

MINUTES OF THE UPPER FALLS AREA COUNCIL

DATE: November 15, 2018

LOCATION: Emerson Community Center

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jack Neville	Anil Adyanthaya
Nina Kochs	Marie Jackson
Maxine Bridger	Susan Huffman
Jeff Riklin	

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councilor John Rice

PUBLIC:

Kathaleen Brearly	Jen Kohl
Kathy Winters	Nathaniel Lichtin

A. Approval of Minutes from October Meeting

The minutes were approved unanimously.

B. Public Comment

Looks like Stop and Shop will be open soon.

C. Treasurer's Report

We have a net amount of \$3753.30

D. Discussion of Northland Land Use Committee Presentation on Site Plan

Jack Neville, Betsy Hewitt and Julie Irish went to the presentation by Northland to the Land Use Committee. One concern was the height of the buildings. Avalon and the building which houses Bank of America are both five stories. Northland is proposing buildings higher than that. So, height is an issue, and too much housing is an issue, and the exit on Oak Street is an issue. Councilor Greg Schwartz seemed receptive to our Oak Street concerns. There was a question about the facades of the buildings, and cut-throughs.

The next meeting of the Land Use Committee will be on Dec. 11 where they will be discussing the housing and economic impact of the Northland project.

Note that NewTV has videos of the Land Use Committee meetings.

Jack suggested that 2 or 3 members of the Area Council be at each Land Use Committee meeting.

E. Discussion of Upcoming Zoning Reform Events

1. November 19 joint meeting to discuss zoning redesign focusing on residential districts (hosted by Waban and Newton Highlands Area Councils)

2. November 29 Ward 5 zoning reform meeting at Angier School

The Waban and Newton Highlands Area Councils are focusing on the zoning redesign. They are holding joint meetings and there is information about the proposed zoning regulations on the NH Area Council website. The meeting on November 19th will cover definitions of terms, and discuss residential districts, type of usage allowed and new proposals. For example, the frontage requirements and side set-backs have gone down. One goal of the zoning redesign is to get more allowed by right and less requiring special permits.

On November 29th there will be a Ward 5 meeting about zoning reform. It is from 6:30 to 8 at the Angier School. More information about this meeting can be found on the Newton Highlands Area Council website. It was noted that a 12 unit project is proposed behind the Whole Foods in Four Corners. The Waban Area Council is concerned about single family homes. With better zoning regulations you get better projects.

F. Upper Falls T-Shirt Update

There was a feeling that we should get better quality t-shirts. The shirts are from Infiniart. Jeff said he would bring an old shirt and a new one. It was mentioned that 1191 Chestnut Street is another t-shirt place. Jeff will ask them for a price. Maybe we could pay more and get a better shirt.

G. General Upper Falls News

The house at 58 Cottage Street is to be torn down. It abuts the historic district.

Some parts of the City are getting exemptions to the overnight parking ban. In Upper Falls you can park overnight near the Bocce Court on Chestnut Street if you get a permit. Maybe more of Upper Falls could get exemptions. There has been a suggestion to move the start of the overnight ban from mid-November to mid-December.

The Saint Elizabeth's Center will have exterior painting done, and get a full renovation this Spring. The owners will have to go before the Historical Commission for approval.

The Bocce Court is finished and up and running. They are only missing one ball so far. The court is a real boon for Upper Falls. The Dept. of Public Works and the Rec Dept. really came through with materials. Carol Stapleton needs a major "thank you." We should send a thank you letter to the various departments involved, to the mayor, and to Carol.

It was claimed that some towns are considering closing roads because GPS systems are routing traffic through these residential roads.

The Climate Vulnerability Action Plan the City is undertaking, to improve infrastructure to withstand climate change, was mentioned. The city will hold a meeting on Dec. 10 to discuss this Action Plan. Undergrounding of utility wires (maybe just for new construction) was mentioned.

H. Public Comment/Question

I. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:55