

FIRRHILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING: 19 AUGUST 2008

Minutes of meeting held at the Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre.

Present: H Levy (Chair/Treasurer); A Hunter (Vice Chair); J Napier (Mins Sec); G Hunter; G Lighthart; L Linn; B Brand (Firrhill Drive Tenants and Residents Association);

In Attendance: J Kerr; Cllr E Barry; L Maguire (Fairmilehead Association)

Apologies: P Wright (Sec); Cllr E Aitken; P Podd; M Jarvis

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting: held on the 22nd July 2008

The Minutes Secretary identified two omissions in the minutes that would be corrected prior to them being forwarded on the CEC. The corrected minute accepted as a true record, moved by H Levy and seconded by B Brand

2. Matters Arising: H Levy

(a) Item 2(a): Presentation: Proposed Development: 1 Oxfangs Avenue: - reported that Dunedin-Canmore's open day had taken place on the 30th July at the disused church. Notices had been posted through the doors of the surrounding neighbourhood in good time to inform people of the event in order that they could view the proposals.

The Chair had been unable to attend the open day herself and, with the absence of W Gray, had no information regarding the preservation of established trees and other plants. Chair to contact W Gray re an inventory of the plantation in order that she can progress the matter.

(b) Item 2(b): Hunters Tryst Primary School: - reported that the building had been demolished and the site cleared.

(c) Item 10 (17/6/08): Pathway: Oxfangs Green / Bank: - as a consequence of the above it was hoped that the health and safety issues regarding the provision of a temporary footpath at this location, until the site was developed, could go ahead. She had joined a working group at the invitation of Cllr Rust to progress the matter. It was agreed that a petition would be circulated round the immediate area to determine and provide evidence of peoples' views on the matter. (See Meeting Reports)

Also proposing to seek a meeting with the site developers, Dundas Estates, to determine their plans. If the developer is not proposing to develop the site in the near future then consideration should be given to taking the matter back to the Council to find another developer.

A Hunter proposed investigating the City's core path strategy to see if that would provide a means of getting the path re-instated. A Hunter to investigate.

(d) Item 8: Community Council Review and Questionnaire: - Community Council members held a meeting on 1st August to discuss the review and complete the questionnaire. In the absence of the secretary no further information is available.

(e) Item 6 (16/6/08): Proposed Internet Website: - members also met to view the work done on the website by J Kerr and discuss the strategy that should be adopted. General view that the aim of the site should be to:

- promote the Firrhill Community Council and the Community within which it operates.
- provide a medium through which local residents can express their views, and
- provide a facility for local interest groups to promote their activities and views

(f) Item 4: The Peak – reported that a large number of articles had been submitted for the next edition of this publication, which was planned to go out mid September. This would be the final subsidised edition of the Peak and if the newspaper was to continue it had to be self-sustaining by the end of this financial year. In order to achieve this, advertising would be required and costs reduced. Volunteers have agreed to take on the role of editorial staff and the paper would be issued bi-monthly.

Proposed this be a standing item on the Community Council's agenda as a prompt to ensure that we make full use of this communicating media.

3. Motion:

The following motion was proposed by H Levy and seconded by A Hunter; -

“That we admit J Kerr as a co-opted by reason of her ICT skills.”

The motion was agreed by the meeting.

4. Community Police Report:

In the absence of any Police representative there was no report but the following issues were noted.

CCTV: – has still to be erected at the Broadway. Delay is due to waiting on Scottish Power to lay the cables. Cllr Barry undertook to meet with the CEC's Community Safety department to progress the matter.

PARKING: – B Brand asked if there was any progress regarding the provision of parking at Firrhill Drive. No information available.

CRIME: – there was a general discussion on crime and policing in the area but it was noted that whilst the problems within the Firrhill Community Council's area were of serious concern to us, overall in comparison to other areas within the city statistically we did not have a major problem.

5. Councillors' Report: Cllr Barry

Pentland Primary School – concerning the use of the school playing field. The playing field has been closed off because the Head Teacher is rightly concerned about dog fouling and the hazard to children. Considers the problem will get worse if the playing field is open to the public. Environmental Wardens have inspected the area and did witness a dog fouling that the owner did not pick up. There is a conflict about the need for suitable open space on which children can play games and the risk of harm caused by irresponsible dog ownership.

