

Waban Area Council
Meeting Minutes April 8 2021
Held via Zoom

WAC members present: Chris Pitts, Rena Getz, Isabelle Albeck, Sallee Lipshutz, Tom Elkind, Bob Jampol.

City Council: Bill Humphrey, Julia Malakie, Tarik Lucas

Community: John Mordes, Maureen Reilly Meagher, Nathaniel Lichtin (NHAC), Carole Grossman

Burning Issues from the Community: IA initiated discussion re no parking sign at the intersection of Pine Ridge and Woodward, in front of Waban Library Center. IA stated that Pine Ridge goes very wide at that spot with plenty of room for two more cars to park in front of the library without impacting the intersection at all. It is desirable for people to have the option to park in front of the library and run to the post office or in and out of Starbucks quickly. The sign (which was installed approximately one year ago) makes it more difficult to do that. CP shared screen showing overview of area, circled where the No Parking spots are. Were cars parking in the no parking spots, private driveways or library entrance would be unaffected. RG suggested that if cars are parked in said spots, drivers coming up Woodward towards Beacon St have to pull far into the intersection to see if anyone is coming from Pine Ridge. Ie, sight lines are affected by cars parked in (now illegal) spots. Bill Humphrey texted Andrea Downs who responded she had no specific insights. Bill Humphrey will find out exactly why the No Parking sign was placed.

Treasurer's Report: Reimbursements and expenses discussed. Treasurer's Report approved.

March Minutes Approved.

Process for Submission to WAC website. Topic was precipitated by Chris receiving a request to post a resource for senior citizens. Request from Chris for more information was not answered. General discussion of WAC website policy ensued. Agreed that WAC is "very, very hyper focused on our responsibility to inform people of what's going on in the city council level." Postings should not expand in any significant way beyond that. Chris did express some willingness to apply a less narrow standard to monthly blast emails.

Process for meetings. CP stated that other boards he serves on have multiple subcommittees which take care of all the different roles that that are required by that organization. Subcommittees issue reports at meetings. At WAC all business is taken care of at meetings. Chris wants to be sure everyone has a chance to talk, but he understands that people do not like two hour meetings. It was suggested that presenter make clear from the outset the subject of the presentation and what is actionable. Time limits for presentation (5 min) and total time limit (90 min) for the meeting were discussed. No current need for subcommittees because WAC's next major role will be in setting up the city council debates for the fall. Two people will be on the debate subcommittee.

Survey Can not be discussed because it was not posted to city website.

Plaque Committee update: SL states that information sent by Rena and Chris from MACRIS database was for buildings on "their" side of the tracks. Sallee had little to work with for her side of the tracks. But Rena eventually sent her material for Angier, Union Church, and Church of Good Shepherd. Group meeting again April 20. By that time there will be 50 word summaries for each building. Plaque committee has split into two. One will have a plaque describing Angier, Union Church, Church of the Good Shepherd and Waban Common. A second plaque will be in Waban Center and overlook Strong Building and Staples Craft building. Anticipated that each plaque will cost \$2500. Using West Newton plaque, located

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near Sweet Tomatoes, as model. Plaques will be funded through private donations. It was suggested that WAC contribute.

WIS Fundraising Changes at WIS. Chris described WIS's saving Waban Library Center and getting it up and running as a private entity. WIS also started Waban Village Day. The lit up tree at Christmas is also popular. Progressive dinner highly recommended. Plan for next 100 years. Membership dues were dropped. WIS needs about \$25-30,000 to do what they do. Donations will be solicited privately, Chris calls on all WAC members to participate. Use WIS link at WAC website (or respond positively when he calls on the phone). WIS is looking to reinvigorate their board. Sachiko from Suzuki School now member of WIS board. Funding also comes through corporate donations and grants. SL: How about WAC's coffers? We currently have \$700, how do people think about growing that? IA : Debate will cost about \$400-500. Debate will probably be in October, many factors re election still undecided. That leaves time in June-July-August to do some fundraising. Set a limit of \$3,000 to be obtained from private donations and businesses. SL: As quasi governmental organization are we allowed to raise money? Nathaniel Lichtin: Area councils can raise private donations. Donations are not tax deductible.

Discussion of possible fall Village Day, but generally felt there are still many restrictions are still in place. Joint Highlands and Waban Village Days for Sept 12 was discussed at Highlands Area Council. CP: All events are uncertain right now.

May 2 NewtonServe Day. Waban Common will be mulched by boy scouts but can also use volunteers. Gail Wintersteiner has been doing much mulching for decades. CP wonders if she is part of Waban Common effort.

Discussion of Chestnut St repairs and whether they were well planned so that the street did not have to be torn up multiple times.

Volunteers must sign up for NewtonServes ahead of time.

Hemlock Gorge cleanup Oct 24. John Mordes has received updates from Ruth Balsler about ongoing projects, ie stair project is in the hands of MWRA and Quinobequin Crosswalk Study. Appropriations for Stone Building did not come through, but minor repairs are being done. Friends of Hemlock Gorge may begin another program of informative walks.

Carol Grossman suggested WIS list what each of their activities costs. Also suggests WAC be transparent about cost of things.

Upcoming hearings: Review of Demolition Delay Ordinance April 12, Crystal Lake April 15.

Engraving on Brian Yates's tomb mentioned by CP and slide shown.

Meeting adjourned 8:45pm

Respectfully submitted by Dinah Bodkin
April 16, 2021

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