

Hackney Wick Fish Island | Cultural Interest Group

Minutes of the meeting on Friday 11th March 2016
Held at: Number 90, Main Yard

“Working together to establish a permanent, sustainable, creative economy in Hackney Wick and Fish Island”

In attendance:

Gill Wildman (Plot London/Upstarter) **Meeting Chair **
Sven Muendner (Wickside)
William Chamberlain (Creative Wick/Unit-APD)
Richard Brown (Brown Urbanism/Affordable Wick/Unit-APD)
Cllr Nick Sharman (LB Hackney)
Chris Bowden (Navigus Planning)
Mel Allison (East Wick and Sweetwater)
Victoria Stonebridge (LLDC)
Leanne Hoogwaerts (Foundation for Future London)
Ewout Vandeweghe (Stockwool)
Matthieu Rogers (LB Hackney)
Ben Hobart (Currell)
Anne Currell (Currell)
Edwina Northcott (LSH Spaces)
Sas Stewart (LSH Events)
Lars Andreas Pettersson (Flinkable)
Michael Spinks (Essex Flour & Grain)
Adrian (Crate Brewery)
Fiona Sibley (Unit-APD)
Alessandro (Douglas and King)
Martin King (Douglas and King)
Stuart (Economy of Hours)
Nimrod Vardi (Arbeit)
John Johnson (UCL)
Rishin Pasnakar (Omega Movement)
Hui Thoh (Business start-up)
Ozlem Edizel (Middlesex University)
Stef Ville (Shapes)
Paul Baynton (90 Main Yard)
Tim Lang (90 Main Yard)
Remi Landaz (90 Main Yard)
Dean (90 Main Yard)
Lewis

1. Central Books (Martin King)

- Architects appointed and presenting the development plans for 99 Wallis Rd (Central Books) today are Douglas and King Associates
- Planning on a ground floor cafe / bar / microbrewery facing onto the new public square adjacent (being designed by another architect (Stock Wool for David Silk). Creating co-working space on upper floors to suit micro businesses, small businesses and start-ups. Will act as more of an accessible community space rather than have a specific focus on nightlife etc
- Brought along some boards with designs showing layouts and some basic design elements. The building is locally listed so will be using pods in order to make minimal changes to the existing building
- *Q: detail on the cost of affordable workspace rents?*
No information on this commerciality available. Research by JLL shows there is a very high demand for small business spaces in the area. Asked dates for planning will be provided following the meeting to include in the minutes (not yet received).

2. Currells Estate Agents (Anne Currell)

- Anne gave introduction to her ongoing involvement with HWFI. Has lived in Hackney for 30 years, started their family business in 1990
- Their approach has been looking at HWFI as a whole; they have developed a model of the area and invite all to come have a look, it has been successful platform for engagement with LLDC, planners & developers and will be located at the office in HWFI when it opens. Currell have a passion for arts and creative industries, for example they have a Grayson Perry tapestry in London Fields branch and welcome those that would like to view it.

Q: there is an ongoing 'tsunami' of property price increases, and asks how do we manage the escalating rents and property prices in HWFI?

Agrees that this is an issue, especially with the amount required for deposits, in addition to the issues around the supply and demand, building labour crisis etc. Unfortunately no suggestions on how to solve this are available at the moment, this is a big topic for debate across the whole of London and the South East

- Nick Sharman stated that he thinks rent control, affordable workspace and housing is needed. Added that there is little to no affordable housing planned within the Hackney Wick Neighbourhood Centre. He noted that developers are paying too much for land and this leads onto issues of viability.

Q: which developers they are currently working with in the HWFI area?

Discussions ongoing between Currell and the Aitch Group

Q: what kind of customers are interested in the properties within the area and if they will be looking to market properties abroad?

Looks to sell locally where possible. Currently don't feel like HWFI will appeal especially to international buyers, however the demographic will meet the general London market so will include some international clients, likely to be already in UK

Q: have Currell been involved with any permitted development from office to housing, in relation to planning policy changes?

Not so far, mainly dealing with new build properties in the area.

