

**MINUTES of the
NEWTON UPPER FALLS AREA COUNCIL**

AUGUST 18, 2022

Pursuant to *An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations*, Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, signed into law by Governor Baker on July 16, 2022, this will be an Online/Telephone Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 714 158 912

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Meeting ID: 714 158 912

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

In Attendance:

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

City Counselors in Attendance

**Deb Crossley
Bill Humphrey**

**Carol Stapleton, Representative: Dept Parks and Recreation
Rena Getz, Waban Area Council**

August 18, 2022 7:00 p.m.

1. **1) Approval of Minutes from June Meeting (5 minutes)**
Marie motioned to approve the minutes and Patty seconded this motion. All councilors in attendance voted to approve the minutes from the June meeting as submitted.
2. **2) Treasurer's Report (5 minutes):** Jay reported that there was a 50\$ registration fee for Village Day to the City (Parks & Rec) Anil is expecting a deposit from the donation made by The Village Bank.
3. **3) Public Comment/Questions?** none
4. **4) Approval of Joint Area Council Letter Regarding Zoning & Planning Committee Village Center Framework (20 minutes)**
Leaders of the combined area councils (Newtonville, Waban and Newton Highlands) met with Anil to prepare a presentation and Anil opened up the letter that Anil had circulated for discussion. Main question being whether NUFAC was interested in signing on with these three other Area Councils. There were some NUFAC members who felt that Deb Crossley should be aware of these conversations since she is the chair of the Zoning and Planning Committee. Councilor Crossley thought it would be helpful to lay out the schedule for community engagement process.

Councilor Crossley reported on the ZAP Committee activities for the last year and a half, including the outreach to find out what is important to members of the community. Set out in 2022 to work with the Planning Dept on how to fashion zoning for achieving the priorities of the public that were consulted during the process. Framework for zoning: i.e a concept for building zoning. Recognizing that all of Newton's villages are different is one of the most important starting point, and how do we deal with that. A three-tiered system has been proposed based on density. Some would get all three (Newtonville, Newton Center, for eg.) and some would be in the first tier that are the least dense. The Council looked at other key factors: For example, parking requirements. They are looking to lower the minimum parking required for each of these tiers. Another example is when to issue a Special Permit versus by right Design Standards so that it is controlled changes to the zoning. There is more work to be done, and the Planning Department needs to develop more maps and materials that will illustrate the different elements of the proposed zoning changes. A second community Engagement phase will begin at the start of September. There are over 90 Network Leaders that Planning has brought in to be engaged with this process (both individuals and boards). Jay Werb and Julie Irish signed up to be part of the Network, and attended the August meeting where the Mid October deadline was mentioned.

They have a framework, and they want to hear from the community when the committee returns to session in mid October. There is a strong framework and concept but there is not an overall product to present to members of the community yet.

Jay and Marie were at the ZAP meeting in August (as Network Leaders) and did not expect this kind of tone to the letter of the Joint Area Councils since we haven't seen the full package of materials yet.

Councilor Crossley asked if Jay and Julie felt like they could explain the framework to the Area Council and Jay confirmed that he will need to see the more detailed summary at the start of September. Councilor Crossley asked if it would be possible to form a subcommittee on the Area Council to address this new Zoning Framework that could meet and not need to wait for the next monthly meeting of NUFAC. In any case, it will be

on the agenda for the meeting on September 15. Marie and Anil volunteered to also read the Zoning Framework materials in addition to Julie and Jay as Network Leaders to help summarize them for the other members of NUFAC.

Councilor Humphrey reiterated that he would love to hear more feedback that is relevant specifically to Upper Falls rather than a joint letter giving feedback from multiple villages.

There was a general discussion about the six-week public engagement period to evaluate the materials shared by the ZAP Committee. A few members of the Community Engagement from other villages concurred with Jay in that there is not enough material in the Framework yet to share with the members of the community. Materials that are expected to come out the first week of September might help the Network Leaders digest and share an overview of the proposed new zoning. Planning Department staff will be working all summer on these materials. Councilor Crossley asked if NUFAC could focus on sharing the material with the community after September 1. There was discussion questioning how much community engagement was possible up until this point since so little is known about what is being proposed.

Matt motioned to move on a vote of whether to have NUFAC join this letter and Julie seconded this motion. Three members voted to join the letter, two members abstained and three voted against joining this letter. So the joining of the letter was not passed, and discussion was suspended on the matter until the September meeting.

5. **5) Joint Area Council meeting and presentation on Zoning at Waban Library, Saturday, September 10th from 2-4 (10 minutes)**

See above item 4 summary for further detail. Jay reported that some of the other area councils wanted to summarize the materials they will receive only 10 days prior. Councilor Crossley confirmed that the Network Leaders have not seen the materials yet for the framework, and agreed with the sentiment that the Area Council could actually use that time to discuss the material shared on Sept 1st with the rest of the community. Councilor Crossley made it clear that the Zoning group is prepared to incorporate feedback from the community engagement.