Environmental wardens will continue to monitor the area and a meeting is to be held after the school's summer recess to discuss the opening of the playing field to the public.

Flooding at Colinton Mains Road and Oxgangs Road North – attended location at the time and spoke to the City Council's officers who were present regarding the cause and current actions being taken. Later discussed with Mark Turley, Director of Services for Communities regarding future actions. Will follow this up

Colinton Mains Drive – this concerns closing off the land on the south side of the burn between Colinton Mains Drive and Oxgangs Road North to prevent its use. Gate recently installed for this purpose but needs to be made secure, as people are using this dead end route and cutting through gardens at the other end to get out. Has had a dialogue with the department concerned regarding the simple task of fitting a padlock to the gate.

Roads – also, notified the appropriate authority regarding a) the state of the road near the bus stop in the same area, where the tarmac is badly rippled causing a trip hazard to persons crossing the road and b) complaints he had received about the state of the ramps at Oxfangs Broadway.

6. Treasurer's Report: H Levy

The Treasurer reported that other than a bill for photocopying being paid, there is no change in the Community Council's finances. It was noted that the planned expenditure for a computer with appropriate software and peripherals for the Secretary had still to be progressed.

7. Planning Report: J Napier

Report on the Weekly Planning Bulletins for Ward No.08. The period covered is from 21 July to 11 August 2008, during which only 2 applications and 1 decision related to property within Firrhill Community Council's area are reported in the Bulletins:

- Planning application 02516 has been registered to erect a single storey extension to the rear of residential property at Colinton Mains Road.
- Planning application 02859 has been registered to carry out alterations to roof to form one dormer to front elevation and two dormers to rear elevation of residential property at Colinton Mains Road.
- Planning application 01612 to carry out a loft conversion in residential property at Colinton Mains Drive has been granted.
- Planning application 01998 by Tesco Stores, Colinton Mains Drive, to install a lobby enclosure over the existing store entrance has been granted.¹

Colinton Mains Park – there has been a lack of progress in upgrading the pitches and getting them back into use. The drainage problems are still not resolved and it is the intention to remove some of the topsoil and insert slits of sand to take the excess water down to the piped drainage system. The removed topsoil will be used to build up the lower level of the park. This work has been delayed due to the weather.

A Hunter reported that there has been some slight activity on the site acquired by McCarthy and Stone for development next to the gates of Firrhill High School. Noted.

The Chair raised the proposed development of a medical centre on the vacant site next to the medical practice in Colinton Mains Drive. Community Council seem to be excluded from discussions being held regarding this development at this time. Decision: to raise matter of consultation at next Neighbourhood Partnership meeting.

8. Meeting Reports

a) Pentlands School Path

See attached report: – Pentland School Path : Monday 04-08-08. (Appendix 1)

9. Correspondence

The following correspondence has been received since the date of the last meeting:

- a) Letter from David McLetchie MSP re attending a meeting between Oct 08 and March 09. Secretary to respond.

¹ This planning application is not in the Firrhill Community Council's area

- b) Association of Scottish Community Councils (ASCC) booklet “The Community Councillor” Summer 2008.
- c) Edinburgh Civic Forum (The Cockburn Association); Notice of Meeting on 9 September, 4:30pm, City Chambers and minutes of previous meeting.
- d) City Council Flood Prevention Update booklet (August 08) distributed to affected properties. Copies available in libraries and community centres.
- e) Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership; Poster for display in Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre, advertising their next meeting on 26 August which will be held in Pentland Community Centre.
- f) A copy of “Inside Letting” publication, Edinburgh’s link with Landlords, Issue 16
- g) Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership: Notice and agenda for meeting on 26th August in Pentland CC plus minutes of previous meeting held on 18th June in Clovenstone CC. Papers for this meeting can be viewed at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cpol
- h) ‘eaga’ Scotland Ltd: promotional letter relating to this company’s programme of cavity wall and loft insulation, which is part of the government’s commitment to reduce carbon, etc.

10.A.O.C.B.

