

**WABAN AREA COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 10 2021
HELD VIA ZOOM**

WAC: Christopher Pitts, Rena Getz, Sallee Lipshutz, Bob Jampol, Tom Elkind, Isabelle Albeck, Megan Meirav, Ronald Marcus, Dinah Bodkin.

City Councillor: Bill Humphrey

Community: Jesse Corey, Judi Burten, Nancy Mansbach.

Zoning of Firearm Businesses in Newton. A gun store was planning to open on Washington St but for now that is no longer happening. For now what is in effect is a regulatory approach which says that there are only a few areas in the city where one can apply to operate a firearms business. In addition, a special permit, with approval from two thirds of the City Council is required. One criteria in the special permit is that the majority of the Council has to determine that the applicant's project is not going to be detrimental to the health of the community. That requirement is true of all special permit applications. Locations were picked by careful study on the part of the Planning Department. It is generally felt by the City Council and the Mayor's office that a total ban on gun stores would not withstand a court challenge. Chris Pitts agreed that those were the sentiments expressed at the special meeting with Newtonville Area Council re proposed gun store.

WAC's Role in Community Engagement of the Planning Department's Village Center Initiative

The question as presented by Rena is how we as a council want to engage our catchment area in the Planning Department's Village Center Initiative. "The Vision" is an online tool created by the Planning Department that allows individuals to reflect on what they envision for the future of our city, particularly village centers. Some frustration and skepticism expressed on the part of WAC members that input from the public was solicited but ultimately ignored. However, there was general agreement that WAC should engage with community and facilitate this effort. It was agreed that all WAC members would go through the Vision Kit and at the next WAC meeting we will decide how to engage our community. Each member will send Rena a comment on each of the nine categories.

Library Parking Spaces (*This discussion has been ongoing through several WAC meetings.*) Councillor Humphrey emphasizes that we must work through Andrea Downs (Chair of Public Safety and Transportation Committee). In response to complaints about sight lines, Traffic Council had created a short no parking zone administratively. Several members of WAC stated in this meeting and in other meetings, that those parking spaces are really needed for parking cars. Andrea Downs was planning on convening an informal meeting to discuss. Frustration expressed because the action was taken administratively rather than put to a vote. Andrea Downs enters meeting via Zoom and states that a meeting is planned with WLC representative, traffic engineer and interested WAC members.

Discussion re traffic incident at Angier in which a serious accident was narrowly averted (see description <https://village14.com/2021/06/03/traffic-control-at-angier-school/>). Newton Police Dept agreed to have a traffic officer monitor the area for an afternoon or two just to basically check and make sure all protocols are in place. Some crossing guard retraining will also occur.

Treasurer's Report: \$720.75. Report accepted.

April Minutes Accepted.

2020 Annual Report Accepted with revisions suggested by Rena.

Chris states that summer is a good time to generate interest in WAC and perhaps recruit members.

MA State Legislature will decide whether municipal meetings can remain on Zoom.

No Waban Village Day but there will be a Waban Fun Run.

Chestnut St work completed. Utilities and sidewalks are finished. Street will be fully repaved from Rte 9 to Beacon St.

Meeting adjourned 9:06pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Dinah Bodkin, June 22 2021