

CRAIGMILLAR PARK ASSOCIATION
Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 13th March 2019
at 7.30pm at Crawford Road

PRESENT: Ronald MacArthur (Chair), Christine Simpson, (Vice Chair),
Liz Philp (Treasurer & Minutes Secretary), Stephanie Bell, Peter Bottomley,
Isabel Clark, Wilma Elton, Simon Gage, Hilary Vandore.

IN ATTENDANCE: Allan Payne

APOLOGIES: Tony Harris, Allen Simpson, Hilary Vandore

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 28th November 2018 at Crawford Road were approved, proposed by Simon Gage, seconded by Christine Simpson.

2. MATTERS ARISING None not dealt with elsewhere.

3. FINANCE & MEMBERSHIP

Liz reported that there was £5,606.07 in our account. Subscriptions amounting to £700 have been paid in so far this financial year, plus donations to the association of £133. In addition donations to the Nature Strips have been made amounting to £800, including a recent most generous donation of £200. We have made payments for the Nature Strips in the current financial year of £736.82. Liz agreed to enquire at the Bank of Scotland about the feasibility of members paying their subscriptions annually by standing order.

The membership situation is less cheerful. We have 97 paid-up households, including 12 new members, but 62 households have still not renewed. In many cases they have probably just forgotten. Liz again passed round lists of those who have & have not paid, asking members of the committee to try to remind people they know well enough to ask to consider renewing their membership.

4. MILLERS & CALA

Playing Field (Millers). Building work on this site is progressing. Two houses are now complete, of which one is now occupied. Residents of Crawford Road have been able to view the second completed house. They report that they have rather low ceilings, steep narrow staircases and some of the bedrooms are somewhat small, but the kitchen and five en-suite bathrooms are of a very high spec. We need to continue to be vigilant about the provision of a public open space on completion.

Royal Blind School (CALA). A goodly number of people attended the public meeting in Craigmillar Park Church Hall on Monday 10th December. This meeting was organised and paid for by the GPCC, NOT the PR people or CALA. Representatives from CALA were present and detailed plans were on view. Ronald MacArthur had kept committee members up-to-date via Email about comments both from CPA, GPCC and members of the public to the Planning Application. These were mostly favourable regarding the main plans with the notable exception of the height of the buildings next to the railway and the brick finish of the rear of these buildings which will be visible from Mentone Terrace, 40 people from Mentone Terrace had sent objections about these buildings. In addition, objections were submitted concerning the installation of u-PVC windows in the original

(listed) building and gatehouse (partial). CPA has twice offered to pay GPCC part of the cost of the public meeting but they have not responded. Our representative on GPCC, Isabel Clark, was asked to remind GPCC about this. In due course there will be a Planning Committee meeting open to members of the public.

5. PLANNING MATTERS.

(i) Abcorn Guest House, 4 Mayfield Gardens.

Despite the 111 objections, planning consent was granted by Edinburgh Council for the conversion of Abcorn Guest House into a 13 bed 15 person HMO. The argument that there was an over-provision of HMO's in EH9 was dismissed on the dubious statistic that only 29 such planning applications had been made since 1995 rather than over say the last three years! The next stage is for the owner of Abcorn to apply for a licence from Edinburgh Council once the alterations have been implemented.

HMO Licensing

1. Undertaken by Edinburgh Council.

An Inspection team (3) visits the premises and if satisfied an HMO Licence is granted for 1-3 years duration at the discretion of the Council after it is satisfied as to the suitability of the applicant.

It would seem that initially this licence is for one year duration.

2. Landlords must comply with certain rules mainly for the protection of tenants (prescribed tenancy agreement also required) e.g. size of rooms, electrical, gas and fire protection measures with annual certificates of compliance etc.

3. The rules include measures which require landlords (a) to deal with antisocial behaviour including noise disturbing other tenants and others in the LOCALITY (undefined) and (b) maintain the premises inside and out. It would seem that residents in the locality may complain officially. Failure to implement measures may result in non-renewal of the licence.

