

# Minutes of the NEWTON UPPER FALLS AREA COUNCIL

October 20, 2022 7:00 p.m.

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>

October 20, 2022 7:00 p.m.

## Area Councilors in Attendance:

Anil Adyanthaya (President)

Kathaleen Brearley (Secretary)

Julie Irish

Marie Jackson

Matt Lai

Jack Neville

Jeff Riklin (Vice-President)

Jay Werb (Treasurer)

## City Councilors

Bill Humphrey

## Others in Attendance

Carol Stapleton (Parks and Recreation)

Rena Getz (Waban Area Council)

Gary Miller (Liaison Committee representative of Northland and NUF resident)

### 1. 1) Approval of Minutes from September Meeting (5 minutes)

Jack N motioned to approve the minutes from Sept and Marie J seconded this motion. All voted in favor to accept the minutes as submitted.

### 2. 2) Treasurer's Report (5 minutes)

See item 6: Discussion about Village Day

3. **3) Public Comment/Questions?**

4. **4) Village Center Zoning & Pettee Square (25 Minutes)**

Jay Werb gave a presentation on his research findings as part of the group of four volunteers who met to discuss the Zoning engagement materials from the ZAP committee.

Some of the conclusions of the group were summarized as follows; Agreement that Upper Falls would clearly be designated in the Small Village Center category of the framework, particularly since it does not have a large commercial center to speak of and that Pettee Square is essentially surrounded by a residential neighborhood. The buildings in the Northland complex will not be in the Upper Falls village center, but rather adjacent to Pettee Square. A discussion followed about the type of buildings and characteristics that would model examples of buildings within a Small Village by right versus by special permit under the proposed framework. Councilor Humphrey commented that: “The MBTA Communities regulations (which might still be refined further anyway if municipalities lobby for it) allow that mixed-use projects will qualify with the requirement, but they cannot be required to be mixed use if a developer wishes to develop the property 100% residential.”

The discussion continued and highlighted points such as on balancing housing with mixed-use designation under the proposed zoning and whether it simply does not apply within an Historic District.

What can the Area Council do to respond to this proposal as it relates to Pettee Square? Councilor Humphrey hopes to get some constructive feedback on the new maps that will be sent out by the Zoning and Planning Committee before the end of October. The impact will depend partly on what the Market will dictate. Discussion followed specifying the limits of ‘by right’ vs by Special Permit under the proposed zoning. Also, Council Humphrey confirmed that he doesn’t expect the requirements under the new MBTA Communities Law layer to apply in Pettee Square, presumably, as it is greater than a half a mile away from any MBTA station. It was agreed that the MBTA Communities Law would most likely be an additional layer of zoning in addition to the core proposed framework.

Councilor Humphrey noted that the good news (as was seen in the Mayor’s weekly message on 10/20) is that there is now confirmed 2 million dollars of state construction funds, and 1.1 million from leftover ARPA funds to complete the road beautification and repairs in Pettee Square. Also, that it would be good if the Area Council could discuss the zoning framework at the November meeting and compile some specific, constructive feedback. Anil agreed that Area Councilors should stay tuned for further discussion on how the Area Council feels about the new maps and framework.

Councilor Humphrey reiterated that under the new framework, property owners in Pettee Square would not be required to build as much as they are legally able to by right or by special permit for that matter. They could choose to keep the buildings as they are and much of it will be determined by the market.

Rena G. noted that the size of the property lot would determine whether the Planning Board or the City Council would review property development proposals.

A member of the public noted, in agreement with others, some pause or hesitation in supporting all of this potential additional development before knowing how the Northland complex itself will change the character of Pettee Square over the next two years. Councilor Humphrey contacted Barney Heath for a more up to date map of Upper Falls under the proposed Zoning framework.

5. **5) Northland Update (5 minutes)** no updates

6. **6) Village Day Review and 2023 Update (10 minutes)**

Summary of Spending

There is a Net of \$1500 following Village Day, with great thanks to Northland and Village Bank both for their sponsorship (1K each) leaving a balance of \$6543.93.

Councilor Humphrey spoke to representatives from DPW and suggested that the Area Council should contact DPW to bring vehicles for children as additional entertainment for 2023, which would provide more activity. Marie suggested that we could ask owners of the Telegraph building for use of their parking lot for Village Day for the trucks and more parking. Anil reported that Paula Gannon from the City will reach out to all her vendors about village day next year, which may help since Village Day seems to get bigger every year. Anil suggested that we could get a team to procure more food options for next year. There was also a concern about making more parking available for participants at Village Day next year. The Magician was a bit more expensive this year. Call to solicit new ideas from the Area Council for upcoming Village Days. Special thanks to The Garden Quartet who provided musical entertainment, sponsored by Patty Connolly.

7. **7) La Nuestra Update & Pettee Square Redesign Update (5 minutes)**

The Full City Council did not vote on land use related to Nuestra yet.

8. **8) Depot Coffee Shoppe Update (5 minutes)**

Phil Emmanuel (Little Luke's Café) will need to run the new signage before the Historic Commission, but he hopes to be permitted and open by December 1, 2022.

9. **9) General Upper Falls News (5 minutes)**

959 Chestnut St got permission to reframe the roof from Historic Commission, by dropping by little over 1'. So they are moving toward a completion at the correct height. 300 Elliot St has received their permits for their carriage house.

13-19 Winter St: grading has been brought up

14 Summer Street: Developer has come back to the Historic Commission twice; retaining walls were too large in their proposal so the project is paused at the moment.

10. **10) Public Comment/Questions?**

11. **11) Adjourn** Jeff R made the motion to adjourn and Marie J seconded this motion. All were in favor to adjourn the October 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](mailto: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.