

Waban Area Council

Meeting Minutes

August 10, 2017, 7:32pm

Members in Attendance: Joe Corkery, Sallee Lipshutz, Maureen Reilly Meagher, Chris Pitts, Isabelle Albeck, Andreae Downs, Rena Getz.

City attendees: John Rice

Other attendees: Barbara Bower, Jack Corcoran, John Mordes, Sande Young, Charlie Shishmanian, Jana Leary

- 1) **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:32 pm**

- 2) **APPROVAL OF JUNE 8, 2017 AND JULY 27, 2017 MEETING MINUTES:**
IA moves to approve June 8 minutes. MRM seconds. Approve: JC, SL, MRM, CP, IA. Not present: RG, AD. SL moves to approve the July 27 minutes as amended. IA seconds. Approve: MRM, JC, IA, SL, RG, CP. Abstains: AD.

- 3) **APPROVAL OF AUGUST 10, 2017 TREASURER'S REPORT:** RG reports current balance of \$1663.53. Went through yearly cycle of rental for PO Box (\$84). Expecting bill for website maintenance soon. AD moves to accept. CP seconds. Unanimously approved.

- 4) **BURNING ISSUES:** Strong community to see road work completed. John Mordes expressed concern that there are people who live on non-busy roads that have not been repaired for significantly extended period of times (one example was 38 years). Noted that Deb Crossley's response to this was concerning. Would like to see WAC potentially provide a rebuttal because most of the roads in Waban are low traffic and not likely to be addressed. JR things are not likely to change before Jan 1. This will likely be decided by the mayor and the commissioner of the DPW. MRM was told that there was going to be a data driven process in ranking the roads. JM there is such a database but was told he could not see it. Learned for Jake Auchincloss that half of his road is scheduled for work in 2020. AD notes that one of the challenges is that some of the really bad streets are going to be really expensive to repair which must be balanced against keeping the main streets in good shape. JM could the WAC make an effort to have the process kept open. Also, if things were to be fixed, how would

they be fixed. SL perhaps we can have DPW come to speak about this. MRM don't understand what JM wasn't able to see the data at city hall. In that situation you end up in place where the noisy get more attention and people become cynical about the process. JM to be clear, never followed up a second time to see if he could get data. When saw the data via Jake, noted that dates had already been assigned to street, so somebody has already done the busy-ness calculus. BB hard to believe that there isn't a schedule for this. AD one of the issues is that a lot of the underground infrastructure needs to be fixed and those have only recently gotten onto a regular schedule of repair. IA notes that when you are repairing underground resources, can't we also bury power and phone lines. MRM got a notice from Eversource say that they were going to be doing tree trimming work. Wants people to know there is a policy around they decide which limbs to take. If you are aware of the policy and Eversource is violating, you can contact the city to get the trimming to stop. Hopefully when they pave the roads, hopefully they will also paint the lines right after they pave. People have a tendency to drift. AD challenging because paving and painting are separate contracts. JR will reach out to Nicole Freedman on this.

5) UPDATES:

a) **St. Philip Neri** - RG reports that ZBA voted 4-1 to approve the change of tenure after a pretty extensive discussion. No documents were dropped and nothing had been presented to the ZBA. Many questions were asked. New owner/developer is Jay Derenzo. Has multiple developments going on in Needham. Working on a property on Warren St. So, now the development is approved for ownership. To balance that one is now 60% AMI instead of 80%. One person voted against because there were no documents and no discussion of condo fees, because the condo association could foreclose on the unit for non-payment of condo fees. One issue is that there is a certain time period that if you can't find an owner, it could go to market rate. As approved it is the same build, nothing else changed. SL stated that there is still a lot we don't know about 40Bs, especially around the financials. For instance, developer can only make 20% on the sale of the affordable units per Mass Housing.

