



WABAN AREA COUNCIL AGENDA

www.wabanareacouncil.com

REVISED

10:52 am, Dec 07, 2016

Thursday, December 8, 2016, 7:30pm, Waban Library Center

ZERVAS COMMUNITY/ CONSTRUCTION TEAM MEETING 7PM
WABAN AREA COUNCIL MEETING: 7:30PM (FIRM TIME)

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOV 10 MEETING JC (4 min)

II. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 8, 2016 TREASURER'S REPORT RG (2 min)

III. BURNING ISSUES: Community comments for future agenda or immediate resolution. (5 min)

IV. WAC LETTER TO MAYOR RE: COLD SPRING PARK ROUTE TO ZERVAS SCHOOL (10 min) AD (attached)

V. UPDATES: (40min)

- A. St. Philip Neri at 1521 Beacon St.: KW (5 min)
- B. Staples-Craft House at 1615 Beacon Street –Report on ZBA Hearing Opened on Nov. 17, - RG and KW (10 min).
- C. WAC Waban Historic District Sub-Committee Information Gathering Update RG (5 min)
- D. “Waban Common” (Island Across from Angier). Report on Second Public Hearing on Nov 30. Result: **Third Public Hearing scheduled for Wed., January 4, 7:00pm at Waban Library Center may be postponed for traffic safety resolution.** Designs explored. SL (5 min)
- E. WAC Visioning Community Survey CP (5 min)
- F. Charter Commission – Update on change proposals.(5 min) Nathaniel Lichtin (NHAC)
- G. School Committee Plans for School Rebuilding and Future Overrides Predicted (5 min) RG

VI. WAC LETTER TO MAYOR AND STATE REPS. RE: FUNDING A PLAN FOR UNDERGROUNDING WIRES ON NEEDHAM STREET (Letter suggested by Newton Highlands Area Council). (10 min) SL and Nathaniel Lichtin NH Area Councilor. Letter to be sent out as soon as finalized.

VII. NEW BUSINESS: New items that may lawfully arise for discussion.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

“Waban Common”: **Third Public Hearing, scheduled for Wed., Jan 4, 2017, 7pm at Waban Library Center may be postponed: Stay tuned!**

IX. ADJOURN. Next regularly scheduled Waban Area Council Meeting: **Thurs. Jan. 12, 2017, 7:30pm,** immediately following the Zervas Construction Team/Community Meeting at 7PM at Waban Lib. Ctr.

We encourage you to continue contributing to the Newton Food Pantry, now housed in the basement of City Hall, by bringing non-perishable food items to that new location.

The location of this meeting is handicap accessible, and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons requiring assistance. If you need a special accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253. For Telecommunications Relay Service, please dial 711.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Letter from WAC to Mayor re.: Cold Spring Park Route to Zervas School:

Bob DeRubeis, Commissioner
Newton Parks & Recreation Department

Dear Bob:

Our area councils are delighted to hear that the Life Course Trail in Cold Spring Park may get some needed maintenance and enhancement.

We are particularly concerned that these occur before the new Zervas Elementary School opens in September of 2017, and particularly to those paths that could and should become a popular way for children to walk to school. Waban Area Council, with help from Newton Highlands Area Council, held two well-attended meetings on traffic and safety around the new school, and these paths were highlighted as quick and safe ways children can access the school.

As you may be aware, Zervas Safe Routes to School volunteers are already planning “walking school buses” that will take groups of pupils from the parking lot loop near Beaconwood Road and the Life Course Trail and from Winslow Road at Wilbur. Both are part of a concerted attempt by the Zervas administration, Zervas PTO and the neighborhood to reduce traffic and congestion on Beethoven and Beacon streets during school arrival and departure.

Having a safer, emission-free route such as Cold Spring, and having enhancements that can keep feet dry, will be immensely helpful in implementing these plans.

Thank you for taking the initiative on this effort.

Yours,

Srdjan Nedeljkovic, President
Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council

Sallee Lipshutz, President
Waban Area Council

2. Proposed letter to be sent to Mayor and State Reps by Newton Highlands, possibly with WAC signature also, re: Need to immediately fund *plan* for future connections to underground utilities to be buried along Needham Street while street is being improved in next two years by massDOT.

Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council
20 Hartford Street
Newton Highlands, MA 02461

Setti Warren, Mayor
City of Newton
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

December 7, 2016

Re: Needham Street project

Dear Mayor Warren,

The project to reconstruct Needham Street in Newton offers the opportunity to not only improve auto throughput, but it can also be a catalyst for enhanced economic vitality in the corridor. We are concerned that the current design of the roadway does not meet key criteria to improve pedestrian safety or desirability to pedestrians to walk in this corridor. Therefore we urge the city of Newton to work with Mass DOT and with local abutters and businesses to accomplish the following:

- **Undergrounding of utilities.** The utility poles that are present throughout Needham and Winchester Streets are unwanted and are not part of any future vision of corridor. Construction of the roadway should not commence until undergrounding is included in the plans.
- **Pedestrian access and safety.** The undergrounding of utilities will improve the accessibility of the corridor for pedestrians, including those with mobility impairments.
- **Economic vitality.** Undergrounding of utilities will create an attractive streetscape that will encourage the success of commercial businesses along the corridor. Foot traffic will increase, leading to community vitality. Needham Street can easily become a “go-to” destination for the entire region.
- **Street trees and decorative elements.** With utilities buried, the corridor should be designed to include street trees adjacent to the roadway within an expanded sidewalk zone, similar to what is done in most other pedestrian zones. Decorative elements such as contextual street lighting and benches can be incorporated into a pedestrian friendly design

We request that new roadway construction in the corridor is delayed and that **no funds are spent** until the undergrounding plans are included. It would be an awful waste of public money to construct a new roadway, only to have the unsightly jumble of poles overhead wires remain.

At a minimum, a **working plan** should be developed so that conduit can be placed during the roadway reconstruction, and so that a definite cost for undergrounding can be determined.

Sincerely,

Srdjan S. Nedeljkovic, M.D

Srdjan S. Nedeljkovic, on behalf of the
Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council