

Minutes - Mill Farm Close Residents Steering Group Meeting

9 March 2010

Steering Group representatives in attendance:

Jackie Fineman (Chair), Ravi Panara, Phil and Olive Balch, Tilman Marsh, Michael Gant, Mariam Yabou

Advisors:

Louis Blair – First Call, Elaine Slowe – Harrow Council

Catalyst Housing Group:

Les Warren, Anna Vachou, Judith Marshall (PTE architects), Kerry Starling

	Action
<p>1. Matters arising from meeting of 9 February 2010</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>2. Planning update - Judith Marshall</p> <p>JM stated that the Mill Farm Close application is going to Planning Committee tomorrow (10 March) with an Officer recommendation for approval (following changes made in the light of Planning Officers' comments e.g parking, built form, larger play area, boundary problems). Five objections have been received by Planning but three are non material issues.</p> <p>PB stated that they had received a letter from Housing Management asking them to vacate their garage which stated that Catalyst would be taking over the estate from 31 March. ES stated this was worded as a 'proposed' date. PB has a classic car in his garage and wants to ask Catalyst if he can leave it in the garage until nearer the demolition date and pay rent to Catalyst. PB stated that some residents had not been happy with the tone of the letter. ES stated she would pass PB's request onto Catalyst for response.</p>	ES
<p>3. Transfer progress report</p> <p>The tenancy agreement has been finalised. Unfortunately the copies that had been brought to the meeting were incorrectly photocopied. ES to provide further copies at the next meeting and send electronic version to LB at First Call.</p> <p>Catalyst will open their site office to give information to tenants after the transfer. Catalyst and the Council are working to a date of 31 March to exchange contracts to enable Catalyst to obtain HCA funding. The transfer will be completed at a later date in April (date to be confirmed) to allow for a transition period so that the change over goes as smoothly as possible from the tenants' point of view. LB agreed that it would be a good idea to take some extra time to arrange the practicalities of transfer. In terms of how the Group thought tenants would like to be informed of transfer information, it was felt that all means of communication should be used (letters, website etc) to make sure information was passed effectively to residents.</p>	ES

<p>4. Estate Forum</p> <p>LB reminded everyone that the Steering Group officially comes to an end on transfer of the estate and that the Estate Forum should be set up as soon as possible after the transfer. LB suggested a public meeting be held to ask for volunteers to join the Forum. There are 12 places to fill in total (3 leaseholders and 9 tenants). If more than 12 volunteers come forward and election will be needed. Existing Steering Group members would have the opportunity to carry on in the Estate Forum format. If the public meeting goes well, Estate Forum members could be in place by the end of the meeting, in theory.</p> <p>KS explained that she hoped to provide an incentive for residents to get involved in the Forum by issuing laptops at the public meeting. KS asked for volunteers from the residents to help roll the laptop programme out as she wants to set up a group to work with the remaining residents with the laptops and to get involved with other connected initiatives (e.g. training). RP volunteered to join this group and may know a couple of other residents who would be interested. JF also volunteered her daughter to join the group. It was suggested that the laptops have a 'Mill Farm Close' screensaver – KS confirmed that this was already being worked up. KS hoped to combine the issuing of laptops with the handing out of other informative brochures about Catalyst and the transfer.</p>	<p>KS to arrange a meeting with RP, KF and other volunteers after 31 March. KS and AV to progress</p>
<p>5. Any other business</p> <p>PB asked when the building programme would start and what would happen with the parking, as there is a large camper van parked outside his block which belongs to another resident and which is often an obstacle for other residents' cars. AV offered to speak to Housing Management at the Council to resolve the issue of the camper van obstruction. AV also made a note that there is an ASB issue with dogs fouling the estate.</p>	
<p>6. Date of next meeting</p> <p>TBC</p>	