

MOUNT PLEASANT NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

MINUTES OF AGM

Held on Monday March 25th at 6.45pm at the Calthorpe Project, Gray's Inn Road

1. PRESENT:

Ann Winchester, Tim Norman, Bill Martin, Marianne Jacobs-Lim, Catherine Street (CCUK), Ben Davies (CCUK) Gail Sulkas, Ruth Hyns, Julie Riley, Elena Henson, Umiak Mahoupe, Richard Sawyer, Judy Dainton. (13 people)

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Ed Denison, Graham Weston, Meg Howarth, Josie Vos Tuohy, Cllr Sue Vincent (5)

3. AGM BUSINESS:- FORUM PROGRESS REPORT AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE COMING YEAR

SUMMARY REPORT. The Chair summarised progress during the last year, saying the officers had mainly been working on writing the Neighbourhood Plan, although it had recently also been involved with consultations on the redevelopment of the Eastman Dental Hospital. The Plan and the Eastman Dental Hospital were both separate items on this Agenda, with written updates set out in the Agenda papers.

She spoke generally about the Forum, reminding people of its history, purpose and general role. Her notes are as follows:-

The Forum is the legally designated part of the Mount Pleasant Association. MPA is a local voluntary organisation with a membership list of all those interested in development in the undefined locality around Mount Pleasant Royal Mail lands; this interest evolved to include wider areas. When MPA applied to write a local Neighbourhood Plan, MPA consulted with local groups and neighbouring organisations and arrived at a designated Neighbourhood Area. This runs from Frederick Street in the north and Clerkenwell Road in the south. Our western border is Gray's Inn Road. The eastern border is more complex, running from Farringdon Road through Kings Cross Road with eastern extensions including Warner Street, Pine Street, the Margery Street estate and Granville Square. This is our legally Designated Neighbourhood.

The appointed membership of the Forum includes t/a or residents' associations throughout the designated neighbourhood, local councillors and individuals who live or work throughout our neighbourhood. The Forum has legal status and is automatically consulted about local planning issues. We apply for and receive a small amount of grant money. The Treasurer will show our Accounts on our website in April.

The Forum has been rather publicly quiet of late, because we have been writing the Neighbourhood Plan, which took up months and months of time, conducting local research into air pollution, and holding local consultations. We are now in a position to invite you all to read the final draft – available on our website – and make your comments.

We are in final consultations with the Camden and the Islington planners, and once we have your final comments on our Plan, we will be submitting the finished article to the Councils. More legal rounds of consultation then ensue and we'll keep you informed of progress. Do not worry, by the time the Plan, which we hope encapsulates your local views, becomes reality you will have had many more formal opportunities to have your say.

Now, the Forum intends to bring our (and your) plan to fruition. We will be contacting you to remind you of our role, and your local input, and to encourage you to involve yourselves in the future of our neighbourhood.

You should note that, despite our workload with the Plan, the Forum is also involved with other local planning issues, including the proposed development of the Eastman Dental Hospital, which we will be discussed at this meeting.

Finally, the Forum is, at this meeting, holding its AGM and yearly elections. Any person who lives or works in our designated neighbourhood is welcome to stand.

ANNUAL ELECTION

The Chair asked if there were any other nominations. There were none. She asked if there were any comments or amendments. There were none. The list of nominations set out in the detailed Agenda papers was therefore adopted nem.con.

The officers for 2019-2020 are:-

Chair	Judy Dainton
Secretary	Miles Hansard
Treasurer	Julie Riley
Communications	Gail Sulkes

Executive Committee Members: Elena Henson, Oliver Bennett (Chair of MPA), Josie Vos Tuohy

Co-opted Exec Members: Ed Denison, Meg Howarth.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN.

The Chair spoke to the Agenda notes. The draft Plan could be read on the website. It was expected that the final illustrated document would be available in the early summer and that formal submission to both Councils would take place by June. Public consultation would follow, and, in due course, a public referendum. There would be some time therefore for everyone to have their say. The Chair emphasised that all the issues raised had been discussed at public meetings and were expressions of local wishes, and had been agreed by local people. She encouraged everyone to read the Plan.

