

NEWTONVILLE AREA COUNCIL

MINUTES OCTOBER 10, 2019

Members present: Peter Bruce, Susan Reisler, Marc Kaufman, Helene Sroat, Colleen Minaker, Dana D'Agostino, Martina Jackson

Absent: Tarik Lukas, Maura Harrington

Guests: Richard Rasala, Jacqueline Freeman, Paul Oliver, Sue Denison, Peter Harrington.

At 7:05 pm. President Peter Bruce opened the meeting. He outlined changes to the September Minutes. The NAC members agreed to the changes and approved the Sept. Minutes.

At 7:10 pm. Martina Jackson asked the members about the NAC voting boundaries: how they were determined and why some streets in Ward 2 were not included? Former NAC Secretary Jacqueline Freeman said she and Joy Huber spent time choosing streets but did not include every street in Ward 2. There is a process outlined in the NAC Charter which describes how to expand the current boundaries. Martina will explore how to follow this process and expand the area council street boundaries.

At 7:20 pm. Peter Bruce introduced Richard Rasala to the members. He is a member of the NewCal working group which is responsible for the site selection of a new Senior Center. He outlined the city's plan to build a new, larger modern center with the addition of a multigenerational gymnasium. Richard discussed the various problems associated with the plan, i.e. where to site the 37,000 square foot project. Many proposals so far have faced community resistance, as parkland could be built on and loss to outdoor use.

Following Richard another guest Paul Oliver spoke in opposition to the site plan proposal at Albemarle Field. Paul supports a new senior center, although not with a big gymnasium and not on parkland. He and several others present have a website for more information.

Preservenewtonparks.com

Other guests agreed with Paul that the Albemarle site was too busy with sports activities and needed valuable parking preserved. The site is far north of the city center and has very little public transit to the park. Sue Denison also spoke and asked why the senior center couldn't be renovated? She believes that many people have been left out of the planning process. The NAC members are very concerned about the site location of NewCal. After some discussion they plan to evaluate the issue more carefully and decide at a future meeting how to support the community.

At 7:55 pm. Dana D'Agostino reported on Village Day. The event was very successful with good weather and a very active and fun atmosphere. Over 30 booths were set up. Over 1300 people participated in the activities which included a music venue, karate demonstration, many

children related fun things and a cake cutting by the Mayor. The cake, as well as T shirts, were distributed to the public.

Revenues topped \$13,000. Costs were near \$6000.00 and profits around \$5000. Everyone worked hard to clean up the street afterwards. The DPW was most appreciative.

At 8:10 pm. Helene Sroat reported about the Austin St. Plaza. There is a plan to celebrate its opening which is scheduled for 8:00 am October 24th. Helene believes our NAC ought to schedule a longer more celebratory opening date. She, Dana and Marc Kaufman formed a working group and hope to set a weekend day in November for a follow up celebration, hopefully with a music component. Marc also discussed how to widen the plaza's footprint which he says is too narrow. He suggested the NAC support the effort to close off BramWay from car traffic.

At 8:20 pm. Susan Reisler reported on the two October candidate debates. The Ward 1,2,3 and 4 candidate debates will be October 20, at Newton North. The Ward 5,6,7 and 8 candidate debates will be October 27, at Zervas school. Both events will be held between 2:00-5:00 pm. Questions for the debate are being worked on. Marc Kaufman offered to be a time keeper. There will not be a sign in table. Martina Jackson offered to shop for water and snacks. A table will be set up for light refreshments. Susan has printed up fliers for advertising the debates. Several people will post them in the north side village businesses.

Marc Kaufman inquired about NAC candidates for their upcoming election. He asked if their bios could be posted on the council website. Some NAC members objected to this idea. However, there was agreement about posting a list of the candidates names on the NAC website. Some people believed that candidates should post information on the city's election commission site.

At 8:30 pm. Council members discussed the Washington St. vision plan.