

Minutes of the FitzWest Neighbourhood Forum Executive Meeting on 2 December 2021 by Zoom

Present:

Nick Bailey (minutes)
Yoram Blumann (Treasurer)
Barbara Corr
Gwilym Harbottle
Julia Haythorn (Chair)
Ian Johnstone
Walid Sheikh
Esmeralda Ypsilanti

Apologies:

Mark Dillon
Jace Tyrrell
Cllr Pancho Lewis

Welcome and Apologies

All were welcomed to the meeting, particularly Esmeralda who was attending for the first time.

Minutes of the last meeting

These are available on the website. They were agreed.

Tesco Greening Project

Julia and Gwilym reported that the consultation finished today and the response had been very good. They will talk to the landscape designer to progress the project which must be completed by the spring. Details will be given to WCC Highways Dept for their approval. Some support and maintenance has been offered by local businesses and the University of Westminster. All Souls' school is also interested in taking on one or two planters.

Community Infrastructure Levy

CIL is a tax paid by all those carrying out development in the area which is used to fund infrastructure such as facilities, services and installations which meet local needs or improve the environment. As we have a completed neighbourhood plan, 25% of all CIL paid in our area is available. The remainder is kept in a central fund. We can propose projects which meet the criteria and receive the approval of WCC.

Jace Tyrrell of the New West End Co (NVEC) has proposed that we fund Dan Johnston to work for 6 months on developing and getting approval for projects in FitzWest and Soho. The cost would be divided three ways between us, Soho and NVEC.

- i. We discussed this at some length and agreed in the end that we would like to wait until early 2022 before making a final decision. It was felt that the major task was in preparing and costing bids and that some local organisations had experience and skills in doing this. WCC also manage the funding and payments. We also intend to organize an open meeting (see below) for organisations in the area to gauge the level of interest and to assess what kinds of proposals might be coming forward. It would be at this stage that we would have a clearer idea of the support we needed.

Julia agreed to report back to Jace on the outcome.

- ii. We have had 3 expressions of interest so far: All Soul's School, the Fitzrovia Centre and Denise Julien. These are in the early stages of development and may not be ready for submission until after the next deadline (10 January). We may consider submitting a bid for planters to complement the Tesco proposals.
- iii. Agreed to set up a sub-group to oversee CIL applications. The following offered: Yoram, Walid, Barbara, Julia, Nick, Ann Goodburn.
- iv. Nick agreed to contact Emily Woodason of Arup's to see if she would be willing to provide pro bono professional advice on urban design and landscaping. She produced a design for Market Place which was shown at our last public meeting in the Wellcome Centre.
- v. Agreed to arrange an open evening to discuss ideas for CIL projects on 15 February at the Fitzrovia Centre (?). We will invite residents, churches, charities etc and circulate a flyer. Walid agreed to prepare a draft flyer and circulate it for comments. We will invite Amit Mistry, WCC policy officer with responsibility for CIL (amistry1@westminster.gov.uk), to speak about CIL.

Licence extension for Bellaria restaurant, 71 Great Titchfield Street

Yoram reported that the Bellaria had applied for a late licence and permission to play music had been given as follows:

Mon – Wed till 11.30pm

Thurs – Sat till 12.30am

Sunday till 11.00p.m.

Both the Langham Hotel and Bellaria have appealed against these hours as too late or not late enough respectively. The case is going to the Magistrates' Court.

Richard Brown, who represents the Forum at the hearing, asked that any residents nearby submit evidence of noise or disturbance, e.g. noise, music, people leaving late, deliveries late or very early, cars or taxis etc. Walid, Esmeralda, Barbara and any others should send observations to Richard at licensing@westminstercab.org.uk

Any other Business

Barbara asked about the proposed green wall at the rear of the UCLH building in Cleveland Street. It was thought it was not possible because of the dangers of Legionnaires' disease.

Yoram and Nick reported that they attend two regular meetings of organisations across Westminster: Westminster Amenity Societies' Forum (WASF) and the Forum of Forums (F of F). Both these fora meet the Council Leader and senior councillors at regular intervals. Agreed that Yoram should attend WASF and Nick the F of F (with Yoram as standby).

Date of Next Meeting

Agreed that we should meet about 2 weeks before the open meeting on 15 February. Julia to circulate some alternative dates.

Nick Bailey