

Waban Area Council

Meeting Minutes December 21, 8:30pm

Meeting Called to order at 8:32pm

Members in attendance: Sallee Lipshutz, Kathy Winters, Chris Pitts, Maureen Reilly Meagher, Isabelle Albeck. **Quorum Present.**

Others Present: Barbara Darnell (Highlands Area Council), Bob Jampol, Dinah Bodkin, Patrick Maher, Russell Stein.

1. **Burning Issues.** MRM – Add-a-lane Project.
 - a. MRM pointed out that Mass. DOT agreed with the City of Newton to be held responsible for traffic changes to Chestnut, Quinobequin and the ramp as a result of Add-a-Lane. Traffic counts were taken very early on, but no monitoring has happened since. SL suggested that on the issue of traffic impact from the Add-a-Lane project we contact Councilor David Kalis to check in on the status of the project with the new traffic director.
 - b. Sound protection – MRM informed that sound protection is being constructed along the Wellesley side of Rt. 128 and that this was a late addition to the Add-a-Lane project. The City had already volunteered to do sound testing for the section of Waban not covered by sound wall on the east side of Rt. 128, but that has not yet happened. MRM would like to ask the City to do some sound testing on the Newton side both before and after the Wellesley-side sound wall goes up.
 - c. MRM – The divider on Rt. 9 in front of the Wellesley office park has been lengthened. WAC had pressed to get an opinion from the traffic department on the original design. It would be good to get a status update from the traffic division on whether that divider is permanent and whether the Newton traffic department thinks this design is safe. KW - Would be good to hear from Mass. DOT on that as well.
 - d. SL suggests setting up a WAC meeting in 2018 for discussing Add-a-Lane. Barbara Darnell suggested including Highlands Area Council as well. PB pointed out that Upper Falls Area Council should also be involved.
2. **Minutes** – November Meeting. **November minutes approved by unanimous vote.** MRM asked that her notes on Officer Ferolito's presentation in September be attached to December minutes as they have not made it into previous minutes. They are attached hereto.
3. **Treasurer's Report.** Current \$1319.21 balance. **Treasurer's Report approved by unanimous vote.** MRM – Friends of Quinobequin accounts for a small portion of that money. MRM says they will work to resolve what to do with that money by June. WAC needs to determine what to do with the Friends of Quinobequin in the future. MRM would like to see it continue.

4. **37 Radcliff Rd.** SL reports that the issue has been resolved. The neighbors went to the NHC meeting. NHC determined that the developer can go forward but must pay a \$25K fine, which IA has been told is the highest fine ever imposed by Newton on a builder for noncompliance. SL would like to see a change to the enforcement ordinance which would allow a builder in violation to finish the project but be penalized in a way that would deter future violations. SL suggests a change that would ban such a builder from receiving a permit for a 12 month-period following completion of the project where the violation occurred. **Action Item: SL and KW will follow up with the new Zoning and Planning chair to suggest an ordinance change.**
5. **Waban Common.** Waban Common fundraiser to be held on January 27th. SL distributed an invitation.
6. **Elections for WAC Officers.** At the beginning of January meeting we will hold an election for officers. SL expects contested elections for President and Vice President. We need someone to serve as Secretary. The consensus of the board is that SL run the January meeting.
7. **Zoning Pattern Book Deadline.** December 31 is the deadline to suggest changes to the City regarding the draft pattern book.
www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/82721.
8. **Traffic Study Results on Allen and Beethoven Roads.** SL distributed the results of the City's 2017 Traffic Calming Analysis (see <http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/86404>) which shows that Allen Ave. and Beethoven Ave. are the two streets with the highest average speed at 11 MPH over the speed limit. Those streets have been ranked 9th and 10th on the City's prioritization list for traffic calming. An email from John Rice explained that the City will employ the following techniques as part of the traffic calming process:
 1. Increased enforcement.
 2. Signage.
 3. Mobile speed feedback display signs.
 4. Permanent feedback display signs.
 5. New or improved pavement markings.
 6. Improvements to road geometry either through permanent changes to curbs, or using more tactile techniques such as paint, textured surfaces, flexible posts, etc.
9. **Proposed Letter of Support of Suzuki School.** CP presented a draft letter to the Massachusetts Cultural Council in support of the Suzuki School. MRM suggested adding some language pointing out that the school will provide some opportunity for public access. Another modification was made to the landscape language. **Modified letter (attached) approved by unanimous vote.**
10. **Waban Market Parking Lot Use.** IA explained that since the parking lot has been repainted there is less parking available. Some discussion of why the parking striping changed. **Action Item: KW will ask JR why the lot was repainted. BJ will discuss with Waban Market owners. SL will talk to the property manager.**
11. **WAC Programming and Fundraising.** SL would like to see WAC buy a bench for Waban Common at cost of \$1,000. SL would like to get a pledge from WAC to buy a bench with the understanding we would raise part of the money in the future. SL and CP recused themselves because of their involvement with Waban Common and WIS. After some discussion, KW indicated she would not vote in favor because she did not want to

