

NEWTONVILLE AREA COUNCIL MINUTES SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

Members Present: Colleen Minaker, Martina Jackson, Peter Bruce, Susan Reisler, Maura Harrington, Dana D'Agostino and Tarik Lucas

Community Members Present: Peter Harrington, Nathaniel Lichtin, Howard Johnson, Joanne White, Helen Nayar, and John Vasilakis

Past Meeting Minutes Review- August minutes were reviewed. All members approved, with one minor change and one request.

Burning Issues in the Community

Discussion occurred about the Newtonville boundaries, their history, and "missing streets." Martina asked how to add a street into the Newtonville area. The group agreed it would ask the City Clerk about it. Martina volunteered to ask and report back in October.

Peter Harrington gave a short presentation about the boundaries of Newtonville over history, and how the neighborhoods tend to shift, particularly recently. He noted that parts of Newtonville and West Newton have been labelled as if they are part of Nonantum by the Planning Department while many people in those neighborhoods don't know about the change. Colleen volunteered to draft a letter with Peter H telling people about these changes. It would be addressed to the City and presented in October or November.

Peter Bruce announced that Washington Place's special permit was amended to put a bank (10K sq. ft) into its leased space, despite a previous rule against this and public disapproval. A request for another amendment for a non-formulaic business space for retail and restaurant usages was voted down by one vote. But, as noted, the amendment to the Board Order to recommit the space for personal service uses was approved for the bank. Peter questioned if the Council was following the rule of law when it simply changed its mind so suddenly, with little public announcement, and little time for deliberation. Susan expressed her concern that the types of businesses that are put into Washington Place will not meet the needs of the people who live in the neighborhood. She would like a hardware store, for example.

Village Day Planning Update

Maura and Dana provided an update on Village Day, reporting that things were moving along nicely, and plans were underway for a great day for the community. Some details about the day were reviewed and some NAC members were given tasks to do on the day, after volunteering.

City Council and School Committee Debate Prep

Peter announced that we were not able to reserve the Auditorium at Newton North for the City Council and School Committee debates. These will be held on October 20th and 27th from 2-5 pm, in the Cafeteria, instead.

The sub-committee continues to work on the details of the event days, including how to advertise, who will speak when, who the moderators will be, etc.

Washington Street Visioning: Retrospective on ZAP's Sep. 9 meeting

This item was postponed, due to a lack of time. However, there was a short discussion anyway about the ZAP meeting pertaining to housing affordability in Newton and rent control, after Tarik mentioned the man who alleged that Newtonites who oppose large - development projects are racist. Martina explained he was citing a book, *The Color of Law*, about historic biases in American law, but that the rhetoric he used is a pro-developer tool used to promote large amounts of market-rate housing.

Remaining Business

There was no remaining business and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Peter Bruce and Maura Harrington

President and Secretary, respectively