

Waban Area Council

Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2014, 7:30pm

Members in Attendance: Rena Getz, Sallee Lipshutz, Christopher Pitts, Kathy Winters, Andreae Downs, Joe Corkery, Matt Gardella, Maureen Reilly-Meagher and Barbara Bower.

Aldermen in Attendance: John Rice

City Officials in Attendance: William Paille, Transportation Division Director

1. **July Minutes. Minutes of July 10, 2014 meeting approved by unanimous vote.**
2. **Treasurer's Report.** Nothing new to report.
3. **Burning Issues from the Community.**
 - Gretchen Friend asked for help with the commuter parking around Waban Center. AD informed that there is no parking plan for Waban, and she feels it is sensible to develop a comprehensive plan for parking in Waban. WAC will work on that.
 - Deborah Charness asked for one hour parking along Collins Rd.
 - Another resident brought up the issue of sewer charges for irrigation. AD reports that the City is working on it. Ald. Rice said a proposal is coming soon to the Bd. of Aldermen.
4. **Community Engagement.** SL gave a report of issues put forth to the community engagement officer.
5. **Parking, Traffic and Pedestrian Issues Working Group.** AD reported that the Group is investigating getting rid of parking along Beacon St. and adding a bike lane. Will set up a date for an open meeting to discuss that. AD is setting up a neighborhood meeting to discuss traffic on Radcliff and Tamworth. The city is looking at piloting in-street stormwater treatment (also known as "green infrastructure," such as bioswales -- taking what would be a tree/grass berm or curb extension & adding some stormwater retention and plants to both slow the flow of water to the river and to remove pollutants naturally) and if the neighbors are amenable, we could come to the city with a fully-accepted neighborhood approach to traffic calming on this two-block street.
6. **Zervas.** RG reported that the vote at the finance committee for the authorization of funding to purchase the abutting properties has been delayed until Sept. 15. RG will post information on our website.

7. **Angier.** Angier update occurred at 7pm.
8. **Moratorium on Demolitions.** Ald. Sangiolo has proposed a one-year moratorium on demolitions. Links to the power point presentations regarding the proposal will on our website.
9. **SPN update.** We have been informed by Planning Dept. and Ald. Crossley that the developer is interested in a 40B rental development at the SPN site. KW is in contact with the developer's attorney, Stephen Buchbinder, and will work toward an early community meeting. **Unanimous approval to hold a WAC-sponsored special community meeting on the project as soon as the developer is able.**
10. **Voting at Library Center.** Primary voting occurred at WLC this week. The Council acknowledged Ald. Rice's work in achieving this.
11. **Add-A-Lane.** Unanimous vote to approve sending a letter to Mass DOT seeking confirmation of certain items (a copy of which is attached). Bill Paille gave an update on base counts done in connection with Add-A-Lane project. Counts are available on website.
12. **Mass DOT public outreach program re Add-A-Lane.** Unanimous vote to approve joint area council letter (a copy of which is attached) from WAC, Newton Highlands Area Council, and Newton Upper Falls Area Council expressing support for Ald. Yates Docket Item #310-14 requesting the development of a public outreach program in partnership with Mass. DOT re the Add-A-Lane project. If other area councils do not agree to join in the letter WAC will send it on its own.
13. **FOTQ Update.**
 - FOTQ, through MRM's work, has received a matching grant from the Dept. of Conservation and Recreation in the amount of \$3,333 to construct footbridges along the walking paths at Quinobequin Rd. Motion from MRM Discussion and Action Decision re: Fundraising mechanism for Matching Grant donations: "Be it resolved that fundraising will be done by Friends of the Quinobequin, under the aegis of the Waban Area Council, and through the Waban Area Council bank account, in the amount of \$1667.00 to match the amount required by DCR's \$3333.00 contribution to install two boardwalks on the Upper Charles Reservation (Quinobequin Parkland)." **Approved by unanimous vote.** A link will be put up on FOTQ page for donations.
 - MRM also reported on a line in Environmental Bond Bill H4375 "that \$250,000 shall be expended for the design and construction of a

pedestrian, bicycle, and multi-use pathway along the Charles river between route 9 and route 16 in the city of Newton and the improvement of such path to make it an official connector trail between Hemlock Gorge and the Leo G. Martin Golf Course." MRM expects public meetings to be hosted by Rep. Ruth Balsler on the line item.

14. Angier/Collins/Beacon/ Waban Ave. Traffic Reconfiguration. Bill Paille gave a presentation of the four options his department has examined to improve the Collins Rd./Waban Ave./Beacon St. area. A link to his presentation will be up on the website. Paille described the views of his department as follows: The concern with Option A is the 5 vehicle pedestrian conflicts. Option B doesn't address many of the current problems. Option C drawback is Union Church exit into the intersection. Option D is the preferred option and his department will continue to fine tune it. Paille plans to present the design to the community before the plans are finalized.

15. Quinobequin. Bill Paille has been trying to contact someone at DCR for help with traffic calming measures on Quinobequin. He suggests getting Rep. Balsler involved as a way to bring pressure on DCR to address the issue. Bill Paille also said that the Mayor and the City are prepared to assist with traffic calming on Quinobequin, especially as a result of any Add-A-Lane disruption.

Next meeting will take place on October 9, 2014.

Adjourn. 9:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Winters

Attachment:
WAC letter to DOT re Add-A-Lane

Waban Area Council

October 1, 2014

Mr. Larry Cash, Mass DOT Design Project Manager
MA DOT
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston, MA 02116
Lawrence.cash@state.ma.us

Re: MA DOT Add-A-Lane Project #603711

Dear Mr. Cash:

The Waban Area Council learned from information given by DOT at the Needham Heights Neighborhood Association Presentation on June 9, 2014 concerning the Add-a-Lane Project (MassDOT Project #603711) that:

- During Phase I of Contract V of this Project two activated traffic signals will be added on the Route 9 deck between Wellesley and Newton. This construction Phase has been scheduled from September 2014 to October 2015.
- The presentation also indicated that the ramp reconfiguration that would empty the storage lanes connected to these lights will not be constructed until a later date in Phases 4/5, up to four years later, scheduled from May 2018-December 2018.

We would like to affirm that our observation about the timing of these two construction items, scheduled many years apart, is current and correct.

If our understanding is correct, we request a clear explanation of DOT's reasoning for separating these two intricately related projects.

It is our role to provide relevant and accurate information to Newton residents in advance of this project. It is imperative that we be alerted promptly to any new information related to DOT #603711 that will impact our community. Your cooperation in meeting this mission is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Waban Area Council, by
Sallee Lipshutz, President
24 Radcliff Road
Waban, MA
rrcexec@regulatoryresearch.com

cc: Setti Warren, Mayor, City of Newton
Board of Aldermen, City of Newton
Ruth Balsler, MA State Representative, 12 Middlesex District
Cynthia Creem, MA State Senator, 1st Middlesex District
Joseph Kennedy, USA State Representative, Fourth District