

**Waban Area Council
Meeting Minutes July 14 2022
Held via Zoom**

WAC members present: Chris Pitts, Rena Getz, Sallee Lipshutz, Dinah Bodkin, Bill Bracken
Community: Maureen Reilly Meagher, Peter Cox, Alice Ingerson, Bonnie Greenberg, Carol Laibson, Carole Grossman, Chris Martin, David Shumway Jones, John Mordes, Lori Gilman, Margie Arons-Baron, Nancy Mansbach, Robert Greenstein
City Councillors: Julia Malakie, Andreae Downs

June Minutes Approved

DPW Improvements on Chestnut St. Aerial photo displayed with new sidewalk sections schematically drawn in. An almost continuous sidewalk path will be built along the east side of Chestnut St. Also crosswalks will be added along the length of Chestnut St. Some narrowing will result in slower speeds. Once repaving is complete (must wait for gas company to complete its work, and sidewalks to be built before repaving is done) speeds will be monitored and the data transmitted to DPW. Traffic calming is outside of DPW budget. WAC could possibly write a letter in support of proposal after it is clear what the car speeds are. Peter Cox complained of trying to cross the street with his young children. No-one ever stops. He and his neighbors who also have small children feel that traffic calming is an urgent need, yet will take years to be addressed. Improvements are paid for through Newton's Road Budget. Chestnut St is top priority at DPW in terms of traffic calming, but the money is not currently available. Some discussion of whether a targeted override, for schools and road improvements, would be appropriate.

Quinobequin Road Improvements. Transportation Bond Bill. Maureen and Rena discussed vote that was taken at the State House. Maureen watched but it was difficult to follow. Amendment was filed by Ruth Balzer that \$75,000 should be spent for development of a Landscape Management Plan for Charles River Conservation area on Quinobequin between Rte 9 and Rte 16. Also asked for \$1 million for landscape design. RG would like a DCR representative to speak at WAC. DCR's public relations person Jennifer Norwood will be in touch when the time is right. John Mordes mentioned bond item to keep foundation intact. Maureen asked that people stay engaged and possibly have some community discussions even without the DCR showing up. Reference Quinobequin section of WAC website.

Zoning Updates: Terry Morris, lawyer for 20 Kinmonth submitted a Request for Consistency Ruling to the Commissioner of Inspectional Services for two small changes, pertaining to landscaping and windows, to their special permit. Rena will inform WAC when and if those changes are approved but assumes that those changes will be allowed. Zoning and Planning Committee will meet on 18 July. RG slide diagrammatically showed three "tiers" of density for village centers. Waban village center is currently designated as BU3. Rena showed a comparison between revised BU3 and former BU3 which was allowed by special permit. One change in the revised BU3 is that the amount of parking required for Retail, Office and Multi-family is significantly reduced. In addition there is no minimum lot area requirement per unit. New proposals were straw voted and the results of the straw vote were generally in favor of new proposals. Slide showed meaning of "FAR" (floor to area ratio). Slide showed phase 2 timeline and tentative ZAP agenda for Monday, July 18. CP: What will Waban look like in five years? AD: Zoning is only one piece of the pie. Zoning slows down the overall process and with various restrictions and publicly owned properties it's actually somewhat difficult to find a place within Waban village that would see dramatic changes.

Alice Ingerson: 1953 Zoning stopped allowing residential housing in Village centers. Now we're sort of going back to pre-1953 which allows a mix of uses. Rena BU3 districts do allow residential construction. Some disagreement on that. Needs to be checked. The current proposal would remove the special permitting process which is time-consuming and expensive and may allow smaller players in.

General agreement at the market alone will not solve the housing problem.

Julia Malakie raised issue of landmarking the Strong Building. General agreement that that building should be landmarked.

Administrative: Agreed that we would meet in August because there are matters that should be dealt with in August rather than wait till September.

Respectfully submitted by Dinah Bodkin August 1 2022