6. **6) Northland Update (Jay Werb) (10 minutes)**

Jay reported based on last month's updates from the Liaison committee: Demolition of AAA and Marshall's parking lot is complete. Northland responded to rodent reports that there is no particular reason that they should assume that the The Northland site is the cause. Thursday 25th is the next Liaison meeting. Anil reported that he followed up with inquiries to the Traffic Council and the Engineering Department regarding the proposed emergency access route on Mechanic St as was discussed in the June meeting. Paula K confirmed that Northland says this is totally from the Newton Fire Department. Paula also brought up parking for the Splash park and that we should get clarification at the Liaison meeting from them.

7. **7) Braceland Park Gate (10 minutes)**

Jay Werb presented a map from 1975 when the Newton Conservation Committee planned what they called The Upper Falls River Walk from what was Newton Conservation Land along the river beyond Braceland Playground through an easement on American Tower land. Jay laid out how an actual Gate could finally come to fruition. Luis in P&R received a quote and needs around ~\$2300 as a deposit to start this project. Jay and others suggest that the cost could be shared between CDC, Area Council. It needs to be a self-closing gate. Marie motioned that the Area Council would fund a quarter of the cost of this gate, and Patty seconded this motion. All 8 councilors voted to approve this funding contribution to the cost of a Gate. (one quarter, not to exceed \$581) Jay mentioned The Friends of the Greenway Fund will also be contributing to the cost of this gate.

8. **8) Expenses for 2022 Village Day (Oct 1) and related planning (10 minutes)**

Anil reported that EventBrite helps to get the word out and there are already 22 vendors signed up for Village Day who have all paid already.

1. **a) Approval of Signage** Jeff R. offered to organize the Banner design and printing. Date and time should be the main visible message of the banner.

2. **b) Food**

Anil was concerned that last year a food truck that we booked last year canceled so we want to try to avoid that this year

Julie offered to send some lists of food vendors that she used with PTO events. Slushies, etc.

3. **c) To do's**

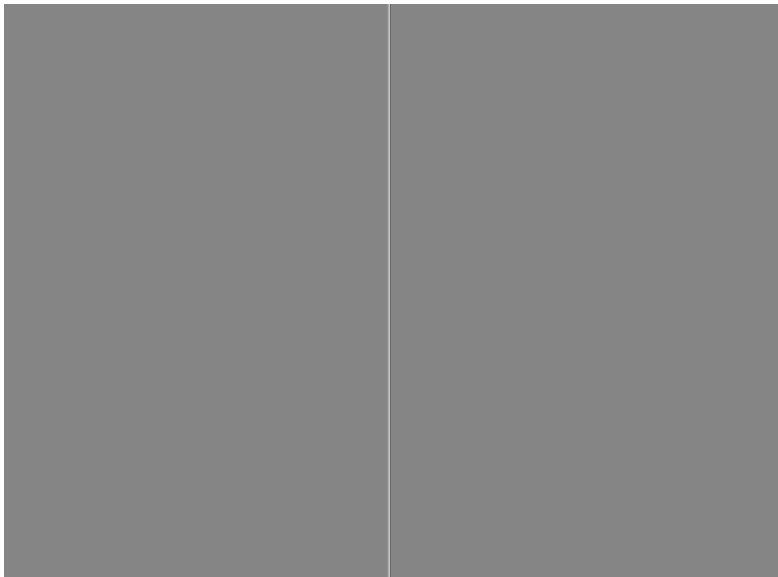
1. **i) Vendors/Participants Update**

2. **ii) Entertainment Update**

Riverboat Stompers were interested in returning for 2 hours

Anil plans to reach out to the same magician from previous Village Day

iii) Sponsor Update



9) Depot Coffee Shoppe Update (5 minutes)

Jack and Anil reported that they have retained an attorney to prepare a lease for the new tenant at the Depot Coffee Shoppe

They are hoping that Phil Emmanuel, owner of "Grape Leaf" in Newton Highlands will be the new business owner at the Depot.

10) General Upper Falls News (5 minutes) 11) Public Comment/Questions?

Councilor Humphrey updated the Council on the status of the Nuestra Cannabis dispensary:

There is an upcoming Land Use Cmte meeting on Tuesday Sept 13 and it is on the agenda.

Councilor Humphrey added of note: The Cannabis dispensary in Four Corners has backed out of their plan after getting all permit approvals so it may be an indication of market saturation.

The State Legislature 'approved' 3.1 million for the actual renovation of Pettee Square (following the design phase last year) but they still haven't appropriated the money. The City are pushing that this money come from the State pool of ARPA money rather than the leftover City ARPA funds. There has been discussion about using leftover ARPA money for this project. This state money is only available if we comply with the MBTA Communities Law.

In general, the villages that need this money should be open to receiving this type of revitalization money from the State. A discussion and debate followed over concerns about how State money would impact authority over these areas that use State money to invest in their infrastructure.

Jerry Reilly reported that the Feast of the Falls crew were planning An Octoberfest event at Dunn-Gaherin's on Sept 18th.

Jerry also reported that a new owner named Ryan has taken over the Echo Bridge Gas Station on Ellis/Chestnut St.

Julie Irish reported that there is a pile of electronic waste collected outside of the old blacksmith's shop at the bottom of Linden St (70 Linden St). Kathaleen volunteered to report it to 311 to request to the owner that it be removed to Rumford Ave.

12) Adjourn Anil motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:05pm

Marie seconded this motion.

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. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711.