

Downshire Hill Residents Association

Minutes of Committee meeting held on Sunday 4th October 2015

Attendees:

Stephen Ainger, Bob Buhr, Fiona Neale, Patricia Robins, Tony Gordon-James, Tony Leifer, Mark Dennis. Christobel Dennis, Margaret Rodgers, Peter Tausig, Peter Freedman

Apologies:

Redding Thompson

1. Summer party

The DHRA garden party on Sunday 20th September 2015 was very well attended and the innovation of inviting the whole street seemed to have been welcomed. The Committee thanked Margaret Rodgers again for her hospitality.

2. Church extension

The St John's architect recently approached Stephen for the Committee's views on a new design before formally submitting it. The new design still involves an extension on the Keats Grove side, at garden level, to accommodate an additional breakout room and one additional staff bedroom. Keats Grove residents are not supportive. The majority of the DHRA Committee opposed the proposal. Some felt that this was now a relatively innocuous proposal. But others felt that it was intrusive to extend the building line and were concerned about additional noise or traffic from the use of the extension. Others were concerned that the 2005 Church restoration had created trust issues with DH residents and felt that we should anyway support the Keats Grove residents as our interests are often aligned.

Stephen will relay our concerns to the architect. The outcome anyway is likely to be decided by English Heritage given that the Church is Grade 1 listed.

3. Police Station redevelopment

We recalled that despite concerns, having a school take over the Police Station is much the best option compared to alternatives such as flats or a restaurant.

The developer is now drawing up plans for the Free School and has agreed to Redding Thompson's request to attend a meeting to discuss them with DH residents. The Committee suggested the developer should come prepared to address the following questions:

- What is the expected scale of the school – how many pupils (and therefore cars)?
- What are the plans for the existing side car park area?
- Where will be the drop-off area and what are the traffic management plans for DH and Rosslyn Hill?
- Will there be a playground (noise) and if so, where?
- How will the external appearance of the current building be protected?
- How will knock-on issues (e.g. children on cycles, skate boards) be handled?

4. ERUV

Camden's approval of the ERUV in Swiss Cottage raises the possibility that we may again be faced with a proposal for a Hampstead scheme. Some Committee members felt that in that event we should not object, as the example of the Garden Suburb ERUV suggests it would not be intrusive. Others were concerned about increasing street furniture (e.g. 5m high poles) when we should be trying to reduce clutter and about precedents for other religious groups.

The Committee concluded that democracy should rule and we should argue for a broad consultation amongst all Hampstead residents, supported by the Heath & Hampstead Society.

5. Other business

- Mark is collecting e-mail addresses
- Bob reported that the traffic study to assess the impact of disallowing a left turn at the bottom of Pond Street will be conducted by March 2016
- There was a recent burglary in the street, during daylight hours
- Rubbish outside No.s 1-2 is still an issue; we should discuss next time that Andrew Neale is able to join the Committee