

DOWNSHIRE HILL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Committee Meeting, 6 December 2015, 7pm

Present

Stephen Ainger (Chair), Bob Buhr, Fiona Neale, Patricia Morison, Redding Thompson, Nicola Sinclair, Sophie Marple, Claire Freedman

In attendance Sophie Marple

Apologies

Margaret Rodgers

1. Abacus School's proposed move into the Police Station

Following up on the meeting on 8 November with Jonathan Kendall and Tom Smith of Abacus School, various issues arising were discussed,

Traffic; The committee discussed the potentially serious additional traffic movements. Andrew had been advised by a traffic consultant that the best time for DHRA to commission a report on the possible traffic impact would be once the public planning consultation opened.

Planning permission. The school does not have planning permission yet. EFA will submit it for planning. It would be desirable for DHRA to talk to EFA and Abacus' architect. Stephen to follow up.

The committee agreed it was important to establish the school's timescale. Once planning permission is granted, it will be too late for Downshire Hill's views to be considered. Redding will ask Jonathan Kendal.

Stephen reminded the committee of the traffic report which the street commissioned 15 years ago. A consultant's report might cost around £2,000. The committee is minded to commission a traffic report.

Thurlow Road and Keats Grove would also be affected by school traffic. Committee to find out whether Thurlow has a Residents' Association.

An Extraordinary General Meeting will be needed to seek the street's opinion on the school, and the willingness to contribute funds for a traffic report.

Catchment Area. The school's catchment area currently excludes Downshire Hill. This is a matter of concern to Downshire Hill residents with children of primary school age. Redding had raised the matter with Jonathan Kendall. On 9 December 2015, Abacus is due to review its admission criteria.

Stephen reported that the Heath & Hampstead Society is against any more schools in the area because of the traffic issue. He had sent H&H the Minutes of the November meeting. Stephen will ascertain whether H&H has evidence of proposed schools being refused planning permission.

Nicky may become a trustee of Abacus.

There was scepticism as to whether Abacus could open by autumn 2017. Their plan appears to need a lot more development.

Numbers. Abacus will not achieve its full complement of children until 2023. Hence problems for residents will only then become fully apparent. The committee was agreed that 420 children on that small site seems excessive. A school of around 200 would be preferable. Jonathan Kendall had said Abacus was given the site on the basis of its becoming a 420-pupil school.

The committee was reminded that if the school were not to move in, the police station will be sold to a developer.

2. Neighbourhood Watch scheme

There was no appetite for joining the scheme.

3. Downshire Hill website

Stephen has prepared for the launch of a website, which will publicise DHRA Minutes and projects affecting the street. The domain name reserved is www.downshirehillra.com. The registration cost is £100. It is planned to go live in January. The committee congratulated the chairman on this forward-thinking initiative.

Copies of the DHRA constitution adopted on 15 May 2002 were circulated.

4. John Chumrow

It was noted that John Chumrow, long-term resident at No. ??? had died.

The meeting closed at 8pm

22 December 2015