

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO.25
7.45 PM ON WEDNESDAY 10 MARCH 2010

MINUTES

Present: Miles Thompson (Chairman), Margaret Bird, Diane Crocombe, Mireille Levy, Louise Robertson, Raquel Stremme, Nick Sampson, Paula Reynolds, Nick Robinson.

In attendance: Chris Attwater & Rob Howle from OM Property Management & Richard Dorey (Chair, WRA)

Minute taker: Miles Thompson

1. Apologies

Peter Higgins & Derek Summers

2. Private Business

None

3. Approval of minutes from meeting 24 (13/01/10)

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record.

4 Matters arising

4.1 Conveyance Matters (Previously raised at Mtg 20 Item 5.1, Mtg 21 item 4, Mtg 22 item 4, Mtg 23 item 4 & Mtg 24 item 4.1) in relation to:

- parking/visitor space relating to number 62 Frenchay Road
- collection of service charge for OCHA units and commercial unit block, and
- charges for additional allocated parking spaces in Lark Hill.

4.1.2 Managing Agent has taken a commercial decision not to pursue Berkeley Homes for these costs. The work has been undertaken at OM's expense and the WMC has not been recharged for their time in resolving these matters. The Managing Agent was thanked again for their efforts on these matters on behalf of the Company – *closed*

4.2 Newsletters to be made available on the WRA website for non-resident owners – Mtg 22, item 5.8 & Mtg 24, item 4.2

4.2.1 **RESOLVED:**

Chair of WRA has agreed to follow up – *open*

4.3 Oxford City Canal Partnership (OCCP). Mtg 22 Item 9.2

- 4.3.1 The Chair had attended the OCCP meeting earlier in the day. The principle focus of the OCCP is on the main potential development areas of the former canal basin (the Worcester Street Car Park) and the Jericho Boatyard. No matters of direct relevance to The Waterways had been raised.
- 4.3.2 There is an open invitation from the Chair for one of the other Directors to attend the next meeting. Any Director interested in going should contact the Chair - *closed*
- 4.3.3 The GSC has considered the proposal of providing a sign to direct boaters to their dedicated bin store, away from using our bin on the green at the top of Frenchay Road; see minutes from meeting of Gardening Sub Committee 24 Feb 2010 - *closed*
- 4.4 Access to Google Documents, Mtg 22 Item 7.25
- 4.4.1 Chair had invited all Directors and the Managing Agent to join Google Group, which will provide access to the Waterways Management Company shared documents. Any outstanding access issues to be taken up with Chair – *closed*
- 4.5 Committee Secretary - Mtg 24 Item 6.1
- 4.5.1 Chair to contact Director to offer them the role of Committee Secretary, at the same rate as the minute taker, subject to the Company Secretary checking that this is permissible in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles – *open*

5 New Property Manager

- 5.1 The Managing Agent explained that the current Property Manager had been promoted to work in another division within the business and would cease to be the Property Manager for The Waterways from 1 April 2010. A new Property Manager will take up the post from 24 May. During the interim the Regional Property Manager will be acting Property Manager for the Waterways.
- 5.2 The old Property Manager will continue to be available to the team at OM to provide background and to answer questions while the new Property Manager settles in and during the interim. He will also continue to be involved in this year's financial work, to provide continuity on this complex and sensitive area.
- 5.3 The Managing Agent explained some of the experience the new Property Manager has. They will attend the next Management Committee meeting on 12 May, even though this is before they officially take over the role of Property Manager.
- 5.4 In the meantime, the Regional Property Manager will pass his email contact details to all the Directors.

6 Aerial Upgrade / consultation protocol

- 6.1 Following the experience of the last consultation process, in connection with the aerial upgrade to some flats, the Chair suggested some improvements to note for future consultation exercises.

RESOLVED

6.2.1 Future consultation letters shall incorporate the following points

1 – it shall be made clear to those being consulted that they must reply individually and cannot reply through others or on behalf of others

2 – those being consulted shall be told that if they submit their comments by email to the Managing Agent then they will receive an automated ‘message received’ response and that if they do not receive such a message then they should assume their email has not been received

3 – within seven (calendar) days of the deadline for consultation responses, all those who were consulted should be told the result of the consultation exercise; even though it may be necessary to issue other details later.

6.2.2 The Managing Agent is to produce a draft standard consultation letter incorporating these points, which can then be passed to the Chair, to be added to the list of documents at the Management Committee’s Google Group account.

7 Rackham Place Flats Sign

7.1 The Committee’s position remained unchanged: all areas of communal open amenity space on The Waterways should be available to all other residents of and owners of property on The Waterways, whether managed by the WMC or OCHA. The WMC does not seek to restrict access, to the land it manages, to just its members, even though some of these areas experience anti-social behaviour. The WMC makes its areas available to all residents of and owners of property on The Waterways. The Committee still feels OCHA should adopt the same principle.

RESOLVED

7.2 Lead Director of External to contact OCHA

1 – to ensure that OCHA recognises that all residents of the Waterways are entitled to access all areas of communal open amenity space around the Waterways, whether managed by OCHA or by the WMC

2 – to explain to OCHA that we understand the concerns that anti-social behaviour can give rise to and that retention of the sign, advising that access to the open space is only for occupants of the adjacent flats, will be needed while the problem of the anti-social behaviour is dealt with but that it is not appropriate to seek to permanently restrict access and that therefore they should provide an indication of how long the sign will be needed for

3 – to seek to establish clearer and more regular lines of communication with OCHA, to ensure in future that matters of common interest are dealt with more effectively.

