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# **Waban Area Council**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**January 15, 2015, 7:30pm**

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

**City officials:** Bill Paille-Transportation Department, John Rice-Ward 5 Alderman

**Other attendees:** Deena David, Dorothy Roberts, Barbara Brustowicz, Isabelle Albeck

**Members Absent:** Chris Pitts and Matthew Gardella both unable to attend due to rescheduled meeting time.

1. **Meeting called to order at 7:34 PM**
2. **Goals of Waban Area Council and Councilors for 2015.** Each councilor present discussed their personal goals for the coming year. SL presented the slate of candidates that had been nominated (and had also accepted those nominations) for office in 2015. Only the office of Vice President was contested.
  - President – Sallee Lipshutz
  - Vice President – Maureen Reilly-Meagher and Chris Pitts
  - Treasurer – Rena Getz
  - Secretary – Joe Corkery

As BB was scheduled to arrive later in the meeting, it was unanimously decided to wait on voting until she was present. A discussion was had as to the merits of a 1 year term vs. a 2 year term of office. No action was taken on this discussion.

3. **Secretary's Report.** KW presented the minutes of the **December 11, 2014** meeting. AD moved to accept the minutes. JC seconded. Minutes unanimously approved. KW presented the 2014 Secretary's report. AD moved to approve the report. RG seconded. Report unanimously approved. KW to submit to the city.
4. **Treasurer's Report.** RG reported that the bank account had an opening balance of \$2866 and a current balance of \$3021.75 that includes a balance of \$269.62 being held on behalf of the FoQ. RG presented the 2014 Treasurer's report and it was unanimously approved. RG to submit to city.
5. **Burning Issues.**
  - Deena David reports that there are two large owls hanging around Waban and that they are very loud. Be on the lookout for them as they are spectacular.

6. **Angier School / Beacon St / Collins Rd Update.** Newton Director of Transportation, William Paille, stated that he plans to come to the WAC meeting every month and hopefully also get a MassDOT representative to attend as well for updates on Add-a-Lane. He also provided an update and a presentation on the status and plans for the intersection at Beacon St and Collins Rd. He presented the existing situation and the current plan for a new arrangement that incorporates an hourglass shaped island in the middle with single direction traffic on both sides. There will be parking on one side of each single direction rd. This plan will preserve existing parking on Beacon St. He stated that the bottom half of the island is historic (or can't be developed) for some reason and he needs to figure out why. There is a plan for a 6 in granite curb all around the island to deter parking on the island itself. There are plans for a sidewalk all the way around and up top. There will be a middle cross walk and they are still discussing whether or not cross walks should be raised.

- AD raised issue of concern about crosswalk being blocked by parkers. AD/RG question whether top crosswalk on right could be shorter. BP says the space there needs to be wide enough to accommodate tractor-trailer trucks. He said he would look at ways to make the crossing safer, perhaps by raising the crosswalk's easternmost corner in a way that could be crossed by tractor-trailers but would be uncomfortable for car drivers.
- RG asked if there had been any meetings with abutters. BP is planning to setup meetings with abutters in the coming week. KW volunteered to provide contact information for abutters to BP.
- RG asked how city is going to address parking so that they don't become commuter spaces. BP stated there is likely going to be some parking restrictions. New school site should be able to accommodate most of the staff parking and so they shouldn't need to park in this area.
- JR wanted to know who approves this. BP states that application has been submitted to public facilities and geometry could be approved next week. Then will work with traffic council over next few months and then go to traffic council for final approval in May.
- RG asked are you going to mock it up? BP said that it might be possible but goal is to have this out to bid for contractors in March.
- BP noted that there are currently temporary signals at Manitoba and is considering making them permanent as part of this plan as they are working out well. The signals would be synchronized with other lights. If not ready to do that at beginning of March, it might be a later addition. Also considering having a pedestrian activated signal in front of Waban Kitchen to assist the vision impaired. Might be a HAWK signal, but might not have the funds for that.
- JR asked where landscaping budget is coming from? He noted that topsoil would need to come out of this. Also noted that they might be able to get some funding from school tree surplus funds.
- IA expressed concern that we aren't getting something temporary that people can provide feedback on. Does not want something done without input and later realize we don't want it. BP stated that money has been

allocated for this project as shown and hopefully there will be excess that can be used for sidewalks further down the way. It would be great if we could simulate this, but the current plan is the best and safest option in the eyes/minds of all the engineers. The city has modeled this and it is going to work.

