

Newton Highlands Area Council Meeting 1 April 2010

Present: Paul Gilbert, Srdjan Nedeljkovic, Scott Gordon, Bob Staulo, Rodney Barker, Barbara Darnell, Alderman John Rice

Meeting began at 8:07 PM

1. **Minutes** approved unanimously

2. **Ethics Survey:** completed by everyone but Scott

3. **Treasurer's Report:**

-\$3303.23 in the bank

-John Rice gave a \$3000 check, which represents the proceeds from the Whole Foods event, and received a check for \$472.04

-\$62.42 was paid for the phone at Brigham House. Scott wants to explore switching to Vonage, which would be only \$15/month.

-Upcoming expenses:

- Village Day
- Lincoln St Bridge Beautification: Justine organized the Whole Foods event, which netted the \$3000 received from John. Part of the money will be used for the Bridge project. Details are still to be worked out with Justine, NHNAC and the T.
- Newsletter: is the Area Council's biggest expense. The newsletter reaches 3100 households, and costs approx. \$1500/year, (\$450 three times per year, including postage)
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(4. Lake Ave Promenade discussion tabled until John Rice's arrival)

5. Crystal Lake Update: The Crystal Lake Conservancy (CLC) spent \$4,000 to begin a study of the Lake, which is estimated to cost \$16-\$30,000 in total, and is in the process of further fundraising for the study. The Gerzoff's at 160 Lake have offered the use of their dock for the water studies. The CLC is also going to help with fundraising for the new bathhouse, parking lot, and landscaping, which is estimated to cost up to \$4 million, to make it a public/private partnership. SN submitted the report prepared by Janice Bourque for the Newton Conservator's newsletter.

4. Lake Ave Promenade: John Rice and Bike Newton are proposing a pilot program of closing Lake Ave to cut-through vehicle traffic from Rogers to Beacon Streets, for 4 hours on 2-3 Sundays as a trial over this summer season. Residents and those accessing homes along Lake Avenue would be exempted from the automobile restriction. There was strong objection from Barbara Darnell, a Lake Ave resident. It was also noted that the length of the closed road was not

very long and that the traffic on the road was fairly light on Sundays anyway. Reasons to favor the promenade concept are that it would give children and families an opportunity to ride bicycles safely on the street, as bicycle riding is prohibited otherwise on sidewalks for persons over the age of 8. Having the event take place over the summer would allow bike riders and walkers to utilize the lake and bathhouse. It was noted that the unique location of the promenade along the lake in a beautiful residential neighborhood are favorable for a pilot test of this program.

Alternative venues were discussed: closing Lincoln St, closing the area around Bulloughs Pond, closing the minor cross streets on the Comm Ave carriage road.

A straw vote was taken with three opposed, 2 in favor and one abstention.

6. Bridge Beautification: Discussed under Treasurer's report

7. Update on Volunteer List and Communication List: No update

8. Village Day: No discussion of the honoree or bands since Peter and Janice were not present.

- Road race: There is a company based in Newton called Fattman productions that organizes the Bill's 5K and the chilly Half Marathon. They may be a good partner for this race. Contact info: www.fattmanproductions.com and Kelly Fattman kelly@fattmanproductions.com
- Silent Auction: Janet Zerlin Fagin has a committee of 4-5 people to solicit items for the Silent Auction.

9. Newsletter: John Rice to coordinate with Barbara Darnell

10. Walnut St Reconstruction: Srdj reported that Mass Highway had received approval of a waiver request such that design may begin on developing 25% plans. A meeting was held on 24 March 2010 with Tom Daley, Lou Taverna, and Dave Turocy from DPW, as well as Gerald Friedman, PE from HDR Engineering, who is expected to be the project coordinator. Gerald lives in Newton and is quite familiar with the Walnut Street corridor. Srdj presented the report that was produced previously by the NHNAC, outlining a number of recommendations made by the community for safety, pedestrian and roadway improvements.

Among the issues discussed at that DPW meeting were traffic calming, esp. at the Hope Fountain; maintaining the number of parking spaces, esp for Lincoln St employees; curbing, particularly in the Southern end of Walnut where a decrease in the amount of curb cuts was advocated to promote the residential feeling of the neighborhood and increase parking spaces. The NHNAC also requested a conduit be put in during reconstruction to allow for the eventual burying of utility lines. Although the DPW staff are in favor of having utilities undergrounded, there

was concern about how this could be funded. Mr. Friedman and the DPW agreed to explore options for the funding of undergrounding work.

The Ward 6 aldermen also docketed an item in March in support of 4 residents of Hyde St, Janie Haywood, Kevin Slayne and Peter Tamm who requested traffic calming/pedestrian crossing on Walnut St. Unfortunately, none were able to attend the 24 March meeting with the DPW staff.

Paul also brought up problems he was having with the parked cars on Walnut St, specifically on trash day when parkers moved his trash cans causing them to be inaccessible to the garbage trucks. Also, people locking their cars with remotes that “Beep” disturb his daughter early in the morning. Paul suggested stickers be given to the Lincoln St businesses to restrict parking to just those employees.

11. Bradford Road: Nothing new regarding the zoning issue.

12. Annual Meeting: What venue, and how to attract the attention of area residents: perhaps if the Mayor, Aldermen and School Committee members were invited. It was proposed to hold the meeting in October. The Brigham House or the Hyde Center were proposed as possible locations.

13. Summer Movie Series at the Hyde: John Rice is organizing 9 weeks of double features: movie and a band starting on the first Friday after July 4th. He expects around 400 people to attend each event, and expects to spend \$2000 for bands. This amount will be offset from a \$500 donation from Lincoln St Coffee, which is a portion of their ice cream sales and John hopes to work out a deal with Highlands Pizza.

Adjourned at 10:15 PM