

# Waban Area Council

## Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2017, 7:30pm

**Members in Attendance:** Joe Corkery, Sallee Lipshutz, Chris Pitts, Isabelle Albeck, Kathy Winters, Maureen Reilly Meagher, Rena Getz

**City Officials:** Elaine Gentile

**Other attendees:** Barbara Darnell, Sande Young, Jay Denenzo, Henry Irwig, Fran Godine, Tom Elkind, Don Ross, Carol Todreas , Barbara Brustowicz,

- 1) **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:31 pm**
- 2) **APPROVAL OF APRIL 13 MEETING MINUTES -**
- 3) **APPROVAL OF MAY 11, 2017 TREASURER'S REPORT -**
- 4) **BURNING ISSUES:** None.
- 5) **UPDATES:**
  - a) **St. Philip Neri** - Nothing new to report. CM states that she had heard from Nate Chaffin that two house lots on Karen Rd. were sold. No more information.
  - b) **Staples-Craft** - SL reports that Alexandra Ananth states on May 2nd that the developer has filed a motion to stay the proceedings at Housing Appeals Committee pending the sale to Suzuki. P&S has been signed. Sale is supposed to close on July 3rd. SL has heard that we should not expect any problems with historic preservation.
  - c) **Waban Historic District -**
  - d) **New Build at 28 Waban Ave -**
  - e) **Waban Common** - Elaine from Parks & Rec attended to present plans for Waban Common. SL presented a slideshow that was produced by Ray Dunetz who is landscape architect hired by Parks & Rec. Have been working to get this plan for over a year. This is a final schematic, but things are a little fluid still. SL reports that SW and SE corners may need to have some kind of decorative fencing to keep snowplows from putting snow on the island. Elaine showed large plan that will be displayed at Village Day to support fundraising. This is just a schematic design. Will be going back to look at different grasses and

trees as options. Directed landscape architect that the plantings needed to be four season. Need to be salt and drought resistant. Need to stand up to being a public place. Have a rough idea of what it might cost, but that needs to be tweaked somewhat depending on the size of the trees. Parks & Rec will be doing some sprucing up of the island in the meantime. Will remove some trees that would be removed as part of plans unless somebody tells Parks & Rec not to. Going to have an arborist evaluate the tree at the bottom of the island as it has a lot of dead branches that should be removed. Initial estimates suggest budget might be between \$70-90k if city does a lot of the work. If put out to bid, it could be much more complicated. \$72k is the current estimate but that doesn't count the cost of the walls and other improvements. Any changes to what is there would require going through Parks & Rec. Elaine will ask law department about whether WAC insurance under the city would cover contractor costs. RG can we get CPA money? SL there are grants that we could look into. RG maintenance has to be built in or it has to be maintenance free. Could potentially be supported by CPC. MRM in the interest of fundraising, is it possible to refine the requirements? Elaine - need to ensure that maintenance is built into your plans as the city will not have the resources to do the maintenance. Right now Parks & Rec is picking up the water bill for these projects, but don't know if the new administration will continue that plan. It's becoming \$1000s in water spending. Need to keep that in mind. CM normally you have an agreement with the city and an estimate firm in terms of what would need to be raised before asking the community. CP if you were going to do this in your backyard, you'd have a detailed financial plan. MRM important to remember though that the island was put there as a result of Angier work. CM you should have the city pay for it. SL there is no budget for this. CP there is a legacy of having communities paying for these types of developments. CM do need to find out what funds are available. SL do need to put irrigation in first. Estimate is around \$3000 for that. CP we will put information up on the website. KW when looking at the design, were trade-offs made with budget in mind. Barbara - there were trade-offs made, but there wasn't a strong budget in mind. SL the walls came from people in the community who wanted to have memorials and can be a source of funding. We're

looking to find something that would be pretty, but least maintenance. Elaine needs to have a discussion with public works about the snow. They put a lot of snow there. Think there should be an alternative site to put the snow. SL: we need to do some fundraising to begin it. RG: we need to complete the process what the plan is first with estimates. Also need to better define where the funding is coming through. SL will it be more difficult to work with Parks & Rec if fundraising isn't going on. Elaine: it could go either way. If you don't have the funds in some type of pot some place it could be held up. Prefer to do projects all at once. Phased approaches take longer. Challenge is you need to know what funds might be available to make some decisions. CM: you do need to do publicity and make people aware of it. Let people know that there will be an opportunity to contribute. SL it's important that we move forward with this soon otherwise it'll be another year. CM I think you'll generate a lot of enthusiasm around this, but people are going to want to know how much it's going to cost. MRM city has a role to play in this to help figure out what money is available. Not comfortable to ask without a strong plan, but also need to recognize that there are lost opportunities if we don't move quickly. SL: we do have numbers from the architect and that was \$72k. MRM: there is a walk of faith to go out to the community. SL: we need to show city we want to do something here. Elaine: yes. The city will do something. You'll see greenery and some trees. CM based on previous experience, suggest you pick a number to fundraise towards and overages can be budgeted for maintenance and incidentals. CP that sounds like a reasonable idea. KW what do we know about the funds from Angier. SL that will be for trees, not cash. JC where does the cash go? To the city? SL the money would be to pay contractors. City would contribute in kind labor and some plants. MRM important to remember that the city already brought irrigation to the island.

