Minutes of the Community Relations Council ("CRC") Meeting
October 24, 2017, 6:30pm
Lowell School Berkeley Library
Minutes Prepared by Neighbors (pursuant to agreement with Lowell)

In attendance:

- Wesley Bizzell
- Manny Pastroich
- Joe McQueeney
- Lizzie Sadoff
- Wendell Hughes
- Sharon Giles
- Goldia Hodgdon
- John Hodgdon
- Cynthiana Lightfoot
- Columbus Giles
- Chris Ginter
- Marcie Bane
- Ashley Sharp

Fraser Site

- Lowell stated that plans have been submitted to the city for a permit. The approval process could take a minimum of three months.
- The work being done on the Fraser site does not involve any new structures. It involves leaving the site as a combination grass field and parking area, but reconfiguring the parking area so that it is parallel to Kalmia Road. The area that is now a parking lot will become grass.
- Lowell stated the work being done on the Fraser site is work it requested in Plan B, which Lowell submitted to (and was approved by) the Zoning Commission.
- Lowell expects to start construction in the late winter or spring time frame.
- Neighbors asked Lowell about its interpretation of Plan B; specifically, the types of trees Lowell intended to plant other than Maple trees. Lowell stated that Plan B does not specify the type of plantings that should be installed between the Maple trees planted along the property line between Lowell's property and neighboring properties. Neighbors stated that the Plan provides for a 10 ft. buffer between Lowell's property and neighboring properties and that the 10 ft. buffer should be planted with some type of trees, in addition to the Maple trees, that will serve as a noise buffer and mitigate or reduce the noise from the playground for those properties that back-up to the playground.
- The neighbors stated their concern is that whatever is placed in the 10 ft. buffer should be sufficient to mitigate or reduce the noise from the playground. The neighbors explained that the Fraser building, which previously served as a noise buffer, has been torn down so they are experiencing considerably more noise now and Lowell students are not even

playing on the Fraser site playground yet. The concern is that when the students start playing on the Fraser site playground, there will be even more noise, so the plantings in the buffer are important to mitigate or reduce the noise from the Fraser site playground backing up to their property.

- Neighbors stated there are evergreen trees, such as a Leyland Cypress, that can be used to reduce or mitigate the noise. The Maple trees alone are not sufficient because even if they provide some buffer in the spring or summer, that is not true in other parts of the year, such as the fall, when they lose their leaves because they are deciduous trees. Therefore, the trees surrounding the maples are even more vital in terms of their thickness – such as a larger evergreen tree – because they will help reduce noise. Neighbors noted the buffer is 10 ft. wide so the trees can be staggered and do not have to be planted next to the Maple trees.
- Lowell said it will not consider Leyland Cypress trees under any circumstances and will not put them on their property because they are non-native and do not belong around here.
- Neighbors stated that Lowell's interpretation of the Plan is different than theirs. Although the dispute cannot be resolved at the meeting, they are willing to discuss it with Lowell.
- Some neighbors were told that if noise bothers them, then they should move. There was an objection to this statement, noting that neighbors were here first; that neighbors work with Lowell and have made concessions; that Lowell is bringing changes to an established neighborhood that the community is absorbing; and that neighbors should not be told to move. There was another objection, noting that when neighbors purchased their home, Lowell had promised the Zoning Commission that it would not tear down the Fraser Building. If neighbors had had any idea that Lowell would retract its promise and they would end up with a playground in their backyard, then they would not have purchased the property. At the time they purchased their property, the neighbors were not concerned or worried about a playground in their backyard because of Lowell's promise to the Zoning Commission. Now to say that Lowell has changed its mind about tearing down the building and you just have to put up with the noise or move is extremely unfair.
- A neighbor stated that because there is a difference in interpretation regarding vegetation to be planted on the Fraser site, Lowell and neighbors should work together toward reaching a consensus about plantings on the site, particularly since it was indicated at the Zoning Commission meetings she attended that there should be some type of buffer along with the trees. The neighbor suggested Lowell and neighbors should work in good faith and look at options and concerns being raised by neighbors.

Traffic Management and Signage

- After the September 2017 CRC meeting, a neighbor contacted Terry Lynch, who visited the site and made a number of observations and recommendations about traffic and signage which were shared with Lowell, including additional school zone signage and no parking signage.
- A neighbor suggested the installation of speed bumps before and after the turn onto 17th Street. A left turn light for traffic turning from Kalmia onto 16th St. also was suggested.

- A neighbor noted there still are issues with Lowell's compliance with the traffic management section of the Neighborhood Agreement, giving specific examples of Lowell's failure to comply (such as no traffic management and parent parking on Kalmia Road) on certain dates. The neighbor again asked Lowell for compliance with the Neighborhood Agreement.

Minutes for CRC Meetings

- At the September 2017 CRC meeting, Lowell proposed maintaining two sets of minutes – one set of minutes maintained by Lowell and one set of minutes maintained by the neighbors. The two sets of minutes would be exchanged but not edited or changed, and both sets of minutes would be filed with the Zoning Commission as required. A neighbor stated that neighbors should have access to information about school activity that might impact them as soon as possible, and proposed a timetable for the exchange of CRC minutes and the posting of CRC minutes on Lowell's website. After discussion, Lowell and neighbors agreed as follows:
    - October 24, 2017 CRC Minutes – Lowell and the neighbors will exchange minutes 3 weeks after the CRC meeting by 6 p.m., and Lowell will post both sets of minutes, unchanged, on its website as soon as practicable but no later than one week after the exchange.
    - September 7, 2017 CRC Minutes – Lowell and the neighbors will exchange these minutes on the same terms, same day, and same time as the October 2017 CRC minutes.
    - February 21, 2017 CRC Minutes – These minutes were approved at the May 23, 2017 CRC meeting but have not been posted on Lowell's website. Lowell agreed to post the February 2017 CRC minutes, unchanged, within one week of the October 24, 2017 CRC meeting.
    - May 2017 CRC Minutes – Lowell will use the draft it circulated on June 28, 2017 for its set of minutes. The neighbors will put their redlined response to Lowell's draft in final form, and that will serve as their version of the minutes. When Lowell receives the neighbor's version of the minutes, it will post both sets of minutes, unchanged, on its website within one week.
    - Lowell stated that the minutes will not be uploaded to its website in a piecemeal fashion; rather, both sets of minutes will be uploaded to its website at the same time.

Next Meeting

- Lowell stated it will propose some dates for meetings in 2018. There was discussion that Lowell should circulate a doodle poll to survey committee members on meeting dates that are mutually agreeable and convenient.