

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF EASTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL HELD ON Wednesday 9th October 2013 AT 8pm IN EASTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

PRESENT: Sanat Mehta, Diane Dakers, Graham Smith, Mark Taylor, Lesley Smith, Grace McCarthy, Jacqueline Keenan, Karen Armstrong, Susan Clark, Connie Hume, Mags Jerfel, Gordon Wallace, Sandra McDermid

IN ATTENDANCE: Stuart Maxwell (Head Teacher), Shona McWilliam (Clerk), Cllr Elaine Green

APOLOGIES: Ian McIntosh, Alex McMillan, Gillian Morgan, Cllr Charlie Gilbert

INTRODUCTION

Sanat welcomed Cllr Elaine Green to the meeting and hoped that she would be able to answer our questions regarding the proposal for a mosque to be built in the grounds of Eastwood High School.

Before Sanat called the meeting to order, Stuart wished to clarify his position. As a senior official of East Renfrewshire Council he cannot comment on anything that is discussed this evening.

Sanat's first question was to ask Cllr Green when she found out about the proposal. She confirmed that she first heard about it on 29th September.

Mark asked if the other sites, Maidenhill and Barrhead were available immediately to build on considering that the council are committed to building a mosque by 2016, the timescale is very short.

Susan asked how are they allowed to choose a site. The sites are up for offer and Barrhead was refused. How can they object? Cllr Green confirmed that it is their (muslims) right to object if they wish. Susan wished to know why it was 'community land' Cllr Green questioned who told her that as she was led to believe it was 'protected urban green space' If that was the case Karen asked why if 'protected' can it be overturned.

Karen was concerned that after us speaking to a few councillors, that you all don't seem to know what's going on and wondered if you all communicated with each other. The ER website is an extremely difficult site to find information regarding the consultation especially as it started today, time is of the essence. It took Karen an hour to find a link to the proposal. Its requires to be an outward facing document. Its a shame that you don't seem to be fighting our cause and wondered how the press can find out more than the local community. Cllr Green said that she would ask one of her colleagues to look into design of the web page as its not her expertise and perhaps make it easier for all to find a link for the consultation. Karen asked if it was possible to perhaps a have link of the website for the public to add their objections.

Mark agreed that it took him quite a while to find details of the consultation on line and eventually when he did the map was in fact out of date and factually incorrect, quoting the ground as 'landscaped' where in fact it is to be used as outdoor learning with woodland walk etc. Karen asked can we halt the consultation or void the consultation due to the document being factually incorrect and totally misleading. Cllr Green said that she would look into this for us. She confirmed that she was in favour for a mosque to be built in East Renfrewshire and is happy to take any of our concerns back to her colleagues. Karen would like her to reply by the end of the week as a matter of urgency.

Sanat was disappointed that although the planners were emailed the sub committees email addresses that no one was contacted regarding the consultation starting today.

Gordon thanked Cllr Green for taking the time to answer our questions and asked her if there was any advice she could offer us to help us progress with our objections. She confirmed that we must make our objections known by letter, making sure we keep to the point, genuine reasons keeping it very objective. eg busy road, pupils walking to the train, busy pavements, 'stranger danger' children's safety. Cllr Green confirmed that the more individual letters the better. Much better idea than having one with lots of signatures on it.

Karen thought that the letter that was issued to all parents was very good and we should use the points raised in the letter for our objections.

Grace asked why couldn't the council just say that the land wasn't up for sale. Cllr Green clarified that actually it was better if it went to consultation as everyone gets a chance to see the plans. Cllr Green was asked her opinion, would she be voting for or against. She confirmed that she could not possibly comment until she viewed all aspects from both sides.

Karen would like it confirmed that the original plan for a pitch at the back of the school would still be completed.

Susan said that after seeing the proposed plan, it must be an exceedingly large area. Cllr Green confirmed that the footprint is small. You don't always get everything you ask for when you apply for planning.

Sandra confirmed that it would be good if the councillors could all get their facts correct. Her children travel from Neilston each day and she is very concerned about the traffic from Patterton station to the school. She will certainly highlight the issues with Neilston Parent Council the next time they meet.

Consultation will run from today until 20th November 2013.

Sanat thanked Cllr Green for answering our questions and hope that she would return in the future.

Grace mentioned that facebook have over 600 objections. She is monitoring the page, keeping the comments positive and if any are offensive they will be stopped. She is impressed by the amount of local support we have had from different group eg. Neighbourhood Watch, Save 'Robslee school'. We need at least 5000 objections. We also require a flyer to be put round all the local homes giving them information on how to object.

Grace attended the local community council meeting where councillors were being assigned to positions, no one took up the planning position. Could we call a meeting to involve all the councillors, planning department, representatives of the muslim community and ourselves?

Next community meeting is on Monday 14th at 7pm at Albertslund Hall. Grace, Susan and quite a few others have agreed to attend.

Susan mentioned that we should involve the press, she has a contact if required.

We only had two complaints, from the letter we sent out to all parents. Only one in fact being a parent the other was a relative.

Our next step is to devise a follow up letter to be issued to all parents the week we return from the October holidays.

Our next Parent Council meeting will be as planned on **Wednesday 23rd October at 7pm**
PLEASE NOTE IT WILL BE IN THE PE BLOCK, in the classroom

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