3. Omega Movement (Rishin Paonaskar)

- Omega Movement are a local group promoting healthy exercise, movement and lifestyles (Yoga / pilates / nutrition etc) . They offer affordable classes, not many gyms in the area. Cost of classes approx £10 standard, reduced £5 for people on benefits, students, children. Reduced rates are supplemented from costs of corporate classes and events
- Rishin noted that rent in the area is going through the roof. For example some spaces last year were £10 per hour, now £30-£40 per hour. Currently working within Stour Space, Shapes, 90 Main Yard, Hub 67, Swan Wharf. Offering a range of classes, physiotherapist, meditation, nutrition and tai chi. Specialist pregnancy classes, mum and babies yoga etc
- They partner with community spaces to provide classes for people in the area that need support. Inviting local businesses interested in becoming involved to get in touch. Always looking for new ways to work <http://www.omegamovement.co.uk/>

4. Queens Yard (Alan Peacock – Stock Wool)

- Public consultation event a few weeks ago held at The White Building, same materials being shown today. Workspace and studio space, housing. 7 units within the yard ranging 150-170m2.No net loss of unit space. 116 residential units 4500sq meters (theatre 2000) No affordable housing
- Theatre will only be submitted as outline and not detailed at this stage. Will be running a competition for the design of this, going out to appoint an architect. Looking to bring in a theatre specialist for this design and in dialogue with The Yard re: requirements, budget, operations etc

Q: how can you design detailed buildings if there is going to be no detail around the design of the theatre - is it really an integral part of the development? Will it actually ever be built?

The plot will be assigned and the detail filled in as further study has been completed. All tenants are involved with the development planning. Approx 2 years before anything starts on site

Q: who will actually build the scheme?

Pearl and Coutts are landowner and the development will be contracted. Richard Brown referenced Neptune Wharf and the Block A community space / affordable workspace allocation that was lost in the same way with the planning applications being submitted separately. Victoria (LLDC) assures that conversations are ongoing and proposals are being developed between Pearl & Coutts and The Yard

Q: request for further information on plans for the waterfront – specifically where the cheeky tiki building is at the moment.

Ground floor will be employment / retail. One key part of the plan is to open up the canal side for access by the community and public

Q: around the rent affordability across the development and HW FI Neighbourhood Centre? Has been discussed at the LLDC board yesterday, has changed from £8 per square foot?

Victoria will find out and report back. Will also added that IDM properties are developing 415 Wick Lane, why was an application by Gavin Turk turned down? Victoria to follow up with the planning team at LLDC.

5. Font workshop (Sven Muendner)

- Font design workshop following this meeting for Wickside, Sven presented the development at the last meeting. They are keen to emphasise and work with the rich history in the area. Intending to bring the fonts back to life by updating / reassembling an old local font to create a new one, giving it back to the community for use locally.

6. Pitching Masterclass (Gill Wildman (Upstarter) / William Chamberlain (Creative Wick))

- Update following on from the info provided at the last CIG meeting. This is a capacity building workshop to develop pitching skills for all creative practitioners. Held at the White Building next Friday 18 March, already 41 people signed-up and some spaces available
- The next session will be based on branding. Funding would be very welcome, huge demand for small business / start-up / entrepreneur support in the local area.

7. Towpath safety (William Chamberlain)

- Lots of towpath safety issues at the moment, there was an attempted rape a few weeks ago, lucky escape by a local resident.
- Unfortunately TfL and Canals & Rivers Trust are not taking responsibility or providing support for these issues. Asked if LLDC / Tower Hamlets could help – Victoria (LLDC) will follow-up within LLDC to see if there is anything that they could do to assist.

8. Creative Wick Film School

- This is a pilot project funded by Wick Award and Open Vizor and will be held at Hub 67 starting 12th April with weekly classes taking place over a 6 week period. The programme aims are to teach 12 local young people how to make a short film and boost confidence, widen horizons of local young people and build professional and mentoring relationships with the creative sector and the surrounding residential communities.
- Open Vizor are also involved with the project to provide screening opportunities and the finished short films will be screened as part of the Food for Films programme at Hub 67. There might also be an opportunity to show the films at the Hackney Wicked festival in 2016. Please see the attached flyer.

9. AOB

- Canal & River Trust / LLDC restoring Carpenters Lock. Currently closed Recruiting for a Heritage Advisor, look at CRT. Old River Lee / River Lee access. The job specification will be circulated to the CIG mailing list.
- Kevin Headley, the well-known local Big Issue seller and usually at the bottom of the Westbound ramp on a Thursday, has a spoken word gig at Grow this evening and all invited to go along to show support.

Lastly, Graeme Evans from Middlesex University Hydrocitizenship Project thought that you might be interested in this paper by Juliet Davis. The paper is concerned with issues of urban change in areas of London that have become the focus of regeneration strategies predicated on accommodating growth and development within existing city boundaries. Its focus is on part of the Lower Lea Valley in East London which, since the *London Plan* of 2004, has been identified as an 'Opportunity Area' for major development and includes the site of the 2012 Olympic Games, and particularly Hackney Wick.
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02665433.2015.1127180>

The next meeting is on Friday 8th April at Royal Connections, Fish Island.