



Powderhall Village Owners Association

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 10th August 2011

Present: Gordon Chrumka, Roddy Martine (Chair), William Mackie (Treasurer), Kathryn Tomlinson.

Agenda:

1/ **Apologies for absence:** David Forecast, John Riley, Frans Kooy, Ian MacMillan, Andrew Nesbit

2/ **Approval of Previous Minutes**

3/ **Beaverhall Road Development**

William Mackie and former Committee Chairman and Secretary Ian Corbett attended the exhibition at Broughton School at the end of July, and they acquired the planning proposals for the proposed development on Beaverhall Road. The Committee was pleased to note that unlike the previous plans submitted by Rutterfords, there is to be no road access to the site from Powderhall Road. The plan does, however, make provision for six town houses between the existing town houses and the flats on Powderhall Road.

Neither Franz Kooy from the Town Houses, nor Lorraine Chalmers from the Road were able to attend the PVOA meeting, but sent their comments as below:

Frans Kooy: “The new proposals are better than the previous ones in one big way: the plan for townhouses in the “gap” with access to the main development coming from Beaverhall Road.

“However I am unhappy about the height and proximity of the main block behind the Town Houses, which will cause serious overlooking to our rear rooms and gardens as well as loss of light particularly in winter. This will be worst for the houses at the lower end where the proposed flats are closest. The architect insists that all rules are met. We’ll have to see when the plans are firmed up. The new proposals are actually 1 storey higher than the previous ones, i.e. 6 storeys including the dormers in the roof, with a ridge level higher than that of our houses. I’m afraid that in spite of the other improvements, I’ll be objecting.

“I only received one reply from other owners. Adam Clarke from No. 42 also thinks the flats are one storey too high, and he also asks what provision is made for the new Town Houses to store their wheelie bins? This is a detail, but a useful point which I’ll mention in my feedback to the architects. Adam also thinks there is too little parking proposed for the affordable housing, at 50%. I suspect the developer is following guidelines. Even though their access will be off Beaverhall, this emphasises the need for us to continue to fight to keep our own spaces to ourselves.”

Lorraine Chalmers: “I have a few concerns as I live on the ground corner flat at no 22. There seems to me to be too many town houses (6 in total) to be built on the small piece of land and next to me. This will block out light from my windows and I will be looking at a brick wall. Same for my neighbours above me. At the rear of my house my 3 bedrooms will also lose any light but this I can put up with as there will be a decent distance inbetween builds.

“Powderhall village is a lovely development and I feel the style of proposed town houses is completely different and not in keeping with Powderhall Road. The developers should cut down to 3 town houses and have some surrounding grass/lawn areas.

“The developers have only allocated 40 parking places – not nearly enough for a development this size.”

Gordon Chrumka is to put the Springfield plans onto the Powderhall Website for general comments. He will also find out the dates of the Consultation Period. We will discuss the matter further at the next PVOA Meeting and thereafter submit our observations to the Council.

ACTION : 10/08/11

4/ Update on Actions from Previous Minutes

Refilling of Grit Bins

Two additional grit bins are to be installed, one on Powderhall Road at the foot of the ramp over the underground car park; a second, smaller one close to the Bridge over the Water of Leith at St Mark’s Park. Nicola will instruct Brian Hunter (Garden Contractor) when the flood prevention work is completed. **Ongoing**

Fabric repair work

Concrete re-pointing work is to be undertaken outside of the bin stores at 4,7,10,11 Powderhall Rigg, and 8, Powderhall Brae. Nicola has been in touch with Burns & Watson. **Ongoing**

Storm Damage

Work to replace tiles at 2 Powderhall Brae, and flashing at 9, Powderhall Rigg is underway. Nicola has been in touch with Burns & Watson. **Ongoing**

Parking at Powderhall

No further response has been received from Edinburgh Council following the Chairman's meeting with Councillor Gordon Mackenzie. **Ongoing.**

Trees at B&Q

B&Q have cut back the trees adjacent to Powderhall Brae, cleared the debris and repaired the fence. The Chairman has written to B&Q asking them to confirm that the state of the trees will in future be monitored on an annual basis, but has to date had no response. Action: Nicola to write to Helen Clarkson, CEO of B&Q Customer Care. William to compose letter. **Ongoing**

Swing at Children's Playground

Gordon brought to the Committee's attention that a swing in the Children's Playground was missing. This has been replaced.

New regulations relating to flues and voids on Gas Boilers

With regard to the regulations being introduced relating to flues and voids on boilers throughout Powderhall, Nicola is to investigate requirements and all owners are to be circulated **Nicola to Action: 10/09/11**

Block Insurances

On 22nd May, Joanna Bytheway e.mailed the following to Sarah Wilson: "We were really surprised to receive the letter from Charles White Limited requesting £305.31 for our buildings insurance, this figure being only slightly less than the £317.07 of 2010's AP. The expectation given at the AGM that there would be a considerable reduction in premium: "There was some good news (too recent for it to have forwarded yet to the committee) that there could be a decrease in the annual buildings insurance premiums in 2011 of around 18.5% for the Brae and the Rigg because of the reduced number of claims in 2010. More details will appear in the Minutes of a future committee meeting".

An urgent advice regarding the difference between the AGM reduction and the premium requested was asked for, and Joanna also asked for clarification as to why the value of the Buildings Sum Assured is so high – £277,715. The Sum Assured she had been given in a flat survey by Graham & Sibbald 5 years ago was £100,000. The Committee would like an explanation as to why the sum assured is so high when the value of the property itself is only around £200,000 and why there should be a perceived 277% increase in the reinstatement value of the flat.

Nicola to Action:

08/06/11

Nicola's response:

“Further to your previous concerns about the insurance figures, I can see that the minutes state that a decrease of around 18.5% would apply for the Brae and Rigg properties. I have discussed this with Sarah and understand that she actually advised that a decrease of up to 18.5% would apply, depending on the block. This information was received from Deacon and a decrease has been applied, however, there was a 1% increase in Insurance Premium Tax from 5% to 6% and also 4.2% index linking added so that reduced the total discount by 5.2%. I can only apologise for any confusion caused.

“With regard to your query regarding the sum insured, Charles White provides Deacon with the declared value (rebuild value) in respect of the development and this is apportioned per flat. This information is taken from a survey arranged by Charles White on the proprietor's behalf.

“I have checked the details with Deacon and the declared value they have noted for your property as of 2010 is £185,143. The figure of £277,715 is the sum insured value, which includes 50% day one uplift– this allows for inflationary increases throughout the year. Owners are entitled to have individual surveys carried out if they feel the sum insurer is not accurate.”

Since Ian was unable to attend the Meeting, it was decided that this matter should be further discussed at the September PVOA meeting.

Water of Leith Flood Prevention Scheme

The work appears to be progressing well with the minimum of disturbance to date.

5/ Any Other Business

Charles Wilson: Increase in Floats

Charles Wilson has advised the PVOA Committee that it is their intention to increase the floats in the September billing as follows:

Rigg and Brae	£150 to £225
Road	£100 to £150

This is to ensure the account is able to sustain increasing costs and will be explained in the Accounts attachment. Taking Charles White's explanations into account, we shall be discussing this development at the next PVOA meeting. **ACTION: Nicola to forward explanation to PVOA Committee prior to the next meeting.**

6/ Next Meeting: Tuesday 20th September at 7:30pm at 4/6, Powderhall Rigg