- a) G Lightheart reported he had noted a number of newspaper articles concerning the need for tradesmen carrying out repairs at schools to be subject to a disclosure check and complaints from school janitors and head teachers regarding youth in the community playing football on the school playing fields after school hours. He raised concerns that if such issues are ignored, it may lead to the loss of access to activity and learning facilities in community schools. Facilities that should be available to the public as of right.
- b) Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre – Bus Trips: notice of the following trips:
 - Loch Lomond Shores – Saturday 23rd August
 - Livingston Shopping Centre – Saturday 11th October
 - Newcastle Metro – Saturday 29th NovemberAll trip priced at £4.00 per person, further details from the Neighbourhood Centre, 441 7558.
- c) Garden Party: organised by Oxfangs Care’s Friday Coffee Group in partnership with Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre. Will be held in the Centre at 71 Firrhill Drive on Thursday, 28th August, from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. All are welcome.
- d) H Levy reported on Women’s Aid, which is a self-support programme for women.

11. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Firrhill Community Council will be held in the Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre from 7:00 pm on Tuesday, 23rd September 2008.

Firrhill Community Council
Pentland School Path
Monday 04-08-08

Present:- Jason Rust Councillor, Alan Faulds Local resident, Dennis Williams Chair Fairmilehead Community Council, Heather Levy Chair Firrhill Community Council

This meeting was held to highlight the concerns that the above people, who represented a good cross section of the community, re the replacement of the lost path from Oxgangs Green to Oxgangs Bank. Dennis wanted to stress that we accepted the original path was lost although it was noted the bad practice in which it was done. It is hoped that the project of the new path could be pursued and matters resolved and move on to a positive conclusion. Heather gave a brief resume of what has happened so far-There have been various meetings held in the past re relocating the existing path and creating a temporary path around the new Pentland school perimeter this was agreed to by a representative of the Children's and Families dept. Although a temporary path in all actuality it would probably become a permanent path after the development of the Hunters Tryst School site. This path could be put in place as soon as the School had been demolished and the site secured for Health & Safety reasons. It was hoped that the upgrading to a permanent path costs would be met by the Developers Dundas. This path is vital for the community to access services such as Doctors, Social Work, Library, Church, local shops, buses and many others. The Hunters Tryst site has been the target for vandalism since it's closure in 2006 culminating with it being set on fire and speeding up the demolition process which should be concluded by the end of August 2008. Jason then updated the group on the progress that he had made

Alan raised concerns about rumours that the Dundas Estates would not be progressing the site or at least drag their heels, due to the present financial climate, resulting in a vacant lot and no path, no access to crucial services. He also raised concerns re people using short cuts through gardens resulting in damage to property. There were many other concerns raised by all but it was agreed that to move things forward it would be best to create a steering group consisting of Peter Watton Estates CEC, Helen Martin Planning Dept, local Councillors, Fairmilehead Community Council and Firrhill Community Council. This group could also help alleviate concerns re the new development of the Hunters Tryst site. Jason also agreed to create a proforma (Appendix 2) to evaluate and record the communities concerns. All agreed to distribute, collect and collate information.

Dear Resident

LOSS OF PATH

Many of you will be all too aware of the loss of the path from Oxgangs Green to Oxgangs Bank. While the previous path has been "lost" albeit in questionable circumstances, it is important to many residents and local people that a new path be pursued and a positive conclusion reached.

I am aware that the path is vital for the community to access services such as Doctors, Social Work, Library, Church, local shops, buses and many others. I am also conscious that due to the absence of a proper path some people are taking short cuts through gardens resulting in damage to property.

There have been a number of meetings with planning and other council officials but progress to date has been slow. In conjunction with your other local councillors, Fairmilehead Community Council and Firrhill Community Council, I intend to step up the campaign to obtain a permanent new path which is fit for use by all local residents.

I would be grateful if you could return the feedback slip below to me at the City Chambers with your comments to add weight to this campaign.

Yours sincerely

Councillor J G Rust
Colinton/Fairmilehead Ward

NAME

ADDRESS.....

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I would like a new path as soon as possible between Oxgangs Green and Bank	YES	NO
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I have the following comments to make:

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PLEASE RETURN TO COUNCILLOR J G RUST, CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL,
CITY CHAMBERS, HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH EH1 1YJ.