

Minutes

BPCCRA Open Meeting Wednesday, 8 October 7.30pm Committee Rooms. Aldhelm's Church,
Lindsay Road

Present:

Peter Schroeder – Chair (PS)

Andrea Charman – Secretary & VC (AC)

John Harkness – Planning (JH)

Vicky Moss – Special Projects (VM)

John Sprackling – Chair Emeritus

Gavin Wright – Ward Cllr (GW)

Annabel Stemp – Magazine Editor (AS)

John Gunton-Magazine Advertising (JG)

Roy Pointer - Planning Matters (RP)

Stanley Peters – Treasurer (SP)

Coffee & Tea available on arrival

1)Welcome& Apologies

(PS) called meeting to order at 7.35, welcoming all attendees noting apologies from the Membership Secretary, plus Carol & Andrew Muddimer.

2)Chairman's Items (PS)

(i) Town Councils (TCs) – going ahead inspite of resident polls (65% against) which clearly reject the BPC development. This cannot be ignored. Council have ignored political voices on this to include Lib Dem Council Members. Should the decision be left to the 2027 election it would become a 'proper' referendum, but this is unlikely. Councillors are against with (GW) suggesting continuing vocal opposition, plus, he will stand to serve on it. Chair (PS) nominated (RP) to monitor how the topic is taken forward. (JG) asked why our councillors are against TCs to which (GW) responded saying they add another layer of bureaucracy, slow the decision process, facilitate 'buck-passing' and will increase council tax.....plus, the huge cost of setting up the infrastructure. A general conversation followed concluding with 2 further comments. The only service TCs must provide is the provision of allotments with all other issues requiring mutual agreement between the 2 levels of council.

(ii) Maintenance of our Environment – (PS) noted that the ongoing excuse for lack of services – lack of money – is increasingly worrying. We can no longer neglect our chimes, gardens and public facilities; the longer we do this, the more it will cost. The beauty of our area is key to tourist/visitor attraction, the basis of our economy. As an association, we must stay involved. This requires funds; Chair (SP) asked for a headline report from our Treasurer (SP), who confirmed funds of £42K, clarifying membership fees remain £5 for individuals, £3 per resident in block members.

3)Secretary's Items (AC)

(i)CIL and a quick review of how funds are allocated – the selection panel criteria – which was not clear from the recent Councillor review of CIL at our last meeting (Aug). Projects have to be concrete, not an 'event,' with clarity on community value, not simply 'nice-to-haves.' This prompted further questions from the floor in an effort to gain further understanding...eg: (SP) asked for details on how the Pinecliff Gardens Shelter figure was calculated? Demolition, structural/safety assessment, construction figures, etc., and how the contract was allocated to providers. TBC. There was further discussion around road safety and whether it should fall within CIL. (VM) Further, it was noted that the next round is from Oct 13 – end Dec and (GW) asked who is leading the Association's bid? Chair (PS) committed to making sure ideas are sifted and a lead is named.

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(ii) The Association is pleased to support certain resident concerns but for residents to engage with it, they must be members. This includes volunteer gardeners (insurance issues) and planning concerns.

(iii) A quick revisiting of technical issues and the ongoing conversation around using our domain address – www.pinesandchines.co.uk for officer email addresses; plus claiming clear ownership of same. TBC

4) Planning (JH)

(JH) provided a comprehensive update/summary of planning activities/decision over the last month prior to our meeting – available as always online. He noted that it was interesting to see Cliff Drive's approval in spite of objections, while some well-designed proposals were refused. Eg: a stone wall on Martello Road. He noted that 2A Burton Road and 7A Spencer Road were refused; it is good to see +/- decisions from the Council as it helps us to understand the rationale used. (JH) went on to ask whether BPC Planning is good or bad? It is difficult to give an answer without reference to other places/locations. We want consistency, a procedural approach that is methodical, factual, and evidenced without which professionals... architects... cannot give advice. Without this, the door is opened to rule bending, poor design and more. Land and building costs are exorbitant so developers will bend boundaries. (JH) noted his own approach, anchored in fact-checking, etc.... poor decisions, cost-cutting, limited enforcement, capacity, bad weather and more are behind a lot of construction disasters. He also took 2 cases to progress his thinking....

(i) Park Court where the developer wanted to build on top of an existing block of flats and then put in a light-blocking lift. There were holes in the application with a resident presenting a highly emotional objection.

(ii) Castle Ave which started without consent but after an enforcement notice was raised with the Council, a planning application was put in and was admitted. Things were done the wrong way round.

The meeting went on to review the Lakeside Road issue which certain residents brought to the Association's attention via (VM). Various issues to specific properties were raised. The Council's position is that some land-related issues fall outside its remit, and this is where the Association can often assist when residents are its members. Enforcement relies on reporting which can be done via the Association. (PS) made a series of related points – which authorities are responsible for what? Eg: asbestos, HSE, boundary disputes, land registry questions, monitoring site development, etc. The line between civil and council issues is in play here discussion from the floor ensued with a proposal from the Chair (PS) to arrange a meeting on-site to involve the Council and possibly our MP.

5) Road Safety & Speed Watch Updates & CSW (VM)

(VM) told the meeting that she has decided to stand down from CSW. She briefly explained how and why she got involved and overall there has been a modest positive outcome. The Chair (PS) will approach one of the team to try to keep the initiative going. The Association is interested in continuing its support but a CIL bid might not be the route. Any CIL bid needs traffic officers approval but the scale of the last bid was too high

6) Updates on Membership Issues (PS)

Our Membership Secretary could not join us today so Membership could not be reviewed in detail. (PS) noted the Warden Co-ordination is a critical issue which the Association needs to solve as soon as possible.

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7) AOB

Pines & Chines update (AS). Lots of contributors in this edition making up a 60-page publication. Delivered on October 25.

The question of blocks of flats membership was raised from the floor. A particular mention was made about 4 Balcombe Road which is not a block member. The question raised was around the Association's policy around approaching Managing Agents about BPCCRA membership. TBA

Meeting closed at 9.00pm

Next Meeting – December 10 at 7.00-8.30pm with Xmas refreshments post meeting.

Peter Schroeder – Chair

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