

Whinfield Residents Association
(incorporating the Friends of Beech Wood)

(website: www.whinfieldresidents.co.uk)

Minutes of the meeting of 19/07/2017 at Oban Court (as amended 20/9/17)

Attendees: David Milner, Judith Murray, Anne Rudkin, Alan Hutchinson, John Atkinson, Rosemary Adams, James Eddy, Roger Fitzpatrick-Odahamier, Carol Milner, Barrie Newton, Pat Newton, Mike Haw, Allanah Robinson, Alice Scott, Fred Greenhow, Claire Thwaites, Jackie Self, Jean Self, Laura Wakeford, Cllr. Tom Nutt

Apologies: Alan Macnab, Peter Voss, Graham Foster, Jean Foster, Cllr. Helen Crumbie

Approval of Minutes: It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 24/5/2017 be signed by the Chair as a correct record, proposed by James Eddy and seconded by Carol Milner

Matters arising from the Minutes

Telephone Box, Drummond Close: This has been removed completely by BT.

Gap in the hedge near Sparrowhall Drive: Cllr. Nutt had had a meeting with the Golf Club and Planning Department but it seems that the Golf Club has done as much as it can. John Atkinson has sent a complaint about the hedgerow in accordance with DBC procedures for formal action on behalf of WRA.

Chair's Report

David Milner reported that Peter Plant had resigned his position as Coordinator of the Beech Wood Sub-committee and is no longer on the WRA Committee. It is hoped to arrange to meet with interested parties to appoint a replacement.

Treasurer's Report

Judith Murray reported that there is currently a balance of £1197 in the bank and that support and ideas are needed for our fundraising events. Cllr Nutt is to clarify with Asda whether table top sales are once more going to be allowed there. Cllr Nutt also explained that funding of up to £2000 might be obtained from County Durham Foundation if we have a viable project which qualifies.

Darlington Local Plan

Alan Hutchinson reported on information received from Alan Macnab about how Beech Wood and Springfield Park were put on the Call-for-sites map. Roger Fitzpatrick-Odahamier commented that we are still awaiting answers to questions from Cllr McEwan raised at the Special Meeting and Cllr Nutt said he would contact Cllr McEwan for an update. John Atkinson also indicated his total opposition to development of Springfield Park as the only play amenity within our area and it is much valued by all that use it. As such it is a disgrace that DBC even consider it for development and David Milner said that many in the room shared those thoughts. Roger Fitzpatrick-Odahamier asked that since the Making & Growing Places plan had been thrown out, why was Muscar House Farm still on the interim plan for development and why were we (as in WRA & its members) and those who participated in the original consultation not told about this? Cllr Nutt replied that until there is a Northern Bypass, potential sites have been highlighted for housing and this might happen in the future. Mike Haw said he had applied to DBC to renew the licences for the Allotment Society and had only been given a three year lease, which indicates that development seems highly probable. Judith Murray mentioned that a sustainability report is due in September or October and Cllr Nutt offered the view that Beech Wood would never be built on. Chair David Milner summed up and suggested that we need to know exactly what is happening.

Northern Bypass

David Milner had attended a consultation meeting and workshop at the Dolphin Centre for two possible routes proposed by the Tees Valley Combined Authority and he distributed leaflets and a questionnaire to be filled out and posted back to TVCA as soon as possible. Routes A and B are under feasibility review, to be finalised in December. It seems that Route B is preferred by DBC as this would open the door for housing on a grand scale, whereas Route A would appear be the better option. Cllr Nutt offered his strong view that a relief road is needed in Darlington but it would not be ready for 9 years. Members mentioned existing traffic problems near Whinfield School and Barmpton Lane allotments, where yellow lines are needed. John Atkinson queried which authority is in charge of the Bypass process and who would have the final say, and that there is much confusion about whether this was DBC, Highways Agency, TVCA, the individual councils within the TVCA area or a combination. John also queried the role of the new Mayor of Tees Valley, given that transport is part of his remit. Cllr Nutt stated that the Mayor would be consulted by the 5 councils and the final decision would be a joint decision with advice given by the councils. David Milner suggested that a special WRA meeting be arranged for August to discuss the implications of a Northern Bypass, and this was agreed.

Beech Wood

It was reported that Graham Foster had obtained a copy of the old action plan for open spaces in Darlington, which was put together by Rob George, showing a comprehensive list of trees etc. Graham had met with Pippa Smalling, Parks Ranger, about bringing the action plan for Beech Wood up to date. This has been done and will be open for discussion at the next meeting.

Springfield Park

John Atkinson asked members for suggestions about where they wanted the proposed seat placed and John will contact people interested to arrange a meeting with them. Anne Rudkin reported on criminal damage to the goal posts in Springfield Park. Photos and times of incidents have been handed to the police and PCSO who are looking into it.

Website

Alan Hutchinson reported that he had continued with routine maintenance and that the site is up to date. He is considering creating a new webpage for the Northern Bypass, incorporating Muscar House Farm into a more general page re. the Local Plan and he is investigating the feasibility of having a WRA Facebook page, provided this does not involve too much work.

PACT Meeting

David Milner had nothing to report, and it was not known if PACT was continuing.

Litter

Judith Murray has arranged a litter pick for Sunday 30th July for Springfield Park, meeting at Asda Foyer 10 am. Members will be circulated.

Any other business: Laura Wakeford had contacted Anne Rudkin regarding a road incident at the crossing by the Doctors Surgery involving herself and her son. The information was passed to Cllr Crumbie and PCSO Rachel Small who are dealing with this.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 20th September 2017 at 7pm in Oban Court.

Meeting closed at 8.14pm