

**Waban Area Council
Meeting Minutes
April 16 2020 7:30pm
Held via Zoom**

Attendees WAC: Chris Pitts, Dinah Bodkin, Rena Getz, Tom Elkind, Ronald Marcus, Isabelle Ahlbeck, Sallee Lipshutz, Bob Jampol. **City Council:** Bill Humphrey, Andrea Downs, Julia Malakie. **Public:** Sachiko Isihara, Deena David, David and Karen Miller, John Mordes, Maureen Reilly Meagher, Carol Todreas, Margie Arons-Barron.

Chris Pitts opened the meeting by asking what can we do to help people in this time of Covid-19. RG suggested checking in with elderly people and others who are unable to get out. CP mentioned that WIS had good outreach many years ago using “street captains,” individuals who knew their neighbors and knew who might be vulnerable.

IA :A Newton South Class conducted via Zoom was taken over by someone insulting the Chinese. IA contacted Chinese neighbor to make sure all was OK and neighbor was most appreciative.

CP asked David and Karen Miller if there was news re the Cogen plant at NWH. The Millers said no. CP noted that the questionnaire produced by the NWH Cogen working group had been sent in in March. It was noted that NWH most likely is busy coping with the many consequences of Covid-19.

TE: Coleman House in Newton experienced 24 hour power loss. Much food was thrown out. CP: In next email blast we will specifically offer to help elderly and others in need.

BH had just come from Newton Upper Falls meeting. Mayor has initiated rental assistance using CPC funds. Planning Department and CPC are putting together a draft proposal. Federal money for rental assistance will also be made available.

CP: AD initiating proposal to have Quinobequin closed to all but local traffic. BJ: Cold Spring Park is getting too crowded. RG: Proposal to close some streets to traffic on City Council docket next week. BH: people should be evenly distributed throughout city to maximize social distancing. Those in favor should email AD and Alicia Bowman.

RM: a flag is now flying at Lincoln Field; apparently was simply put up by a resident. CP: WIS will take care of illuminating the flag as the pole was originally put up by the WIS.

BJ: Where does proposal for tot lot at end of Waban Ave stand? CP: This proposal was brought to us over a year ago and neighbors were asked to write in support or dissent, resulting in an overwhelming amount of support. A 75K price tag was attributed to the proposal but there seems to have been no further action since.

Sachiko Isihara proposes children at Suzuki School create videos of their music making and distribute that to elderly people. CP: good idea, Newton Festival of Arts was cancelled, but now encouraging many events to go online. Newtonfoa.org DB: Groupmuse, creation of Sam Bodkin streams lots of live events.

Carol Todreas: Will building where Pine Straw located be preserved? CP: We can try to landmark that building. RG: Landmark ordinance has been suspended.

Status of 20 Kinmoth. Generally agreed that little progress has been made. Some discussion as to which construction projects have halted and which not. BH: Exceptions were made to

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halting construction throughout the city. Landscaping deemed essential (*this is a state level decision that can not be overturned locally*) so it is ongoing.

Maureen Reilly Meagher: Footbridges at Quinobequin Park repaired by David and Sam Jones. Friends of Quinobequin paid for the materials. Some discussion as to which Newton parks are open and which not. Julia Malakie: most play structures blocked off with yellow tape.

February Minutes approved.

SL : Let's publicize Newton Together. CP stated WIS will take lead; he will arrange that w Colleen Noland.

Meeting adjourned 9:14pm.

Respectfully submitted by Dinah Bodkin
April 27 2020