- RG asked what's different from now? BP stated that traffic flow is the biggest difference by preventing conflicts in intersection, better traffic flow into and out of site. There will be more controls for traffic.
- AD asked where are bike lines? BP stated that all shared use lanes go through the intersection and in front of school.
- BP states that construction to begin in June or July.
- BP will give a copy of presentation to SL
- BP provided an Add-A-Lane update: contractor got notice to proceed (1600 days to complete) - April 25, 2019, next 30 days will see some activity along 95. Public meeting held in Needham on December 22, 2014. Likely to install traffic signals on rt 9 but most likely won't be in use for 2 years.
- SL stated that we now have a contact name that works at DOT for issues related to Add-a-Lane. His name is Joseph Graham and his email address is: [Joseph.Graham@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:Joseph.Graham@dot.state.ma.us)
- AD wanted to know what size signal masts going in on Beacon. BP states that they will be 1990 standard, similar to Concord and Washington / Crafts and Washington
- MRM asked do you still want to encourage residents to contact DOT or have those funneled through the city? BP responds that if you want to direct all of your questions to SL and have her give them to BP in a group that he'll go to DOT to push them through. He'd be happy to do that.

7. **Election Discussion Continued.** MRM requests that in the future we have more time between nominations and voting so that people running can notify existing officers and talk with other councilors. SL explains that we are required by OML to vote openly. All unopposed candidates unanimously approved. MRM elected to position of Vice President (votes for MRM: MRM, SL, BB, JC, AD / votes for CP: RG, KW).
8. **St. Philip Neri Update.** KW reports that nothing is going on right now. KW has asked attorney about rumors that it is being sold. Attorney has not heard anything about it from owner.
9. **Zervas Update.** AD invited everybody to a Safe School Site Design meeting on Feb 25 at WLC she is organizing on behalf of WAC. She has already talked to NHAC about it. AD will post it at city hall if SL reminds her. Going to reach out to Steve Siegel, Deb, and Brian to attend. Has contacted both Angier/Zervas PTOs. Need to notify BP about meeting. Need to get out to PTO newsletters, our email newsletters. WalkBoston will come to present on best practices in school design and policy for safe walking. LivableStreets has recommended an engineer

to come to talk about how to design streets for walking safety. Focus will be general, but will look at Zervas school plan given the existing site.

- JR suggests considering how to structure the meeting to prevent conflict between Angier vs. Zervas vs. Cabot discussions. Try to keep it broad and then potentially break it into separate school specific meetings. Try to keep this to 30,000 feet view point so that people can be informed for Zervas community meeting instead of at this meeting.
- RG says she only got one email (from Patrick) and that abutter group is ready to come to the table for discussion.
- MRM says that we need to be very clear as possible as to what we can promise at a meeting.
- JR suggests try to model after 40B meeting as an educational process. need to make sure that people know that this isn't here to design Zervas.

**10. Friends of the Quinobequin Update.** MRM states that there is no news about footbridge project. Waiting to be contacted by DCR staff and the only other thing is that AD and MRM attended an urban path and parkway committee and learned that it was unusual and unprecedented that DCR reached out to bike groups and now walking groups are trying to come to the table. Good news that DCR is thinking outside the box and interested in community input.

- AD states that DCR is going to start looking at scope of planning. if you are going to replace, here are the things that you need to take into account ... for example, how is a parkway different than a roadway such as walking, biking, etc. Second part of that is that they are going to try to build in a process and a list of priorities for places that are in need of improvement. Try to make it easier for neighborhoods and communities to come in and be a part of the process.
- SL states that speaking of Quinobequin, June 7 came up as an opportunity for a day to block the street off for an event.
- JR asks do we need to have a meeting for FOTQ to take lead on this?
- MRM says we need a lot of people to do this.
- JR says won't be hard to shutdown, it's what to do once it is done. MRM and AD will work to get together to talk about scope of this.

**11. Waban Future Vision.** SL states notes from first meeting are up on website, please check it out. Next meeting is next on Jan 22 at WLC.

- IA asks how important is this to the city? SL responds that this is very important. We are well ahead of the other neighborhoods in doing what is asked.
- IA is worried that there isn't enough community input. RG responds that perhaps at next session need to talk about outreach and how to get more input.

