

Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council Meeting Minutes, January 3, 2013

Meeting Minutes –January 3, 2013

Attending: Rodney Barker, Bob Burke, Barbara Darnell, Paul Gilbert, Groot Gregory, Peter Meyer, Srdjan Nedeljkovic

Ex Officio Aldermen: John Rice

Guests: Jerry Reilly, Chris Steele, Adam Peller, Robert Solomon, Ron Mauri, Mildred Hutchinson, Beth Lewinger, Harry Sanders

Meeting called to order at 7:35

1. Meeting minutes approved 7-0
2. Greenway
 - a. Adam Peller and Jerry Reilly gave an overview of the current rail trail plans. They are looking for support for proposals to link Upper Falls to the Highlands. Opportunities exist to include a connection with upcoming road work on Centre St, use Floral St with an additional bike line. They assured that the new Greenway would be accessible and ADA compliant and that no plan would favor bikers over the needs of pedestrians and people parking in the community.
 - b. Council voted 7-0 to support the plans with a letter of support to appropriate agencies
3. Dog Park Updates
 - a. Little support from the city for major changes to off-leash dog parks but there may be some movement for plantings to delineate boundaries and increased enforcement.
 - b. Area Council can play a role in monitoring any changes.
 - c. Beth Lewinger reported that the city may be knowingly in violation of use rules at Cold Springs Park by not maintaining the park for uses agreed on for earlier park renovations with Department of Interior money.
 - d. An oversight groups is being formed and Rodney will represent the Area Council.
4. MBTA Accessibility

- a. Robert Solomon reported that he has been working with the Director of Lightrail for the MBTA and a plan to improve accessibility was going along well but ran into a wall due to the cost to update the station for ADA compliance. There are insufficient funds to take on the large project and a smaller project is not currently possible.

5. Taxi Stands

- a. The taxi stand on Walnut at Lincoln frequently has taxis parked in crosswalks and outside of the designated taxi stand blocking the view of pedestrians trying to cross the street. The taxis stand is governed by the Public Safety and Transportation committee of the BOA and Barbara will be looking to find the appropriate actions to improve the situation.

6. Parking Issues

- a. The Pilot-Project Subcommittee of TAG will be performing the second round parking survey.
- b. A survey to assess the needs of the local businesses should be the next step.
- c. It was reported that Woodcliff is still a problem with the cars parking all day blocking services like trash pickup. Rodney will work with his Alderman to get a item on the traffic council docket since other parking proposals will likely take longer to implement.

7. Budget

- a. The 2013 budget was presented. It was similar to the 2012 budget and used 2012 actual results modify some items. It was noted that the Village Day road race was eliminated since it was not viable in its current form and no income was budgeted for the Silent Action since there is currently no one to lead the effort.
- b. John Rice proposed dropping the printed newsletter after this year to be replaced with all electronic communications. The remaining newsletters will call for email signup for future communications from both the Hyde and AC.
- c. Mailing labels come from the Elections Dept and cover 2800 households, some outside of the AC Service Area. We need to be sure to include addresses in any expansion areas.
- d. Dome residents may need to have paper mailings if not users of email.

8. Community Meeting

- a. Will take place at the Women's Club from 7 – 9 on March 21st. The space will cost \$75/hr.

9. Winter Social

- a. Will take place on Jan 19th at 6 PM.
- b. Barbara asked each council member to talk with one or two merchants to confirm donations and follow-up to help deliver soups and other foods.
- c. It was suggested that Walnut Market be invited.

10. Silent Auction

- a. Janet Fagan has told us that last year was really her last year running the auction.
- b. Barbara proposed that we could have each council member take 6 or so past contributors, solicit a donation and store any merchandise prior to Village Day.
- c. Peter suggested that he may be willing to take on Janet's role and will talk with her to understand the job.

11. Officer English Garden

- a. Rodney reported that there is no action on a design without understanding where to get water.
- b. John Rice mentioned that it is not feasible to have a new meter added to an existing building but a Reader could be used to split the water service so separate the water used for the garden.
- c. If water service was added, the AC would be responsible for costs.
- d. John and Paul will investigate.
 - i. There are some city funds allocated for beatification that the AC can look into.

12. Ice Rink

- a. People are skating

13. Allerton Road

- a. Bill Patly will be presenting crossing ideas in April.
- b. There are several issues with crossing Centre St. from Paul to Walnut.

14. Non-Conforming Lots

- a. Waiting on rulings

15. Service Area Expansion

- a. Collected signatures are being validated.

16. Meeting Adjourned at 9:45

Respectfully Submitted,

Groot Gregory,
Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council