

NEWSLETTER

4/2007

July 2007



EDITORIAL

This Newsletter marks the beginning of the Society's financial year and also the beginning of the subscription collection season. Some road Reps may have already started, but most will wait until the end of the holiday period. If you are out when your road Rep calls they will probably put a reminder slip through your letterbox. Please respond to it and save him or her another journey. They are all volunteers. As announced at our AGM, Elizabeth Davies our Chair, was intending to move to Colyton in Devon to be near relatives. She has now moved and is settling into her new home. The Society sent her a card and a floral display to greet her on her arrival and to thank her for all that she had done over the past years. I can report that she was thrilled with the flowers. You have guessed it - we are now looking for a volunteer (or volunteers) willing to stand for election as our Chairman. Without calling an Extraordinary Meeting the appropriate time to elect a new Chair would be at the AGM next March. However, it would be nice to have names for potential Chairmen before then, perhaps this could enable candidates to get some practice in by each chairing one of our meetings up to the next AGM. So don't hang back until the last minute (which will be January 2008) hoping that someone else will offer to do it, please respond now. If you want to know more or to just say yes, call Peter Pain, the Vice Chairman on 8460 2828. He will happily bring you up to speed.

Dates for the Diary

Thursday 6th September - Members' Meeting 8.00pm - Bromley Court Hotel

Thursday 1st November - Members' Meeting - 8.00pm - Bromley court Hotel

Peter Pain (Editor)

PLANNING

As has been reported in earlier Newsletters, the post of Planning Officer (Bromley) was relinquished by Leslie Tucker at the AGM after 15 conscientious and effective years. Clive Lees volunteered to step into the breach with Leslie continuing to give valuable support and advice in the background.

126 Madeira Avenue: This highly contentious proposal for 8 4-storey townhouses to replace one existing property was refused by the Council in February without debate but the developer lodged an appeal. The appeal will be determined by a "hearing", a relatively informal meeting chaired by the Planning Inspector at which the various points of view are aired. The hearing has been set for 10am on 14th August 2007 in a Committee room at the Civic Centre, Stockwell Close. Please come and support the Society and the Council in resisting this appeal. At the time of writing we are preparing our case against the development.

Very recently the developer has submitted a second application for the site. This time for a block of six, 4 storey, 5 bedroom town houses. These new plans are currently being studied. The appeal referred to above has not been withdrawn.

30, Downs Hill An application for a 7 bedroom house as a replacement for the existing dilapidated property had previously been approved. Recently an application for two 5 bedroom properties largely within the profile of the 7 bedroom house was made. The Society objected and the council refused the revised proposal on the basis that two houses on the one site would be a cramped over-development - thereby spoiling the open spaced character of this Conservation Area.

3, Highland Road This is an unremarkable Victorian property next to Bromley Park. A previous application to convert to a block of flats was rejected on the basis that it would not have been of sufficient quality for its own residents and impacted too greatly on 5 Highland Road. New proposals (which were acceptable to RVPS) were submitted and agreed. At the time of writing work appears to have started on the property.

Goan Sports Ground (behind Millwall's ground) This area of land was recently put up for sale at auction by the current owners but there were no bids. Whilst this is of passing interest, the land is designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and as such is extremely unlikely that any detrimental development would ever be allowed.

Hill Brow, 14, Highland Road This large Victorian property with attached dilapidated conservatory was recently put on the market. At the time of writing we understand that an offer has been received and it is thought that the potential new owner intends to extend the existing house to the rear and convert the whole into 9 flats. This is a Locally Listed building having many fine period features and we remain vigilant as to the appropriateness of any future development.

25, Coniston Road The planning application to convert the house to a care home for up to four 11-15 year olds has been refused by Lewisham.

ROADS AND TRAFFIC

Junction of Grasmere Road and Oaklands Road: For some time we have been pressing Bromley to extend the yellow line at the eastern side of this junction so as to improve the sight line when exiting Grasmere Road. Bromley have recently had the yellow lines repainted but with a paltry extension of only about 12 inches. There is no improvement to the sight line.

Southern Junction of Oaklands Road and London Road Following recent road repairs the red line was not reinstated, allowing cars to park very near to the junction with the main road. Bromley have been informed.

Speeding Traffic on the eastern section of Bromley Avenue A letter has been sent to Bromley Council about this but, to date, there has been no reply.

Crab Hill / Ravensbourne Avenue Following rumours that there is a proposal to make up the unmade section of Crab Hill and part of the unmade section of Ravensbourne Ave, we checked the situation with Bromley. It was confirmed that the concept of rerouting the local bus to serve Ravensbourne Station was being

considered. At present the proposal has been put to the Portfolio Holder for Transport for him to agree to make it the subject of a "resolution" which is necessary before the officers can draw up a scheme to brief consultants and before a detailed proposal can be put before the Council. What is not clear is where the funding is coming from. There are very few private frontagers to share the costs. As it seems that Bromley and Transport for London have initiated the idea to improve bus/rail links, perhaps they will pay!

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Martins Hill / Queen's Mead & Ravensbourne River In May we received a letter from the Friends of Bromley's Parks and Gardens telling us about their project to enhance the heritage and environmental value of Queen's Mead, Martins Hill and sections of the river running through the area. Funding would come from the Heritage Lottery Fund - Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The letter invited us to become "partners" in the scheme. That led us to attend a meeting where both Bromley and the Environment Agency were present. It became clear that both were behind the proposals and would support them, both financially and in kind. As a result of that meeting we asked Jeff Royce, the secretary of the Friends, to attend our next Members' Meeting to make a presentation and answer any questions from the members present. Following Mr Royce's departure the matter was discussed and it was unanimously agreed that we should become partners.

At this stage the Friends are working up the paperwork to make the necessary pre-application submission to the Lottery fund. If accepted the application for a sum to cover the cost of a feasibility study would follow. If that is accepted a grant for carrying out the work could be made. The aim would be to keep the total cost of the work below £1,000,000 as up to this amount the "match funding" is only 10%. (It would be 25% if above £1m) With both Bromley and the Environment Agency on board most of the cash element of the 10% would come from them. The rest would be in kind which is where we would come in by helping to distribute leaflets and raising local public awareness etc.

BECKENHAM PLACE PARK

Back in January we reported that Lewisham had decided to employ two highly regarded consultants to report on reducing the golf course, improving the Stable Block / Homesteads, the various lodges and produce a new Master Plan.

Seven months later a representative from the Society was invited to a meeting outlining the present situation. The Consultants had prepared a report that gave 3 or 4 options for reducing the present 18 hole golf course to nine and included proper practice holes. They also proposed the re-siting of the car park in front of the Mansion to a position nearer the entrance gate and Homesteads. No grassland nor woodland proposals were included nor were there any specific proposals for converting the Stable/ Homestead buildings to accommodate the golf management / shop, club rooms, café / bar or visitor centre studies / shop.

It was emphasised that none of these suggestions were written in stone and that full public consultation would follow later this year. The provisional time-scale was: first application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2009 with the second following a year later. Hopefully before the pot runs dry because of the London Olympics.

Although not up for discussion at the meeting, it was clear the Lewisham want to off-load the Mansion (as they cannot afford to renovate it) and will, at some time in the future be exploring the open market