

# NOTTING HILL GATE IMPROVEMENTS GROUP AMENITY - CHARACTER - DIVERSITY

## MINUTES OF THE 56<sup>th</sup> MEETING held on WEDNESDAY 6 SEP 06 at 233-235 WESTBOURNE GROVE, W11

1. **WELCOME** The meeting welcomes Nadim Karam, recently evacuated with wife & 3 children from Beirut. D.O'N was congratulated on the birth of a son yesterday with his partner Shaheera.
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Toni Newman, Iain Wilcox, Willoughby Wynne, Frank Leiberman, Dez O'Neil, Adam Moy.
3. **PRESENT** Those ticked on the list below.
4. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING ON 1 MAR 06** Were tabled & copies distributed for approval & perusal & signed
5. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** 7.30pm. Wed 29 Nov. 06. Same venue.
6. **DELANCEY PROPOSALS**

Steve Burgin outlined the gist of Delancey's proposals which will probably be ready for consideration and discussion in the first qtr of 2007 & submission in the second qtr. These involve extensive upgrading, by new cladding, of properties, retail addition in Newcombe House area including car park area.

Other points

  - a) A sprinkler system has been installed behind Newcombe House to overcome the most disturbing nuisance created by Eastern European immigrants sleeping rough etc.
  - b) C.B. said his constituents were greatly interested in the Delaney proposals & hoped that a public meeting ( or one for his constituents) could be held in 2007.
  - c) Congestion Charge & Road layout D.C. declared the Notting Hill Advisory Group meeting at Town Hall at 4.00pm on 14 Sep. would table new road layout & car parking proposals & S.B. would ensure Norman Kingston would attend to consider the ramifications of such proposals for Delancey.
  - d) D.C. expressed great anxiety at loss of Tylers as a most useful hardware shop. On account of the lease structure this was outside D's control. R.R. compared this with the distressing loss of the general toys etc store on Kensington Park Rd - now another coffee shop!
  - e) Farmers Market - location undecided - 4 possible sites.
  - f) S.B. distributed a brief questionnaire on "What shops in NHG?" and members agreed to distribute & urge replies to guide the best shopping solutions for the future.
  - g) C.B. was particularly anxious that the cladding or appearance of Newcombe House should be vibrantly appealing. It is currently an eyesore.

S.B. was warmly thanked for his frank & open discussion on the aspirations of Delancey for N.H.G. and kindly agreed to attend the next meeting when plans would be more advanced.
7. **"SMALL SHOPS CAMPAIGN" & USER MIX**

Much criticism was directed at the outrageous increase in Estate Agents. Dangerous Liaisons - 301 Westbourne Grove and the huge Mook property (on the corner of Pembridge Rd & Notting Hill Gate are to become Estate Agents). This manifest denial of our aims of Amenity, Character & Diversity highlight the urgency of the All-Party Parliamentary Small Shops Group recommendations. They recommend "New requirement for all local authorities to adopt a retail strategy" or "delegate greater decision making power to people locally". C.B. observed this would require a change in the law.
8. **LACK OF PLANNING CONTROL**
  - i) 148 Kensington Church St without planning consent has changed from A1 (Timber & Building goods shop) to Bureau de Change with plastic & aluminium fascia, the cheapest loose lettering & wholly inappropriate aspect. ii) 58-60 N.H.G. (Previously Deep Pan Pizza) now Nando's with 'Canadian outback log cabin' effect. Both these having no regard of the Council produced guidelines for shop fronts and a main element in our efforts to "Improve the Gate". This outstandingly beautiful building with charming bow fronted 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floor windows is empty (the upper 2 floors have remained this way for some 20 years in defiance of National and Council strictures that residential parts above shops must be brought into use or taken over). The separate side access was lost by most ill advised Planning consent long ago (to increase zone A shop area). A golden opportunity to reverse this calamity was not grasped when the recent planning consent for this ugly and wholly out of keeping shop front was granted.
9. **NADIM KARAM**

N.K. reported that the pink backdrop wall behind the Elephant had been vandalised (the installation has been untouched for over 3 years).

He proposes cleaning all 3 steel structures (Elephant & 2 Carnival figures on top of Waterstones) and a re-design and painting of the wall for £3,000. This was approved by the meeting, on consideration of the basic design format which will be more detailed when the painting is executed on site. J.S. to liaise with Tim Leathan, Building Consultant to Land Secs.

