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Town of Lexington

Noise Advisory Committee (NAC)

Minutes of Meeting November 22, 2021

A meeting of the Noise Advisory Committee (“NAC”) was held via Zoom videoconference on Monday November 22, 2021, at 7:00 PM. A quorum of three members was present.

NAC Members Present: Dan Koretz (Chair), Vicki Blier, Nick Afshartous, Stewart Smith, April Wang

Others Present: Mark Sandeen (Select Board), Joe Campbell, and 4 members of the Public

1. Introductory Remarks

Dan convened the meeting at 7:00 pm and took the roll of NAC members in attendance.

After calling the meeting to order, he referred to the posted agenda for the meeting. He indicated that there was one main item to discuss, namely the future work of the Committee.

2. Approval of Minutes

The Committee reviewed Minutes from the November 10, 2021, meeting of the NAC which had been posted on Slack in draft form. Dan moved that the Minutes be approved, and the motion was seconded by Nick. Following a roll-call vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

3. Committee Business

Dan suggested that there were, currently, two main areas of future work that the Committee could consider:

- a) Review and revision of the Town’s current Noise Bylaw (s.80), and
- b) Assisting in the creation of an integrated ticketing system among various Town departments for recording and dealing with noise complaints.

Concerning the current Noise Bylaw, Dan indicated that he had discussed this matter with Town Manager Jim Malloy in the past. Jim indicated that appears to be a consensus within Town leadership that the Bylaw be brought up to date.

Dan also noted that due to the absence of a centralized ticketing system, noise complaints are currently received by several different Town departments and are informally re-directed between these departments. A coordinated intake process would allow the tracking and correct allocation of complaints. Dan indicated that he had informally discussed this initiative with various Town officials prior to the Covid restrictions implemented in 2020.

Dan then requested input from the Committee on these two proposed initiatives and asked for other suggestions.

The Committee then considered whether there were further noise-related issues which should be added to the Committee's mandate.

Nick enquired of Mark as to whether the Select Board would prefer to have input on any new initiatives at an early stage. Mark indicated that the Select Board would prefer having the NAC develop new issues and bring them to the Board for consideration. He also said that the Board conducts goal-setting sessions and would like to see progress on a two-way system of communication regarding noise complaints. Mark also suggested aggregating noise complaints including those related to Hanscom AFB.

Among other ideas, Nick mentioned utility company noise and also noted that in New York City the city government had begun deploying sensors to measure noise levels. Stewart suggested that Town residents could be contacted via social media in order for the NAC to develop a list of noise-related issues from the public's perspective. Other Committee members voiced concern about potentially soliciting complaints via this suggestion.

Regarding the potential review and updating of s.80, Vicki suggested that the Committee seek to determine if there is model legislation that could be a starting point for re-drafting the Noise Bylaw. Joe noted that the Belmont noise bylaw may also be a useful point of reference as it was created recently and may be the furthest along in terms of enforceability.

Dan noted that the bylaw review process appeared to be a major undertaking. He also suggested that the NAC reach out to Jamie Banks who may have a data base of noise bylaw information.

On a further matter, Dan asked that the Committee consider an administrative change within the NAC. He indicated that he would like to ask Stewart to Co-Chair the Committee with him on a going-forward basis.

The Committee discussed this matter and Nick enquired as to the mechanics of how a co-chair arrangement would work. After deliberation, the following motion was made:

Motion

Dan moved that Stewart be appointed as Co-Chair of the Noise Advisory Committee, effective upon receiving Town approval (if required). The motion was seconded by Vicki and, following a rollcall vote, was approved unanimously with Stewart recusing himself from the vote.

4. Next Meeting

The Committee agreed that the next meeting of the NAC take place at 7:00 pm on December 15, 2021.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, Dan made a motion, seconded by Vicki, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.