

MINUTES of the NEWTON UPPER FALLS AREA COUNCIL
February 17, 2022 7:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20, this will be an Online/Telephone Meeting

Participation Details: Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/714158912>

Meeting ID: 714 158 912

One tap mobile +16468769923,714158912# US (New York) +16699006833,,714158912# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York) +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 714 158 912

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ani0ErE3g>

Meeting called to order at 7:02PM

NUFAC councilors in Attendance

Jay Werb
Patty Connolly
Anil Adyanthaya
Julie Irish
Matt Lai
Marie Jackson
Kathaleen Brearley
Jack Neville

Invited guests from Northland

Stephen Buchbinder
Peter Standish (Northland)
Kent Gonzalez (Northland)

Jeff Aliber (Village Falls)

1) Approval of Minutes from January Meeting (5 minutes)

Jay Werb motioned to approve the minutes from the January meeting, and Patty Connelly seconded the motion. All Members in attendance voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the January meeting.

2) Treasurer's Report (5 minutes)

There is still a balance of ~\$5600 no spending/revenue since last month. There was some revenue generated around village day. The new treasurer (Jay Werb) reported that he was able to access the account.

3) Northland presentation on proposed 400 resident 40B development between Charlemont and Christina Streets (30 minutes)

Northland plans to file this new application for a new development in the Charlemont/Christina St area by the end of Feb, hope to hear in June, filing with ZBA at the end of the Summer so looking at Feb or March 2023 and anticipate holding a broader community meeting to get additional feedback at that point.

Peter Standish presented elements and visuals from the provisional designs of Northland's soon to be filed proposal for the 7 acres of land behind Marshalls (and behind the building occupied by H.C. Starck Inc) adjacent to Christina/Charlemont area. A 40b project seemed to make sense given the singular, residential nature of this proposal with a sizable portion of affordable (25%).

This proposal Conducive to add recreational public active greenspace connecting Charlemont and Christina, assuming that the bridge will be rebuilt. Both on the Newton and Needham side.

They plan for a larger community meeting in March or April whenever needed.

Intent of the proposed design is to maximize the green space in this lot to offset all the proposed buildings. Emphasizing the pedestrian connections. Attempt to create a (green) buffer of pedestrian space. Passive recreational space is the goal of this design.

Keeping in line with the current development on the opposite side of Needham Street (NND) by incorporating shuttle bus system and underground parking to emphasize the pedestrian aspects of the area. One participant asked about sufficient parking for additional 400 units, and a resident of the Village Falls is concerned about traffic and capacity at Countryside to absorb the 800+400 new residents. Other parking concerns were voiced by Area Councilor M. Lai. Jay Werb. Peter Standish agreed to submit the slides to Anil when they file with Mass Housing. Northland has no plans to change the tenancy at Marshalls. Discussion about 40B and the schedule for building permit approval. It was made clear that this is only an introduction of this new proposal. To summarize, the bulk of this discussion was on parking, traffic and pedestrian accessibility.

CHARLEMONT 40B
PROJECT METRICS

Site Acreage:	6.99 Acres
Market Rate Apartments:	307 Units
Affordable Apartments:	<u>103 Units</u> (25%)
	410 Units
Unit Mix:	
Studios	27 units 7%
1-Bedroom	134 units 33%
2-Bedroom	208 units 50%
3-Bedroom	41 units 10%
Commercial Space:	10,430 SF
Parking:	
Total	495 Spaces
Structured	477 Spaces
Surface	18 Spaces



4) Cypress Tree (aka Redi) update cannabis dispensary on 24 Elliot Street and special permit conditions (30 minutes) Victor Chiang (managing partner of Cypress Tree) explained that Cypress Tree (aka Redi) were required to keep business operations ‘by appointment only’ for the first six months as part of their special permit status. Now that they have completed their six-month minimum for this requirement, they are hoping to go back to the city and request that this requirement be removed, which precipitated their request to join the meeting this month and get feedback from the community. Currently, 45% of their customers have made an appointment or already purchased products online, and the drop in customers still constitute 55% of their business. The general comments from attendees were positive, and noted the minimal traffic and parking impact on the Elliot@Route 9 intersection area, although some were concerned if the restrictions were lifted that things might change and need to be reassessed. The police detail ended within the last couple of weeks and they agreed that the volume of traffic did not justify the Traffic detail remain in place. Chiang is open to future community rental use in the vacant end of their property (the old Fabu salon side of the building) once it is renovated and suitable for occupation.

5) Discussion of projects for uncommitted America Rescue Plan Act funds allocated to Newton (20 minutes)

Anil reported some ideas from members of the community: on the Greenway (improvements to the entrances of the greenway, crushed stone dust).

Jay Werb shared some images from the Mayor's presentation; the scope of allocation of the ARPA funds. (Elements emphasized Equity, finite projects)

~32 Million still uncommitted, needs to be spent by the end of 2026.

He hopes to make the project for the stairs on the Greenway speeds up and finally gets going. Work on "Sunset Bridge". There needs an engineering study to determine how structurally sound it is, and this would be a good use of the funds.

Any dangerous intersections in the villages would also be a good use of these funds. (additional traffic lights).

Culverts?

Anil wondered whether there were additional city wide efforts we could support as a council.

Suggested that we put the word out to the community and finalize by what we present as a council by next month. Improving the existing green spaces seems like a universal concept that all the councils can get behind.

a) Pocket park next to Upper Falls Greenway?

b) Electrification of Pettee Square?

For Pettee Square and other community spaces (Emerson)

c) Upper Falls Greenway Improvements?

Emphasize the green theme: street trees

d) Other ideas?

6) Newton Upper Falls Walking Trail Updates (10 minutes)

Jay reported that there is likely there will be a community walk in May but very informal

7) Discussion of proposed marijuana dispensary at 1185 Chestnut Street (5 minutes)

According to Councilor Crossley, there is no update on any filings.

8) General Upper Falls News (5 minutes)

Anil reported on the dog park (Braceland) and a discussion ensued about trash and bags of dog waste on the greenway. Carol Stapleton suggested the council write a letter (including the requested location) for a dog waste barrel (it was noted that the DPW area and trash from the Nexus dumpsters blows into the greenway). The dumpster behind Newton Electric building is also an issue. The Health Department would be the entity to contact about that , not parks and recreation.

9) Public Comment/Questions

10) Adjourn: Marie motioned, and Patty seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35PM

The location of this meeting is wheelchair accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a reasonable

accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Sec. 504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253.