

Forest Home Improvement Association

Meeting of FHIA officers, January 23, 2008, 7:00-8:30pm. FH Chapel

Present:

Trevor Pinch, President; Michael Bend, Vice President; Harriet Brittain, Secretary; Darcy Binns, Immediate Past President.

By invitation: Jonathan Miller, FH representative to the UNC (University Neighbourhoods Council)

Minutes:

1. Report by Jon Miller on liaison to the UNC

JM has been FH rep since 2005, and is now co-chair of the committee with George Tabor of Cornell. The UNC has been meeting once a month, although they plan to scale that back to 6 or 7 meetings a year. Issues on the agenda for February include an update of the Cornell Traffic Plan and Masterplan, and a report from the Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services which Cornell supports as part of its \$25 M gift to the community.

1. JM sought permission of the FHIA officers to continue as rep to committee. Permission was granted by the officers.
2. JM enquired whether there were any issues which the officers would like him to raise with the UNC. The following were discussed:
 - a. FH would like to raise the issue of construction noise, especially in relation to the new buildings around FH. JM indicated that the issue of noise was of interest to other neighbourhood groups. TP suggested that FH would like to call in an expert to establish the facts.
 - b. FH would like more information of the construction of the new Preschool next to A Lot, and how Cornell plans to deal with increased traffic and parking issues. JM reported that Cornell do not seem to have detailed plans in this topic yet. DB pointed out that traffic may be inadvertently diverted from FH if the Preschool entry/exit links to Jessup. No clear details on this yet. JM agreed to raise the issue.
 - c. Question whether UNC would be the place to raise the idea of Cornell putting money in the FH TCP, especially in the light of expansion of the Plantations Office and the proposed coffee shop. The traffic and access issues related to this affect JFR and MacIntyre Place. DB recommended also contacting Mina Amundsen, the University planner.
 - d. DB suggested UNC might be place to bring up proposed social activities for children, which may be of interest to children in other neighbourhoods. JM's comment was that as yet the UNC had not functioned as a way of connecting neighbourhoods peripheral to

Cornell, but that it might be a good place to get a shared discussion going on topics of mutual interest (such as deer control for e.g.).

- e. FH would like an update on plans for Martha Van Rensselaer Hall.
 - f. It was deemed too early to report to the UNC on FH's ideas with regard to the Park (see below)
3. JM enquired as to how to report to the officers. Agreed that minutes be mailed out to any that are interested.
 4. JM extended invitation to any officers to attend meetings of the UNC and took his leave of the meeting.

2. Signatures on the FH bank accounts.

Amita Verma (in absentia) reported that there are too many signatories to the FH accounts. It was agreed that MB and AV alone should remain as signatories. AV to check on the correct procedure for removing other signatures, and make the arrangements at the bank for deleting the unnecessary ones.

3. Appointment of an Upstream bridge Representative

Following an approach to the officers by Bruce Brittain, who has been invited to represent FH on a select committee of interested parties on the technical aspects of the refurbishment of the upstream bridge, the officers reviewed procedures for selecting the best candidate in such cases. In this instance, Bruce had been invited by John Lampman, and sought the blessing of the officers to act as FH Rep. In view of his close acquaintance with the TCP, and engineering expertise, officers agreed to confirm his appointment. Although it had been established that being an engineer was not a requirement, TP felt it would be an asset for such a committee.

However it was stressed by DB that opportunities to represent the community in this way ought to be opened up to the community at large, both in the interests of transparency, and so that more residents could have the chance to serve. TP doubted whether the officers had the time and resources to carry out a community wide search, or the expertise to choose between candidates. MB argued that acting on such a committee with members of the Town and University authorities ought to be the function of the FHIA officers.

Officers agreed on the need to keep in close contact with Bruce, and have him report on aspects germane to the interests of the FH residents, in particular as the upstream bridge project would provide an opportunity to implement traffic calming measures from the TCP. In the light of which it was decided that Bruce Brittain should be invited to meet with officers to discuss these issues.

4. Proposed “Eco” Park

TP read out minutes of the initial, exploratory park meeting with HB, Carrie K-L, Mari Mitchell and Herb Engman, town supervisor, which was held at the suggestion of the officers at the last officers’ meeting. The plan is in very early stages. Mari Mitchell has agreed to produce a drawing of ideas.

MB was concerned about maintenance. Community could probably maintain something that needed to be maintained two times year, but not more. In HB’s understanding the proposed plantings will not need to be regularly maintained. She suggested waiting for a drawing from Mari, and then inviting the community at large to give their input on the ideas.

DB stressed the importance of inviting all officers to attend the first meeting of a new committee, and sending an open call to the community for involvement, after which she withdrew from meeting.

5. Update on Traffic Calming

A productive meeting was held between FH officers TP / MB and Abe Schramm and Ruth Mahr, representative of MacIntyre and Judd Falls respectively, and of the signatories to the petition for those streets currently lodged with the Town of Ithaca. Their actions are not inconsistent with the FH TCP. They are a local focus group representing MacIntyre and JF, with especial concern for pedestrian safety. They agreed to share information with the FH officers and vice versa. They were particularly interested in exploring a partnership with Cornell in the light of the Plantations office expansion.

MB agreed to contact Cornell regarding this, and reiterate to the Town that JF residents are very concerned about pedestrian safety. TP reported on conversation with Fred Noteboom: Town Traffic Committee has been dissolved. TCP will now to go to Public Works Committee. FH will present the TCP to them in approx. two month’s time. They offered to meet in the FH Chapel.

6. Other items on the agenda were postponed due to the late hour.

Harriet Brittain
Secretary FHIA
1/25/08