- f) **WAC Business Economic Development** - Carol stated that she interviewed some of the local tenants recently. Spoke with Tracy Crowley (owner of Pine Straw). Was relatively surprised to hear that she is very happy with situation in Waban. Although not terribly happy with management of the building. Landlord for store in Wellesley is much more responsive. Starbucks is very important to her and her business. Access to Starbucks from her store isn't well

maintained. Has to use a cane sometimes and access is problematic. Snow removal is an issue. Thinking about organizing with other merchants to find a person to do the snow removal. Said that store is a “lifestyle” store. Carol states that she gave Tracy some ideas for promotions in the neighborhood.

CP interviewed owner at Frame Shop. Problem is not the rent, but is the taxes. Say they have doubled in three years. Commercial taxes are flying up. SL reports that Jan from Waban Market reports the same thing.

Carol says that Tracy stated that a number of awnings on the block. Carol says that she’s generally happy with the tenant mix and the store.

SL how can we help? Why do the shop owners have to shovel? Shouldn’t the property owner have to do that. CM that may depend on what the lease says. May require them to do all the maintenance. CP says that tenants have to tread lightly with the landlord. Manager’s name is Tim Sullivan. CP states that they don’t want to do anything with the building.

Carol: somebody should reach out to the management company to figure out what the issues are and what can be done to help. Problem is most information about relationship between manager/tenant is all hearsay.

SL: we could create a new subcommittee focused on new business economic development. Carol: would be willing to help interview and get the lay of the land. Would like to understand current situation. SL: Parks & Rec could definitely do something between upper and lower square. IA: if we approach owners we have to be careful to not name tenants because there is a sensitivity. CM: it would be useful to understand what the lease lengths are. Carol: perhaps management company would be happy to have a better connection to the street. CP moves to have a committee formed to investigate economic development of square. IA seconds. Approved by SL, KW, IA, CP, JC. SL will populate the members of the committee from within the council and the community.

- g) WAC Visioning Community Survey** - CP reports that at a special meeting 2 weeks ago, We went through every word and sentence in the four surveys. Actually threw one out because felt answers were

already known based on feedback already received. Survey has been significantly improved as a result of the working group. Sent out a test to 48 people. First question has to do with transportation (do members of your household work from home). 20 people answered the question by the time he looked initially. Plan to send out the survey to whole email list. Already from test group have been finding some bugs in the questions that are being worked out. 30 years ago very few people worked out of their homes (except for large population of psychiatrists). Telecommuting is a new thing. Another question was on cars. 4 out of 20 respondents reported having 3 cars. Question on open space. Most thought there was room for improvement one left a comment. SL: this is very timely. Representative from Parks & Rec just joined the meeting. CP reports that Srdj will take this and tweak it to survey their village. CP states the modules are: Transportation and Open Space, Development, Commercial Center, Arts & Entertainment, and Aging in Place. Lots of opportunity to comment. JC is survey anonymous? CP yes. Survey will be attached to an email (so only recipients can receive it) but results will not contain information about respondents. CP moves to send out to list. IA seconds. CP states that comfortable send this out. Received a lot of good feedback in the testing (including from a person who does surveys professionally). IA went through several stages. SL things that could be misinterpreted or could be considered targeted have been removed. CP probably impossible to make a survey that is unbiased because sometimes asking the question appears biased, but you can provide a gamut of answers and leave it open for comments. Carol - compliments to you. It was fantastic. Lots of options. Seemed very fair. Although it was a little confusing with the three emails. Perhaps you can provide a little description to let people know how long the surveys will take. Vote on motion to send the survey. Approve: JC, SL, IA, KW, CP. No others present. Motion carries.

**h) Newton Serves -**

**i) Election Showcases -**

## **6) CHARTER REVIEW FINAL PROPOSAL**

## **7) AREA COUNCIL ELECTION INFORMATION FOR NOVEMBER 7**

**8) WAC PARTICIPATION IN WABAN VILLAGE DAY**

**9) NEW BUSINESS**

**10) ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**11) ADJOURN:**

Next meeting will take place on June 8, 2017 at 7:30 PM.

Adjourn. 10:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joe Corkery