She reiterated that the purpose of the Plan was to have local views included in the planning process and emphasised that there were benefits for the neighbourhood. Not only would local concerns be reflected in local planning decisions; the Forum would continue to be the legally recognised local voice and the Forum, once the Plan was accepted by both Councils, be entitled to ensure that a proportion of money raised by the CiL charge was spent locally.

She asked for any comments, of which there were none, and concluded by urging people to read the draft plan updates and watch the Forum website for news of the latest developments.

5 EASTMAN DENTAL HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT.

The Chair spoke to the Agenda notes and then threw the issue open for general discussion.

Julie Riley spoke for the residents of the New Calthorpe Estate (as Chair of their local t/a group) and confirmed their views about being overshadowed and overlooked. She noted that the estate group were to meet again with the UCL development group; she added that, despite UCL's willingness to meet and talk,

the residents of her estate still felt UCL had done little in real terms to moderate their designs to meet local concerns.

The Chair said she had concerns that UCL's wish to appropriate 2 metres of land from the Calthorpe Project, and re-organise their use of their land to meet UCL's wishes; this could disadvantage, or even close, the Calthorpe Project if no satisfactory agreement could be reached.

She noted that Historic England (another consultee) also had some unresolved problems with the proposals as they stood.

She added that the Forum welcomed the proposal for the dementia research unit and attendant NHS out-patients department, though it had reservations about the provision of un-related academic teaching space. However, their objections, as listed in the Agenda papers still stood. The Forum wanted the best possible outcome for the site and did not feel the present amendments to the proposal were good enough.

General discussion followed; the ways in which developers ducked serious response to requests for redesign ("too expensive"), political insensitivity of ignoring the needs of "poor and often in-articulate" residents in social housing, whether the academic non-related teaching element of the proposal was essential, whether the newly proposed off-setting of the top stories was adequate, whether the Calthorpe Project could get a good deal from the developers which would justify their potential closure; and re-exploration of what exactly the proposal would mean in social terms. There was general dissatisfaction with the present proposals in their latest "amended" state;. They were seen as cosmetic only, and not truly responding to expressed local views.

The meeting agreed by a show of hands that the Forum should write to UCL development team expressing dissatisfaction with the consultations, and suggesting the development team delayed their formal planning application until they had shown a more detailed and elegant redesign of their plans. Another more workman-like consultation was seen as necessary. These points were agreed nem.con. The Chair was asked to write the necessary letter.

6. TRAFFIC STRATEGY 2019-2041 CAMDEN

The Chair pointed out that the Camden Traffic Strategy Document, and a similar Islington document were very alike in overall desire to reduce air pollution based on reducing road-use by vehicles producing harmful emissions. This was the Forum's view also. She urged members to read the documents on line. She said that the Forum's present view was in favour of less pollution-emitting cars in the city; the Forum backed the Camden Strategy document, and were reading the Islington equivalent.

There was some confusion. Marianne Jacobs-Lim said she and many other people around Calthorpe Street hated the present traffic changes. The Chair interrupted her to say that these were two issues – the present traffic changes and the future strategy. She suggested the meeting discuss the long-term policies, as set out on Agenda, and then discussed present traffic problems. Marianne said the Chair did not want her to talk about traffic because her views were different. Chair replied that was not the case, and when discussion on the strategy papers finished Marianne and others should discuss the problems with the present traffic changes.

The Chair said that she recommended that everyone who wished to read the Camden and Islington Traffic Strategy documents; these strategies would affect our local lives. She said the Forum was in favour of these policies which would reduce air pollution over time. She said the Forum was aware, in the short-term, that some local people would find problems with the proposals, but that in the long-term the proposed changes would benefit health and well-being. She said that the on-line references to the documents would be posted on the Forum website.

She then added that Camden residents were experiencing the beginnings of changes in traffic flow, and some local people were noticing problems and black-spots in the new arrangements, and invited Marianne to speak.

