

L.A.R.A. Committee meeting. Monday 09 July 2007

1. Present;

Jeff Fry, Chris Hamilton, John Thomson, Mike Wall, Mark Harris, Patrick Martin, Roger Hartley, David Sandland

2. Apologies

Graham Edwards

3. Minutes from previous meeting

Jeff proposed we peruse through last minutes and any matters arising as a subsequence, clarification was sought on the true amount of funds presently available to LARA, this was confirmed as £ 265.39 (inc a contribution of £100.00 from LDC)

The matter with the additional car park spaces envisaged for the Community centre has not yet been clarified, no planning consultation has been sent out to date.

4. Matters arising/actions

John raised the issues of potential noise when parking is finally determined, other issues include how close to residential properties they will be and the facility for coaches to park, these and the above matter will be raised accordingly. David will contact LDC again and feedback at next meeting.

Jeff relayed his thanks and continued support for the tremendous turnout from residents relating to the "workshop/meeting for the "Darwin Park, Shaping the Future" held on 11 June 2007. The feelings were running high and the feedback was overwhelming.

5. Finance

The current budget available to LARA was as above £265.39, members confirmed that there are various avenues that can be explored to attract potential funding.

6. LDC & Developers meeting

John confirmed that he had met with all parties on 28 June 2007, also John Smith in attendance, John confirmed that the new LDC "Green Open Spaces" initiative, this was touched upon, without any real understanding, this may be explained, due to the fact that it has only just been out forward and is presently seeking further consultation.

Matters discussed

- Landscaping was to be completed within the next 6 – 8 weeks, although LARA takes this as aspiration
- Lamps to Cathedral Walk to be completed with July 2007
- Benches approved for Cathedral Walk
-

Matters agreed and to be discussed at future meeting

Members were concerned with the current state of the brooks, tree damaged at the bottom end of the brook, bin types to be introduced onto Darwin Park, grass cutting along Cathedral Walk, John stated that previous meetings with Malcolm Caddy – Taylor Woodrow, proved beneficial. Matters to be taken up accordingly. (**minutes not yet distributed**)

Members were questioning the possibility of extending the "Park Ranger" service that exists on other nearby parks, this would take in some areas around Darwin Park, this was seen as a

valuable service to users and residents alike and would be seen as visual deterrent to any vandalism/damage.

Chris asked that signage be put in place at the new playground facility and P.C.S.S.O contacted Elaine..... so that she is made aware that the area is safe for all ages to go to, their had been concern from some residents that there was potentially some bullying issues going on presently, it was also suggested that signage could be placed on the different types of play equipment (age restrictions)

7. Darwin Park. Shaping the Future.

Jeff reminded us that there is still much to do around the future vision of LDC, Developers and Darwin Park residents, and agree a suitable way forward, in light of the meeting 11 June 2007, it is clear that we are not yet there, Jeff will write to Steve Hill – Planning Officer, thanking him for his continued efforts and seek further clarification on matters involving the “buffer zone” development.

No feedback yet has been received from Dr Alison Millard – Independent facilitator at the recent meeting, Chris however did confirm that he spoke with Richard Cox – Planning Officer, who confirmed that the feedback from residents would be a combination of the meeting held on 11 June and the written correspondents to date.

Mike/Dave confirmed the buffer zone currently owned by 3 stakeholders

- Delta-Bridge
- Mr James – local Farmer represented by Richard Thorn
- LDC

All members agreed that LARA continue the pressure against the proposed plans to over develop this site, Mike suggested that we should look and consider 2 options: -

Rely on local public opinion to continue to resist applications of development, by default

Approach LDC and discuss section 106 monies and establish the cost of buying the land in question and retain it for the community, thus safeguarding its future

It was acknowledged that Mike had recently done an article for the Chronicle, relating to the above, which was seen as quite an accolade, members thanked Mike for his continued support and contributions.

8. Road works

Deferred to next meeting, Graham Edwards to advise and comment.

9. LDC responses to s106

John received a response from Beth Harris – Solicitor for LDC, she explained that previous use of this money was deemed to be appropriate, however those officers previously responsible for its spending had now left, LARA continue to question the use of this money with ongoing improvements to the Garrick Theatre, how is this having any direct affect on Darwin Park and its residents.

Members questioned if s106 money was being spent within the remit it was supposed to, as no direct investment into facilities at Darwin Park, Mike/John confirmed that a report is to be sent to LDC on future spend, LARA have been promised a preview? John to pursue and feedback at next meeting.

10. Planning

Development at Friary is still awaiting clarification on its volume and design, a number of members questioned the size, although recognizing that there had been some improvement to the original plans, members still have some concerns about the outline design, LARA have agreed to write to LDC.

11. Play areas/Football Pitch

Play area should be finished in July 2007, members raised concern as to who will maintain the equipment, also how the site will be supervised, Chris raised concern from other residents had a fear of bullying from the older youths, Jeff confirmed he would pass these comments over to the CPSO. Also could play equipment be marked to show what ages were appropriate for each piece of play equipment, members asked if further areas of leisure facilities were planned for the older children, as yet no formal application has been made, although the green space, west of Darwin Park (buffer zone) was ideal.

12. Correspondence.

Jeff & John commented on the recently published draft of the "Green Spaces Document" which is now on-line for comments, although the document appears lengthy it lacks any teeth or real focus, although the group discussed the document, no real thoughts were expressed, ***"watch this space"***

Members had already congratulated Mike on his work with the Chronicle, also the work Roger continues to do with "Lichfield's Living Civic Society"

13. Press

N/A, although LARA needs to know how residents will be consulted in the future on developments within Darwin Park

14. Agreed actions

Jeff, John and Mike have agreed to write to a number of individuals relating to the areas of concern within the meeting, also to request further clarity on other issues; _

- Access way at the Friary
- Proposed build at the end of Cathedral Walk/Friary
- Planning application for Friary outer car park (even though it may be outside of LARA's remit?)
- Darwin Hall development
- Green Space document

15. Date of next meeting: 17/09/2007 – 8.00pm Waitrose

16. Date of LARA A.G.M to be confirmed, dates of 03 or 10 November 2007 will be considered, Graham to confirm venue.