commit WAC to have to fundraise to fund a pledge for Waban Common. The item was then tabled.

- 12. Unanimous vote to donate \$100 to appropriate charity in honor of WAC member Pia Bertelli's late husband John Dragat.**

Attachments:

MRM's notes on Officer Ferolito's September presentation
Suzuki School Letter

Attachment – Maureen Reilly Meagher’s Notes on Officer Ferolito’s Presentation at
September WAC Meeting

Officer Brett Ferolito introduced himself as Newton Community Outreach Officer,
Newton Police Department.

He proceeded to give an overview of Community outreach program, which is currently
focused on village centers. In addition to building relationships with local area councils,
the program currently deploys three bike riding officers during day shifts in the villages
and schools.

The police department would welcome support from the public ,for this program.

The area council was given an update on work of Police dept. noting the practice of
ongoing training exercises for various scenarios.

The Newton police department has pulled over several hundred cars and issued over
100 citations on Quinobequin Road in 2018.

An analysis of conditions(safety, speed, volume , etc) on Quinobequin Road will be
forthcoming from the department.

Attachment – Suzuki School Letter

Massachusetts Cultural Council
Cultural Facilities Fund
10 St. James Ave
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Members of the Review Panel of the Cultural Facilities Fund:

In light of the recent decision by the Suzuki School of Newton to relocate to the historic Staples-Craft-Wiswall Farmstead in the heart of downtown Waban Village Center, we, the Waban Area Council, are writing to you to convey our heartfelt support of this decision, and to encourage you to invest in this project.

The Waban Area Council is a local council elected to hear, respond to, and represent village concerns. The nine elected representatives address matters at the village level and report local support and concerns to the City Government on pertinent Waban issues. We believe the presence of the Suzuki School will positively impact our village and by extension, will be a benefit to all of Newton.

In 1688, Deacon John Staples arrived in a land approximately 7 miles west of Boston, and built the first homestead that gave birth to Waban village. The house and the land that started it all still stand majestically just as they have for over 300 years, having survived numerous threats from nature and man. Generations of owners have been careful stewards of this farmstead and the result is that the house, with a few modest modifications, is still here today.

The school's commitment to maintain the historic home, respect the landscape, and open its doors to the community through public engagement is incredibly good fortune. The Suzuki School will become an important member of the community, and will add immeasurably to our community-building events and cultural enrichment. Much like the Waban Library, which is now thriving as a community center and has welcomed new generations of villagers who had never been inside, the Staples-Craft Farmstead will welcome citizens to numerous events and concerts, ultimately strengthening the fabric of our village and our city, and will be an important step to making Newton a cultural destination.

We urge the Council to participate in enabling this endeavour in any way it can.

Sincerely,
The Waban Area Council

Sallee Lipshutz
President



Christopher Pitts
Vice-President