Marianne said that lots of local people did not like the changed traffic flow; people in Calthorpe Street could not drive in to the street without taking a huge detour and this was very inconvenient, and disadvantaged older users. She spoke about shopping deliveries. She was conducting a local survey and had hundreds of local complainers. She and they were organising a meeting with their local councillor, Sue Vincent, to put forward their views. She and other complainants wanted the former traffic flow restored.

The Chair asked her exactly how many of the hundreds, those who she said were upset, were local residents, but Marianne did not reply to this. The Chair reminded Marianne that she had spoken about this topic at the last public meeting. The Forum had encouraged her then to make her views known to Camden Council, but also pointed out that the Council would be unlikely to change their new traffic flow until some time had passed for the results to be monitored. Marianne replied that there was local dissatisfaction with Camden's consultation process, which had been "rigged". The Chair intervened and said that as far as the Forum knew the l.a. consultation in this neighbourhood had been perfectly all right. Marianne said that the Chair just did not want her to talk about traffic. The Chair replied that she, Marianne, was talking to the meeting at that moment and had been for some minutes.

The Chair summarised this discussion saying Marianne's comments would be minuted. She repeated that the Forum to date viewed the immediate traffic problems as short-term details, solvable through discussion; the Forum's long-term view supported the Council plans and the principles of less air-polluting traffic. Therefore, the Forum did not support Marianne's views.

Umiak Mahoup asked who decided Forum views, was it democratic?. The Chair said she would discuss this under AOB, as there was other business to be dealt with first. She said there were other items to discuss as well as the Traffic Strategy, and so she would draw this item to a close.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **THE MINI-HOTEL IN EYRE HILL STREET.** The Chair said that Tim Norman, from Warner Street, had emailed the Forum about this planning application. She noted the Forum had also received one comment in favour of this proposal. She then asked Tim to speak about the proposal. Tim said that the proposal was unsuitable; it was too tall for the surroundings and had too many very small rooms, so it looked like student housing masquerading as a hotel. The style of the proposal was unsuitable for the c19th buildings surrounding it. He added that the claims of service vehicles to the hotel being slight seemed unbelievable and he and other local residents expected that more vehicles than stated would be cramming into narrow streets to reach the proposed hotel. He added that public notification of the application had not been well done, and he had complained. He asked the Forum to add to the opposition to this application. He had sent the Forum a summary of local objections. The Forum agreed, nem.con. by a show of hands, to oppose this planning application.
- **POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF EAR NOSE AND THROAT HOSPITAL.** The Chair notified the meeting that the ENT hospital on Gray's Inn Road was, apparently, making plans for a large redevelopment of their current site. No details were known, as no planning application had yet been made, but note should be taken of this impending large-scale development in our locality.
- **TRAFFIC PROBLEMS ON GUILFORD STREET.** The Chair notified that the Forum had received complaint about the road-works in Guilford Street interfering with local people and children using

Coram's Fields. The issue was duly noted and Camden traffic department would be informed, but no further action was proposed about traffic-flow until the major gas-pipe works in the road were completed.

- **QUERY ABOUT DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING IN THE FORUM.** Marianne Jacobs-Lim and Umiak Mahoupe both queried who made decisions in the Forum. The Chair replied that the Forum held quarterly public meetings to whom all were invited. Invitations were sent to all committee members, representing residents and businesses, local t/a groups and interest groups within our Designated Neighbourhood, and to those who were on our mailing list. Decisions were made at the public meetings. The publicly elected Executive met monthly to ensure publicly agreed actions were performed, and a report-back of their actions was given at the next quarterly public meeting. Anyone who worked or lived in the designated Neighbourhood was invited to voice their opinion. She asked the meeting for any other suggestions about how they could be more democratic. She asked for other comments. No other comments were received.
- **PLAY STREET PROPOSAL GT ORMOND STREET.** One of our local residents, Laura Walsh works as head of play services at GOSH. She and her team want to propose a 'Play street' on Gt Ormond St between Powis Place and Lambs Conduit St. Although just outside of our designated neighbourhood it is very close to us and will affect our residents. As this aligns with general recommendations with our Plan the Forum supports this proposal.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING JUNE 24TH. This date was agreed.