. There's no reason not to move forward with a new facility.

An annotated sketch of a future "Crystal Lakes Arts/Cultural Center was presented by Srdj and there was an extended discussion about how we could help to move the project forward. Steve thought we had to get a handle on advancing a variety of 12 month a year activities that a new bathhouse could be used for in addition to swimming and skating. Otherwise it could become a "White Elephant". Amy thought we should look at what other cities and towns are doing with their lakeside facilities; others thought we should co-host a campaign with Crystal Lake Conservancy and other supportive groups although some who live around the lake may have concerns about additional public activity there.

### **Newton Housing: City Housing Production Plan**

Nathaniel announced that a consultant report on the City's Housing Production Plan is being developed and that he will keep on top of things and will report back As things develop and progress.

### **Planning for a Better Newton**

Srdj announced that the next community meeting by the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council and the Waban Neighborhood Area Council to discuss housing and residential change and development in the two villages will be held at the Waban Library on Monday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. It will be a follow on to the more meeting on February 29<sup>th</sup> which involved a discussion on the future of Newton Highlands and Waban village centers and commercial zones. The March 29<sup>th</sup> meeting will again include presentations by Srdj and by Chris Pitts of the Waban Council regarding residential development in our two villages.

### **Traffic Plan for Zervas School**

An update on the City's Traffic Plan for Zervas was presented that built on Andrea Downes presentation at our February meeting. Andrea submitted her comments and observations from this meeting.

The highlights include:

- (1) Our overall goal is to present three options for how Zervas may look to the neighbors and parents as well as the pros and cons of each.
- (2) A list of people from the City and neighborhood that should be invited including Steve Siegel, School Design Committee members, the Zervas principal, all 3 area councils, PTO members, and especially all abutters.

Julius noted that there's a fundamental difference between Angier and Zervas in that Angier is essentially a neighborhood school whereas Zervas is cross village and cross neighborhood in scope.

Srdj said he hoped there would be a thirty minute time vehicle free period in the morning and afternoon when only buses would be allowed at Zervas to alleviate confusion and congestion at drop off and pick up times.

A community meeting will be held to discuss transportation planning at the new Zervas. The date has been set to coincide with the monthly meeting of the Waban Area Council on Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup>. This meeting will be co-hosted by the WAC and the NHNAC.

### **Items in Brief**

- Sad news that Janet Fagan will no longer be organizing the flower arrangements in the Village Square. Many comments about how much Janet has done for the Highlands. They are looking for a replacement.
- John reported the ice skating rink season was not as good as those in the past. Warm weather and vandalism put a damper on things, but we will try again next year.
- The Winter Soup Social was a success. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. We are pushing to make it a real community event next year with music, entertainment and an open mike story slam hosted by Jerry Reilly and the Nomad Players. Amy Wayne will be taking the lead on coordinating and organizing this event with John Rice.
- Anna's Taqueria is finally open and they are doing a brisk business.
- Steve noted that we should get together with other area councils to make certain that the influence of area councils is strengthened and not diminished by any changes the Charter Commission proposes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Burke, Secretary,  
Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council