8 Health and Safety

8.1 Matters Arising

8.1.1 Mtg 22 items 16.8 and 16.9, mtg 24 item 8.1.1
Letter to apartment block owners, outlining the cost of measures relating to rodent and badger control, to be issued by the Managing Agent – *closed*

8.1.2 Mtg 22 item 16.10 & mtg 24, item 8.1.2

Managing Agent to provide the Chair with proofing cost – *closed*

8.1.3 Mtg 22 item 16.12 & mtg 24, item 8.1.3

Managing Agent to forward a copy of the health and safety report to the Chair - *closed*

8.1.4 Mtg 24, item 8.2

Chair of sub-Committee wrote on half of WMC to County Highway Authority, asking for provision of grit boxes around the Waterways - *closed*

9 Report from Parking and Traffic sub-committee

9.1 Matters arising

9.1.1 Mtg 22, item 10.5 & Mtg 21, item 10.4

RESOLVED

An article providing an update on progress towards adoption to be submitted for inclusion in Waterways World, if the publication timetable coincides with the County Council's timetable for the road adoption – *closed*

9.1.2. It was reported that once the WRA had identified its new SubCommittee members, as a result of the change in membership, the joint working group would continue its discussions with the Council for the adoption of the entire fabric of the bridge on Elizabeth Jennings Way. Chair of Parking and Traffic sub-committee to report progress to future meetings of the Management Company – *open*

9.2.1 It was noted the proposed scheme of parking restrictions follows the results of the consultation we undertook with residents

RESOLVED

9.2.2 1 – Chair of Parking and Traffic sub-Committee to submit representations to the County Highway Authority supporting the proposed scheme of parking restrictions

9.2.3 2 – The Traffic & Parking Sub-Committee, the Gardening Sub-Committee and OM Property Management to work together to identify suitable locations at which to post signs to advise that some areas on the Waterways are residents parking only.

10 Apartment Block sub-committee

10.1 Matters Arising

10.1.1 Mtg 22 item 11.4, 11.5 & 11.6 & Mtg 24 item 10.1.2

It was agreed that a paper on the benefits, risk and implications arising from the employment of a caretaker / site supervisor would have to be deferred until there was confirmation the lease on the community room would allow use of the room by the caretaker for employee 'welfare' purposes.

The Lead Director for the Community Room reported that the freeholder had

confirmed the use of the facility by a caretaker, for welfare purposes, would be acceptable. The Lead Director for the Community Meeting Room was now raising the same point with the party who had been invited to manage the room on our behalf, to ensure they too would be happy for a caretaker to use the facilities of the Meeting Room, for welfare purposes – *open*

10.1.2 The next meeting of the ABSC is scheduled for 16 March 2010.

11 Complaints

11.1.1 It was reported that a number of residents had sought clarity on items relating to their service charge, which the Managing Agent had been unable to resolve through the usual letters and emails. However, subsequently no-one had taken up the invite to attend the offices of The Managing Agent to review the accounts with a member of staff.

11.1.2 The Lead Director for Complaints expressed his gratitude for the way in which the Property Manager had dealt with some of the recent complicated and persistent complaints.

12 Gardening sub-committee

12.1 Matters arising

12.1.1 Mtg 21 item 14.3, Mtg 22 item 14.3 & Mtg 24 item 12.1.1
The Environment Agency has provided advice about how to deal with unauthorised fishing around the lake and on how residents can report suspected offences to them. Discussion had also taken place with the North Oxford Angling Society, whose Secretary is also the local 'bailiff' - *closed*

12.1.2 The Managing Agent had sent a copy of the recent Health and Safety report to the GSC, which contained reference to the risks associated with fishing by the lake - *closed*

12.2 Name for the lake

A Director from the Gardening sub-committee suggested the lake off Elizabeth Jennings Way should be given a proper name. The WRA was asked to consider running a competition in Waterways World to find a suitable name – *open*

13 Community Meeting Room

13.1 The Lead Director reported the recent progress and what more was being considered to help move the process further along. He also outlined some of the areas at dispute. The Committee duly noted these points.

14 Any other business

14.1 Draft Service Charge

The Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer outlined some of the points they had raised with the Managing Agent. There is a concern the WMC will be criticised for increases in insurance costs, which we have little or no control over. The letter to accompany the invoices to members of the Company is to make clear the WMC

has no control over this cost. Across the board the level of increase this year is expected to be quite modest (just over 2%). However, there is significant variation within this and some members will see their charges increase by more than this. Nonetheless, it was noted that but for the insurance many of our members would have seen reductions in service charge. This reflects in part the work of the Directors and of OM to bear down on costs. This effort and the results for our members should be recognised and it was suggested this could be covered by the Treasurer in their report for the AGM.

14.2 Planning Application – 15 Complins Close

RESOLVED

Having regard to the size and location, it was agreed that the Committee had no comment to make.

14.3 The Waterways World could accommodate a logo to represent the Company. All the Directors were invited to consider what would make for a suitable logo.

14.4 Two Directors confirmed they would be standing down soon: one at the end of the month, and the other will know shortly. They were thanked for all their hard work.

15 Date of next meeting

15.1 12th May 2010.

15.2 Apologies received from NR for that evening.

15.3 It was agreed to continue, for the foreseeable, to commence the meetings at 7:45 and to finish in no more than 2 hours