

MOUNT PLEASANT NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

NEWSLETTER 2

6th July 2016

1. GRANT FUNDING

Our grant is about to be paid into the Mount Pleasant Association Ltd account. Many thanks to Miles Hanson and Graeme Weston, who have fulfilled all the complicated demands of the Compliance documentation - great work! Our Forum has permission to use the MPA Ltd account until we have set up our own banking arrangements. We have exchanged formal letters. Within the next week we should have £3,900 to spend on our activities.

2. URBAN PLANNING SESSION AND SOCIAL ON JULY 30TH

You are ALL invited to our first formal training session.

Cllr Sue Vincent has very kindly volunteered some of her exceptionally busy time to give us a 2-hour session on the basics of urban planning and suggested we have a social get-together afterwards to build team-cohesion. The Calthorpe Project have kindly given us use of their premises and garden. Many thanks to Sue, and to the Calthorpe Project, for all their help.

5pm-7pm Training session followed by social get-together until 8pm.

Calthorpe Project, Gray's Inn Road WC1

REQUEST FOR THIS SESSION. Sue would like all of you to send her a photograph of a building, local feature or area which you particularly like, and also a picture of some building feature you particularly dislike. (Can be from anywhere, tho' local area would be better). **PLEASE DO THIS, SINCE YOUR INPUT WILL FORM PART OF THE TRAINING SESSION.** (and if you can't attend, please send your photos anyway)

Send your photos to sue.vincent@camden.gov.uk or to me, judithomas@blueyonder.co.uk by July 24th. Mark your email as PHOTOS FOR MP URBAN PLANNING JULY 30, please!

- ## 3. OUR PLANNING PRIORITIES.
- Members were polled for their views (though this was a bit like pulling teeth!) and everyone who attended our second public Forum meeting on June 20th was asked to write down their own issues of importance/concern.

A list of our planning interests (in no particular order) is pasted at the end of this newsletter - please take a look and add anything you think is missing. If any of you have further views, please send them to judiththomas@blueyonder.co.uk by July 24.

We need to make this varied list of topics into a preliminary set of policies that we will research and pursue. The Forum Executive will meet (mid-July) to draw up a set of draft policies based on this information (and any other insights you care to send us) and these will be amended and circulated to you after the Urban Planning session on July 30th.

4. OUR PLAN OF WORK

We have the summer to get ready for detailed work on our Neighbourhood Plan.

- a) Send Judy a note of **other planning issues you want the Forum to consider by July 24th.**
- b) We have our **Urban Planning session on July 30th.**
- c) Once the planning policy list has been circulated (**early August**) you will be asked which **topic you want to work on, so you can choose the project is nearest to your heart!**
- d) **Project: Skeleton Plan.** The Executive will draw up a draft Plan (headlines and lots of empty spaces) so you can visualise what we have to do. **This will be sent with the August Newsletter.**
- e) **In late August or early September, we will have a second Training session,** about our planning priorities. We'll also talk to a member who belongs to another Neighbourhood Forum (probably West Hampstead or maybe Kentish Town or Highgate).
- f) **Project: Mapping our Area (on-going July-August).**
Josie Vos, Judy Dainton. and *(as a separate task)*, the Create Streets team, will be working on various demographic maps so we can see exactly what we are dealing with in our neighbourhood - things like population, types of housing, types of tenure, age of population, areas of deprivation. **You will be updated in September Newsletter and receive copies of these maps.**
- g) **Choosing our own Town Planner.** This is the planning expert we will hire to cope with the planning implications of what we want to do, and who will help us write our final plan.
The Executive will decide on a short-list of qualified town planners whom we will contact to see if they would be prepared to work with us, and to see if we can afford them. Any personal recommendations from any of you will be gratefully received. It would be good to find someone with experience of Central London areas such as ours. The Executive will discuss this very important item at the next public Forum meeting on September 19th.
- h) **Consulting our local public in early-mid September.** We will publicise and circulate our planning priorities to our local public (with posters, leaflets ...maybe newspapers... and website postings) in September, before our Forum's public meeting on September 19th, asking them for views. This consultation will include all local tenants and residents' groups, local interest groups etc. **You will be asked to help put out this information amongst your local groups.**

5. REMINDER. HOLBORN NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM JULY 10 CORAM'S FIELDS. They are having their inaugural meeting and a party at Coram's Fields on Sunday July 10 at 11am - 2pm. When established, they will be our neighbouring Neighbourhood Forum. At the moment they have just submitted their application and are awaiting ratification by Camden Council, so they are about 6 months behind us in terms of legal standing (though they have already done some preliminary work on defining their planning priorities). Please look in to their event, if you can, to show solidarity.

6. COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BUILD (CRtB)

Having successfully completed the statutory Public Consultation for the CRtB project, the MPA Ltd is preparing their Order (like a planning application) to submit to Camden this month. As agreed in our March minutes, the Forum will formally submit this Order.

7. THINGS FOR YOU TO DO

- July 10 - visit Holborn Neighbourhood Forum event at Coram's Fields, if you have time.
- July 24 - send photos to Sue Vincent by 24th- URGENT that you do this!
- July 30 - attend Urban Planning session at Calthorpe Project
- late July - decide what planning policy you want to work on - you will be asked what your preferred field of interest may be
- Late August/early September - Reply (**please, please, reply!**) to notification re second Training Session . You will be informed of venue, date and times and invited to attend but we will need to know numbers to make arrangements.
- Early/mid September - Help consult the wider local neighbourhood on our planning priorities
- September 19th - attend next Forum public meeting at Margery Street Community Hall

Thanks to one and all for your interest and support. We are a useful and varied group, all with our own interests and strengths. We can use our talents collectively, to make a really strong statement about our locality. Keep up the good work!

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood Forum Executive, July 6th 2016

This Newsletter will be posted on our website.

LIST OF OUR PLANNING PRIORITIES: *(in no particular order)*

- **Properly affordable public and private housing** - retention of existing and increase of provision in new developments.
- **Worries about increasing transient population.** Some kind of enforceable lettings policy (*?unknown?how to do this?..?national policy....*) to ensure tenants and leaseholders have the right to stay in residence for a minimum of 5 years.

- **Worries about “ghost” tenancies:** that all flats should be inhabited by the named tenants/leaseholders for at least 10 out of 12 months in each year. (*?how can this be done?...can this be done? ...depends of landowner/lettings policy?...*)
- **Retention of** (and where feasible, extension of) **Conservation Areas**, with strict adherence to the conservation rulings to be enforced (roof-lines, extensions etc).
- **Resistance to over-development and possible rack-renting** (sub-partitioning of dwellings, basement extensions and roof extensions) to the detriment of existing buildings, street-scapes and decent housing provision.
- **Air-quality, pollution issues.** Need for more green-walls, street planting, pocket-parks. Retention of public open spaces, increase of local public open spaces where-ever possible.
- **Traffic nuisances** (including air pollution); bicycle routes; pedestrianisation of more residential streets a possibility.
- **Removal of street clutter** (particularly with reference to traffic management and traffic signage); provision of more street benches, more tree planting in residential streets, limitation of on-street parking.
- **Setting up the “Fleet Valley Walk”**, as a pedestrian signposted route, with benches, planting, and notes of buildings-of-interest etc.....as a tribute to the forgotten history of this London back-water.
- **The need to have a central focal point, like Mount Pleasant Circus (if it is built).**
- **Re-opening of existing fire-station** (Clerkenwell Fire Station, Rosebery Avenue).
- **Re-introduction of public conveniences** (to compensate for loss of those outside former fire-station)
- **Anti-social behavior**, drug-dealing, littering and dog-fouling to be addressed.
- **Protection and retention of local public houses**
- **New developments to contain 50% properly affordable housing**, including a proportion of that 50% to be under borough council or housing association control/nomination.
- **New developments to include a proportion of street-level retail activity** - for reasons of regeneration and for communal cohesiveness and safety issues.
- **Regeneration and (if required subsidized letting) of existing retail premises**, particularly at the junction of Margery Street/Farringdon Road and at the junction of Calthorpe Street/Gray's Inn Road.
- **Retention and increase of local affordable workshop provision** (traditional to this area)
- **Site of the proposed new secondary school.** This still divides the neighbourhood. Although Wren Street is the designated site (faute de mieux) many hope that if/when the Eastman Dental hospital is re-developed that parts of this site might be found more suitable.

If any of you have further views, please send them to judithomas@blueyonder.co.uk