#### **10. N.H.G. UNDERGROUND**

J.S. reported on a most encouraging meeting at 55 Broadway with Geraldine Hope (Head of Service Development) and Mike Ashworth L.U.L. Design & Heritage Manager. A site meeting is planned with the latter on 10 October. The meeting felt that the decoration should fit the high public profile of Notting Hill Gate.

#### **11. PAVEMENT PLAQUE (COAL HOLE COVER) - MARIA VLOTIDES**

Maria received a round of applause for finally achieving the first installation officially opened by The Mayor, Tim Ahern, outside The Coronet Cinema. The author Margaret Drabble was present to admire this discreet addition. This delightful enrichment to the street scene financially supported N.H.I.G. "Behold the Glittering Coronet of Diamonds, Tears & Dreams". The excellent design was by Alan Thewlis; and the Council are much thanked for their help and setting the plaque so neatly in York stone. It is greatly hoped other N.H.G. sponsors will be found for the Sebastian Faulks proposed "A word in your eye - don't worry or push - a step in the Gate is worth two in the Bush".

#### **12. CORONET CINEMA**

J.S. Reported on this most frustrating project. Freehold owned by Land Securities, let on a full repairing lease to the Elim Church who purchased the lease some years ago for several £ms. Despite meetings with the Chief, Colin Dye and Property Manager Ron Salamat no definite programme of external restoration has been forthcoming. The last meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> March & the next is to be with English Heritage. Tim Leathan advising Land Securities is on the case & supportive of our pressure for progress on the only Grade II building in N.H.G.

#### **13. R.B.K.&C. "RETAIL COMMISSION"**

The Council have set up this commission & the first meeting has been held. Members include Andrew Ashenden, Sir Terence Conran, Michael French and Robin Price whom N.H.I.G. have appointed as our champion/conduit to promote our views. G.R. as co-ordinator will carefully brief R.P. so to secure a meaningful resolution of our problems by the Commission. A most helpful meeting had been held with Andrew Ashenden, G.M., J.S., & D.McH. at the offices of The Howard de Walden Estate to explore possible means of achieving our objectives.

#### **14. SUPPORT OF SMALL SHOPS AT 107 & 109 KENSINGTON CHURCH ST. PARTY & PRESENTATION**

A photographic display was sponsored by J.S. to encourage Effie Fotaki & Maurice Steiger who have written an exciting book "Independent London Store Guide". This publication is full of excellent photos of small family run independent shops that N.H.I.G. Are seeming to promote; and emulate the success of Marylebone Village.

A successful party was held on 10<sup>th</sup> August at which Cllr Paget-Brown spoke with Andrew Ashenden present. There was extensive press coverage particularly Evening Standard (Jonathan Pryne).

#### **15. MAINTENANCE OF FLOWER BEDS**

After many years of unsatisfactory planting the Council (Graham Vincent & Angus Morrisson) have achieved an attractive sculptural display with small palms & box shrubs; and are to be congratulated on their efforts.

#### **16. MATTERS TO BE RAISED AT N.H. ADVISORY GROUP. 4.00 TOWN HALL 14 SEP**

- a) A blast against awful shop fronts, Estate Agents, Bureaux de Change & Coffee Shops.
- b) Report on Delaney & S.B.'s report.
- c) Exhort Council to make some proper progress on "Retail Commission".
- d) 74 Notting Hill Gate. Demand more detailed coloured plans & relationship with neighbours (existing proposals were given to D.C.)

#### **17. FINANCIAL REPORT**

This was circulated; it was noted the current surplus is £8,098.

#### **18. THERMAL REGULATIONS**

A.P. urged the Council to examine rigorously thermal insulation of shop materials to conserve energy as in houses. He agreed to write to the Chief Executive.

19. The meeting concluded at 10.00pm.

Distribution:-

\* = By Invitation

Toby Ackroyd	Petra Brown	Steve Burgin	Christopher Buckmaster	David Campion
Richard Dubell	Fiona Fleming-Brown	Frank Leiberman	David Marshall	David McHugh
Robert Meadows	Peter Mischon	Adam Moy	Toni Newman	Dez O'Neil
Andrew Pilkington	Geoffrey Roome	Robina Rose	John Scott	Sylvia Smith*
Amin Taha	Maria Vlotides	Iain Wilcox	Willoughby Wynne	