**12. Angier Update** - JC reports that they discussed vibration concerns from community. Contractors measured vibrations and showed that they were within

tolerances. However, as ground froze more vibrations were noted at Church and they have stopped digging until spring (April). Things are moving quickly with steel and expect to be done with steel construction by Feb 6. Almost all major utilities for the site are done. Just a small section of water and gas line that needs to be completed once they can start digging again. 10 days behind schedule due to delays in steel, but making that up as they go. It doesn't affect completion date as they are pulling in advanced work earlier. Expect framing to be done in March and first bricks to go up sometime in mid-April. At peak construction, may have up to 150 employees on site. Parking won't be a problem in community as they are required to take public transportation or shuttles if staff is over capacity for parking onsite. Landscaping for school should be done by October. Grounds won't be open until completion date.

13. **Zoning Update.** RG reports that city is almost done with phase 1 of rewriting zoning ordinance. No notices yet for phase 2.
14. **Add-a-Lane Update.** SL states that we now have the name of a person that we can speak to if we have problems (Joseph Graham). They are starting construction this month, phase 1 stage 1 will include changes at Rte. 9.
  - SL wants to discuss writing a letter to the community to make them aware of what's going on, what WAC is, add-a-lane. SL plan to write and bring it to the meeting next month. it may take most of the budget to mail it.
  - JR suggests looking into putting an insert into WIS newsletter.
  - MRM asks can we get a strong message on a postcard and direct people to the website.
  - AD suggests tabling topic until next meeting.
  - MRM asks if somebody can look into cost for postcard.
15. **Council Boundaries Update.** SL sent a letter out to neighbors on Winslow because NHAC went out and collected signatures on Upper Winslow, North Side of Beacon, and around Cold Spring which was not what was agreed upon originally. SL has received 8 responses and 7 of which are to join WAC and 1 to NHAC. NHAC gathered 7 as well. Suggested that we show up on Feb 4 in front of programs and services for when this might be decided. All people on Puritan between UW and Beethoven want to leave NH and join Waban.
16. **Evaluation of snow ordinance.** JR suggests that we should get feedback on snow ordinance this year but that it is hard to do because so little snow fall. Enforcement of ordinance has been pushed back another year because they are trying to figure out if meter maids can enforce. Goal to get feedback on snow and sidewalks in Waban so that when we get to 2016 we can provide feedback to see if we make this a permanent ordinance.
  - AD would like to see if by lowering speeding limits on "green streets" (those that abut parks or aqueducts) whether can avoid having sidewalks because these streets are safe because streets are designed to be walkable.

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17. JR suggested that WAC adopt the new island in front of Angier as a way to raise awareness and make it a beautiful park. AD notes that the island had been used for parking recently after bushes on the island were trimmed back. Turns out, they were being used a camp ground and people drinking. JR suggests that WAC look to churches to co-adopt as well. Apply to Parks & Rec, propose what to do and then do it.
- MRM will take the lead on this.
18. **Trash at Richardson Update.** JR says Carol Stapleton and people are working on it. If any issues with trash, use 311 to notify P&R. SL states that city needs to have more trash / recycling bins. JR will try to come up with rehab plans.
19. **Needham St Project Update.** SL has written a letter and wanted to know if it should be WAC letter. Question of whether it should be a WAC issue as it is outside of WAC. Unanimously decided that it should be a personal letter.
20. **Street & Sidewalk Committee.** AD states that we haven't met, but we ought to. State of Sudbury Aqueduct project: Newton still last community to not go for it. Need to pick a date to go out and get signatures. AD will develop materials and needs people to go with her once a date selected. MRM and BB volunteered.

Amherst & Tamworth pilot project has not been docketed yet, JR will put in tomorrow.

Annawan and Varick will be repaved. If people have comments, people should pull them together to report them in bulk. SL reports that nothing has come in through the website. BB states there is desperate need for sidewalks on Varick based on discussions with parents. AD reports that DPW will call a meeting on all these street (possibly 2). AD suggestion to them is to give area councils a heads up so that we can collect feedback and bring them to DPW so people don't have to sit through whole meetings. WAC has already alerted DPW that there are more issues than just repaving including some water issues. AD says that it feels like we've done our due diligence in notifying people.

AD reports that there is parking meeting on January 27th (Beacon st and side streets). Invites people to come in and talk about what the issues are and what potential options are.

### 21. New Business.

- SL states that we want to have a budget and we need to have a fundraiser to raise money. Do we want to have a silent auction again and are we willing to help? Consensus is that we do want to pursue a silent auction and plan for village day. SL needs people to help as she will be out of town the first two weekends of May. SL will organize a meeting to plan auction.
- SL notes that there was a discussion on the WAC Google Group discussion list about wireless coverage in Waban. Council unanimously agrees that there

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is nothing that the council can do about this.

**Next meeting will take place on February 12, 2015.**

Adjourn. 9:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joe Corkery