

FitzWest Neighbourhood Forum Zoom call 19/1/2022

Present: JH Julia Haythorn (chair)
NB Nick Bailey
JT Jace Tyrell, NWECC
YB Yoram Blumann
BC Barbara Corr
WS Walid Sheikh
AG Ann Goodburn
CJ Catherine Jenkins from Placemaking, visiting

We welcomed Ann Goodburn as a new member of the Forum CIL Committee.

We discussed the arduous and protracted process of applying for CIL monies.

JH said she and NB had met with Lucy Haine, Chair of Soho Neighbourhood Forum to discuss sharing the costs of employing a company to support us all with CIL applications. So far we have received a proposal from Placemaking. And Lucy is going to source a proposal from Publica.

We welcomed Catherine Jenkins from Placemaking. CJ is a town planner working principally in the West End of London. They had submitted a proposal to work for FitzWest Forum to assist with preparing CIL bids.

On the Mayfair NF public realm project, funded mainly through CIL, she project managed the design team, including Arup. CJ discussed the CIL application process-make sure Councillors are well informed, she advised. For Mayfair, Dan Johnson made a big map with community suggestions for changes. It is a formal process and Placemaking project management would decide which projects we would undertake in which order. Placemaking have looked at streets behind Oxford Street as well as Oxford Street. At FitzWest we have made our Neighbourhood Plan but it may need re-analysis, she said- What are the gaps in our report? CJ can advise on the type of work needed.

Jace Tyrell said procedures and rigorous process is needed- Dan Johnson has experience.

CJ would organise stakeholder meetings and agendas as part of her remit.

Nick Bailey said the Placemaking proposal names Soho and Fitzrovia but only gives a fee appraisal for single bids, whereas we may be working on several concurrently.

CJ said WCC CIL office works on quarterly meetings. We should agree deadline for CIL officer then work backwards and use a standard form for procedures. She suggests initial attempt... Dan has estimated fees based on jobs he has done.

NB But only for a single bid. NB suggests an hourly rate may be the most suitable fee structure- can Placemaking cope with two areas? (Soho and Fitzrovia)

CJ would meet CIL officer and plan a programme to avoid pinch points.

JT They worked with us in Mayfair on Green Route.

YB We need funding for assistance- can we use CIL money for this? The funding quoted only covers one year.

JT Maybe all Forums join to fund help.

NB Maybe we should have a template that all Forums –Mayfair, Soho, FitzWest all share

YB The FNA, for example, provides services and raises funds. How much can be claimed for fund raising?

YB As of 4th Nov 2021, our CIL fund with WCC stood at £537,373, out of which £152,000 were committed to the Market Place project, and £32,797 to the Greening project, leaving a balance of £352,376 to be spent on future projects. YB said that he continues to monitor planning application for our area; in the past 2 yrs, there were no major application yielding significant CIL contributions this year or the next.

JT anticipates some significant developments along the northern side of Oxford Street;

YB agreed, pointing out IKEA, although no application was submitted yet.

YB pointed out that we can only afford to pay for one year/term support fee from our own funds.

YB suggested that we lobby WCC allowing us to include some support costs in our CIL applications, as is the normal case for funding applications for various projects submitted to local councils.

Maybe it is a point that can be raised by the Forum of Forums?

JT In the interest of transparency JT will not vote on who gets the job.

JH AOB

Ann Goodburn wants to look at the **Green Wall** idea on the UCL wall in All Soul's playground. JH said she would put her in touch with Chris Shaw who was involved with this project a few years ago.

Walid Sheikh also wants to work on the Green Wall and has done a Green Wall project at UCL.

Public Meeting

NB will invite Amit the CIL officer to the public meeting to explain CIL.

NB need to target organisations like churches and schools and invite ideas.

Print 500 leaflets from Walid's artwork at Kall Kwik in Great Titchfield Street and ask them to send the bill to Yoram. Barbara and Walid will liaise with Kall Kwik.

All Soul's School Street

After having been closed to traffic for years it has now reopened as a Designated School Street and will only be closed between 8.30am and 4pm during weekdays in term time. The rest of the time it will be open.

YB We need to find out who at WCC is responsible for making the arrangements that road closures work.

Also for the diary

JT On April 22nd, World Earth Day, Together Band launch a renewable energy campaign with flags across Oxford Street and Regent Street.