- b) Staples-Craft** - JR says that has heard that some of the parking issues have been resolved. Getting close to having the planning report that will tie together feedback from all the departments and the public. Still taking feedback, but vast majority of feedback has been positive.
- c) Waban Historic Subcommittee** - RG still doing much of the same that was reported at the last meeting. Gathering more information. MRM is there any event data? RG not at this point. Would like to do something in the fall, but nothing scheduled. Focused on 155 homes that have been identified as in the center and historic/national register districts.
- d) Waban Common** - SL on Monday had a meeting of the fundraising committee. Shared an “almost final” copy of the landscaping design. Had discussion with WIS was to create a standalone 501c3 to handle fundraising. Tom Elkind is working on a MOU with the city. Planning second meeting on August 28th. Fundraising goal is \$100k. First event will be a cocktail party on October 28th 5:30-7:30 at the Brustowicz’s house. \$250 a head. Currently developing a website (www.wabancommon.org and www.wabancommon.com) thanks to CP. Will be able to accept donations by checks or PayPal. Planning a dog show to provide another giving level option. Many options for donations to name bricks, benches, walls, etc. Talked with parks & rec and expect irrigation system to be in this fall. WIS has pledged \$4k. Mark Welsh will plant the trees this fall. Will be able to hire proper tradesmen to build the walls next spring.
- e) WAC Visioning Community Survey** - CP just put up second survey results. Very interesting. Encourage people to view them on the website (look in archives under survey 1 & 2). Goal was to get a sense of how involved people with the history of their homes. CP shared a high level summary of the results. MRM it would be great to host a presentation to provide these results to a broader audience. RG it might be worth to reach out to those that didn’t respond to see if we can increase the yield. Once you have all the results, would be good to pull a report together to send to planning department. MRM think it might be a very sensitive suggestion. We should put together a presentation and share with the community before sending the report. RG the zoning reform process is on pause right for this fall and we have better sampling than the city. Not saying this is definitive.

Janet: what was the recruitment process? CP we sent it to all the people on the WAC email list that live in Waban. Don't feel that it is strongly tipped in one direction or another. People are looking for better planning. MRM suggest that we put together a proposal to let planning department know that people want better planning that makes sense. But you can't say that this is definitive. AD there were people that raised concerns about their ability to do the survey. MRM not comfortable with us putting this to planning. Think we could do more to encourage people to participate in the survey. CP not a problem to send a second message. Janet - it's never a bad idea to send again to get more responses. The open question is whether the survey is representative. RG people are self selecting to be engaged in the community. CP to be clear this is a ridiculous amount of work to prepare the results. The planning department has been involved in the future vision process all the way. Let's not let perfect be the enemy of the good. This is useful information we should make it available to who wants it. SL comfortable with sharing it with planning, but not drawing conclusions. MRM reject framing of perfect not be the enemy of the good. We should make our actions as transparent as possible. CP there is a lot of work that would need to be done before we could send it out again. Not comfortable to do that while addressing some of the challenges that were raised. JC so is the concern that you think people don't believe the WAC actually represents that? AD there are some people who think that. MRM so based on feedback from last month, are you comfortable sharing this? CP yes, absolutely. IA when people submitted emails they don't have any addresses. How do we know for sure that those people live in Waban. Actually, most of these people came to vote at Waban Library. How did you validate that people live in Waban? AD do we know how many voters are in the WAC catchment area. SL it's roughly 4000. CP went and did a reverse lookup on email addresses and pulled from other sources to get addresses and names for 70% of the missing ones. Left a small amount that didn't have details. With that, you can strip out the non-Waban zip codes and investigate in more detail. AD to Joe's point, we only have 700 people on the email list and roughly 4000 voters. MRM we should compare to Newtonville survey. In that case they had a very hot issue. SL this is a good discussion. We can't guarantee that

we've reached every citizen but we've got a large number of respondents. CP we've done this under the auspices of the WAC all along. We've made the intentions very clear all along. JC I think you should provide a front page with a results process. MRM could you send out to more people first? CP no that would be more work. RG moved to send the results to planning from the WAC. AD seconds. Unanimously approved.

f) Election Showcases - Next meeting of 4 ACs is August 15 to discuss planning. WAC is the host of the showcase. Please put the dates on your calendar (10/8 and 10/22) and try to be available the events. Nobody has sent any recommendations except for CP.

6) AREA COUNCILORS JOINT STATEMENT ON PROPOSED CHARTER CHANGES: SL reports that we will withdraw from an official comment on this and discusses as public citizens.

7) AREA COUNCIL ELECTION INFORMATION FOR NOVEMBER 7: SL visited city hall and got nomination papers for everyone. Everybody needs to sign to confirm receipt so that she can get it back to David Olson. Papers are due Sept 22 with verified signatures.

8) ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Oak & Christina St work delayed. May not start until fall.
Mayoral primary election on Sept 12

9) ADJOURN: RG moves to adjourn. IA seconds. Unanimously approved.

Next meeting will take place on September 14, 2017 at 7:30 PM.

Adjourn. 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Corkery