

**Waban Area Council  
Meeting Minutes  
March 14 2019 7:30pm-9:15 pm  
Waban Library Center**

**WAC Members Present:** Sallee Lipshutz, Joe Corkery, Kathryn Winters, Dinah Bodkin, Christopher Pitts, Bob Jampol, Isabelle Albeck, Patrick Maher.

**City Councilor Present:** John Rice

**Members of the Community Present:** Bill Humphrey, Julia Golden, Colleen Nolan, Alan Noguee, Maureen R Meagher, Rebecca Conon, Jenn Martin.

**February Minutes and Treasurer's Report Approved.**

**Issues from the Community** MRM suggested posting WAC agendas on bulletin board at Waban Market.

**Friends of Quinobequin/Hemlock Gorge** KW, Councilor Downs and Maureen Reilly Meagher attended a recent Friends of Hemlock Gorge meeting and agreed that it would be useful if Friends of the Quinobequin and FOHG could work together. Question still remains as to whether the two organizations should merge into one or should work together by holding regular joint meetings and pursuing joint projects. Friends of Quinobequin does not want to lose its status as a subcommittee of WAC. But public interest in Friends of Quinobequin has been waning. Hemlock Gorge is a strong organization, helped greatly over the year by Brian Yates. Access to DCR is critical, as Northland and Riverside Developments will impact these parks in a significant way. MRM is working on scheduling a joint meeting for the two groups to get together and talk about how best to collaborate.

**Charter Reform** Five WAC members attended meeting of Programs and Services on March 6. Programs and Services is reviewing changes suggested by the Charter Commission, one of which would remove area councils from the City Charter and have the created by ordinance through the city council. All WAC members, in addition to members of other area

councils, spoke against this change. P and S took that item off the table for now. Other item discussed was Article 10, which requires 20% threshold voter participation for initiatives and referenda. Issue was left unresolved.

See detailed discussion at

<http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/95828/03-06-19%20Programs%20&%20Services%20Report.pdf>.

**Zoning Redesign Update** On February 25th the Planning Department presented the buildout analysis to the Planning and Zoning Committee. As of the current Zoning Redesign Draft, the biggest changes in zoning regulations will happen in the R3 districts. The proposals are in flux, R3 may be divided into R3 and R4. Changes in R1 will likely be in the feasibility of subdivisions. Zoning Reform in the R1 districts is oriented towards reducing tear down vulnerability. Summary memo can be found here <http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/95483>.

**Allen Ave/Beethoven Ave Pedestrian Safety.** Jason Sobel of Transportation Department communicated to Councilor Rice that there will be curb extensions (bump outs) and crosswalks on the west side of Allen Ave. at Pine Ridge and Plainfield. Bump outs have the effect of slowing traffic regardless of which side of the street they are on. Bump out will be across from Richardson Field and will have cross walks to Richardson Field. Beethoven Ave is not wide enough for bump outs, but they are looking at making the crosswalk at Richardson wider in the short term and eventually raising it to make crossing safer and speeds slower. No funding source of that yet and the transportation department needs to work with fire department (fire department is resistant to raised crosswalks because it will slow firetrucks). . Members of the public in attendance requested cross walks at the aqueducts and JR said the issue with aqueduct crossings is poor visibility for cars. Members of the public raised safety concerns about Allen/Beacon intersection and about heavy parking and passibility around Zervas (especially because more students will be added over time).. JR suggested individuals email Jason Sobel. Motion passed that WAC will draft a letter to the Mayor and Transportation Department requesting that these issues be addressed.

**Finance Committee Transfer of \$1.25 M from Angier Account to Capital Stabilization Account** Essentially an accounting correction (JR) necessitated by the debt exclusion override. According to JR, the city CFO explained that after the debt exclusion override was approved but before the

override funds were available, the city spent \$1.25M of general funds on Angier design. City general fund had loaned the money to Angier and now the money is being returned from Angier to the city.

**WAC 2019 Goals** Candidate showcases as done two years ago; communicating with the public; keeping the email list up to date, making the most of Village Day. BJ: WAC should deepen its connections with Friends of Hemlock Gorge, Quinobequin and Cold Spring Park. Jean Martin stated that WAC meetings will be announced in Zervas emails. Several members expressed that we need more consistent outreach to local businesses.

**Announcements** As in Agenda

**Meeting adjourned 9:15.**

**Respectfully submitted by  
Dinah Bodkin 04/14/19**