Detailed information is contained the *Guidance for Landlords - HMOs" published by the Scottish Government and the guidance re the application form on the Edinburgh council website.

(ii) Ronald MacArthur has been most organised about keeping committee members informed about all planning applications in our area and the result of such applications. He also sent out details about the progress through the Scottish Parliament of the Planning (Scotland) Bill 2017. It is likely that the right of a third party to appeal against a planning decision (defeated by only three votes at Stage 2 Committee level) will reappear for debate and voting in Parliament before the final Bill is voted on in Parliament, probably later in 2019.

6. WEBSITE AND COMMUNICATIONS

There were various suggestions at the last committee meeting about possible articles for the website, but unfortunately none of these happened. Ronald MacArthur had tried to contact the Cockburn Association both about an article and also a speaker for the AGM but had received no response. All articles should firstly be submitted to the Chair, who will check their content and then forward to Allan for the Website.

Allan Payne reported that CJ Perring recommends using a better host for our website, at present the website keeps going down and the chairman receives (sometimes unsavoury) spam Emails. This could cost £70 instead of the present £15, but the committee agreed that it would be money well spent. Allan is not keen on continuing as Webmaster and also creator of the annual paper newsletter. Stephanie agreed to help with both of these. All the committee were agreed that Allan does a fine job and we would be sad to lose him. Simon suggested that if we cannot persuade Allan to stay he knows several freelance people whom we could employ to do the work, their services would not cost too much. One big difficulty is finding people willing to write interesting articles.

Facebook. There was a suggestion that the CPA should have a Facebook page. Somebody needs to set it up and monitor it. To a query as to what purpose would it serve the reply was that it would achieve better communication between the people who live in the area than the website which has few hits, also it would raise our profile with younger residents. Stephanie offered to set up a Facebook page but was clear that she would not have the time to constantly monitor it. Pete offered to be number two monitoring person.

7.. NATURE STRIPS

Christine Simpson reported that she had been approached by Jim Sorrell, a planning consultant on West Savile Road, about the possibility of CALA being prepared to fund a community project in the area around the Blind School site. Fences for the nature strips seemed a good suggestion. Meetings of volunteers of nature strips 1,2,3 and 4 have been held to discuss what would be appropriate. The process of pricing metal fencing is being undertaken before there is a meeting with CALA to see if they would fund them.

Wilma reported that she has told her teams of volunteers that money is available for developing the Nature Strips since we have received some generous donations and the CPA had already agreed to expenditure on the Nature Strips. Simon requested £150 for a Scots pine, Christine £150 for various trees & shrubs, and both Pete and Simon proposed expenditure of up to £500 for bird boxes, since we are agreed that we should be enhancing wildlife habitat. The Committee agreed that such expenditure could proceed up to a maximum of £1,000 in total before seeking the approval of the committee. To an extent the allocation of money should probably reflect where the donations have come from. Liz will provide Wilma with addresses of the donors (where known). One of the Nature Strips volunteers had raised an objection to the fact that Ben Morgan has already been paid for heavy work. He thinks that all work should be done by volunteers, he wondered who had authorised the paid work. The CPA committee agreed that Wilma should organise a Nature Strips Committee consisting of volunteers on the Nature Strips and they would be the ones to authorise paying someone to do heavy work if no volunteers were prepared to come forward to do it. This committee would also decide what money should be spent on the various items. The CPA, as custodian of the funds, would then make the necessary payments.

8. AOB

Donations to Charities.

We already pay an annual membership subscription of £40 per annum to the Cockburn Association. We have previously donated money to the Friends of Newington Cemetery and it was agreed that we should make another donation of £100. Ron had found that the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland were supportive regarding the Planning Application of the Royal Blind School site. It was agreed to make a donation to them of £100 and cancel our membership of the Cockburn Association. We hope the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland might be able to provide a speaker for the AGM, in which case a further donation could be made. After the meeting it was found that CPA can be a "Small Charity Member" and a cheque for £60 has been sent to AHSS.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 12th June at 13 Crawford Road.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 10.15pm