

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



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Minutes of Meeting on 2 November 2004:

CRYSTAL PALACE & NORWOOD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
HELD AT 1ST FLOOR, LORENZO'S RESTAURANT, WESTOW HILL

1. Present

Honorary Chairman - James Slattery-Kavanagh - Quotes
Honorary Secretary - Lucy Smith - MyMatiz.com
Honorary Membership Secretary - Mary Kennedy - The Tanning Shop
Honorary Solicitor - Geoff Harding - Bennett Welch
Sharon Parry Baldwin - Town Centre Manager
Suzanne Elkin - Crystal Palace Community Association
Iain Sim - London Borough of Croydon
Mark Allen - Allen's Florists of Distinction
Frank Lissimore - Amphlett Lissimore
Kevin Carleton-Reeves - Transport Consultant
Chris Brody - CBrody.com
Peter Louka
Terry Marks - 2 Bob Café

2. Apologies

Honorary Treasurer - Peter Runacres - Thornton Springer
Geoffrey Gibbs - Gibsons

3. Minutes of previous meeting

Seventeen people attended last month's meeting and there was some very healthy discussion. This is the second largest turnout since records started in 1999. The minutes were proposed by Kevin Carleton-Reeves and seconded by Mary Kennedy.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Guest Speaker - Iain Sim, Divisional Director (Urban Regeneration), Planning and Transportation, London Borough of Croydon
Iain gave an update on the one way system. The meeting of the triangle management committee won't be until the 8th November. A report of traffic and environment can then be circulated to interested parties. There are currently 52 parking bays around the triangle and nine loading bays. One proposal is to increase the bays and the stay time. There are wardens currently enforcing parking but Iain was unsure as to how the CCTV was operating.

Monitoring the traffic impact has been carried out using money from Transport for London. The turning bans were looked at and it was found there was over 90% compliance. There is no great difference in the number of pedestrians on the triangle. The traffic volumes before the one way system were 47,309 and after implementation 39,020. This is a 17.5% decrease in volume. Speeding has been found but there is greater compliance since the one way system was introduced. Vehicles are moving more freely round the triangle although there is congestion at some points in the day, particularly at Gipsy and Central Hills. Rat running has increased in Hermitage Road, Harold Road and Auckland Road. According to statistics there were 19 accidents in 2000 and 8 in 2003. Approximately the same number of vacant number of shop fronts existed before and after the one way system. There has been a shift from shops to restaurants. The Chairman said vacancy rates were a poor measure because businesses can still be surviving but doing badly. The emergency services are happy with the system, bus operators also say they have managed to keep the timetable more consistent. Cycling is a bone of contention as there are no dedicated cycle lanes.

Iain has three recommendations to put to the meeting on the 8th November:

- Concerns about pedestrian safety, therefore propose a pavement build out on Central Hill and Gipsy Hill to deter the illegal left turns. This would need Lambeth Council's approval.
- Two green men crossings on Westow Street and Gipsy Hill. Looking at a green man crossing between the Hollybush public house and the Tanning Shop, but there are concerns about the extent of the queuing in Central Hill.
- Increase on street parking, particularly around lunchtimes.

The Chairman pointed out that every illegal left turner would come into contact with pedestrians as that is the only time people cross during the green man phase. Many places along the triangle had double yellow lines that were excessive. He did not think a pedestrian build out would help matters and the Chamber's proposal was to make a safe crossing and he asked Iain to reconsider this proposal. Concrete blocks were suggested as an alternative to digging up the pavement for the buildout. Terry said there were build ups along the Crystal Palace Parade, Church Hill and Central Hill and that cars turning left out of Jasper Road and then trying to manoeuvre into the right hand lane were blocking the left hand lane on Westow Hill. The second problem was the right hand side of the Hollybush, because if you're turning right anyone waiting to go straight on can't. There are no 'no left turn' signs as you come out of many of the side roads. The triangle effectively runs as one lane so you might as well use the other for parking. Terry said the one way system had cost him 50% of his business because no one will come from Penge or Anerley. The Chairman asked if there was an opportunity for traders in location to feedback formally to the Council. There is a blockage at the Bingo hall where buses are pulled up and cars are on the other side. The point was made that traffic enforcement should be fair for everyone, both day and night traders. Kevin said that the condition of the pavements should be looked into and Croydon needs to be tougher on the utility companies that dig them up. Also the original plans had various trees and planters which never materialised. There are also drainage problems in two places (one being The Tanning Shop). Direction signage is spelt wrong in places (Gypsy instead of Gipsy). Iain thanked the Chamber for their comments and suggestions. He said he would follow up the warden enforcement issue and anyone who wanted to could write in to him was more than welcome. Unfortunately he did not have the staff to do individual interviews or a walkabout of the area. He would consider extending the yellow box junction at Gipsy Hill/Central Hill, closing off Jasper Road, additional parking spaces and trees. He has a budget of £100,000. If approvals are made on the 8 November then changes will take place as soon as staff and contractors can be organised. Iain will return at the next full meeting of the Chamber which is scheduled for Tuesday 1st February 2005.

6. Chairman's Review

6.1 Membership and Finances

Membership was increasing and several new members had joined the Chamber recently.

6.2 Member's Directory / Diary

A mailshot has been circulated to members and the diary will go ahead if enough interest is shown.

6.3 Post Office Closure and Relocation

Postponed because telephones are not ready in time. The post office is closing on the 3rd November and opening on Friday 5th November opposite Safeways. There will be more counters. The old post office site will be an extension of the newsagents.

6.4 Christmas Party

This will take place on Tuesday 7th December priced at £15 for a three course meal. RSVP as soon as you are able.

6.5 Top site proposal by Ray Hall

Ray Hall has sent his proposal in the post and it was passed round for people to look at. It was agreed that the Chamber was not a platform for all the different people's proposals for the top site but that if Ray particularly wanted to talk about his then he was welcome to come to a Chamber meeting. The 4th December is the next Nigel Westaway meeting for an update on what is going on.

7. CCTV: Ticket Collection or Crime Prevention?

In the Tanning Shop one member of staff was held up by a knife and her handbag stolen. The police said they did not have access to the CCTV footage. Sharon said the police do have access and was shocked to hear Lambeth police say this. The CCTV is Croydon based and perhaps Lambeth and Bromley officers know it exists but it would be more difficult for them to get access to the tapes. She said the CCTV would only work effectively if people had the radio system. She has 12 radios which Croydon can finance from six months to a year. Norman Whalley, Head of CCTV can come and speak at a Chamber meeting. He would be able to clarify CCTV usage.

8. Any Other Business

Sharon has booked the Christmas lights. They will be put up on the 15th November and will be switched on on 27th November. They cost £3000 and are as good as or better than last years. The CPCA are helping with raffle tickets. Prizes are £100 Christmas hamper, pantomime tickets etc. The Queen's Hotel have offered £500 sponsorship. The Chairman declined Sharon's invitation to approach traders for contributions. Sharon said there has been a scrutiny of district centres and Sharon will be making recommendations about boundary difficulties in the Crystal Palace area. Geoff Gibbs has sent in a local guide for North London suggesting we might want to do something similar. A Bromley based Women's Business Club (The Women's Company) has asked the Chairman to see if anyone is interested in going. Contact the Chairman if you are interested. Lambeth have spent £10,000 on making the space at the back of the library into parking. Cleaning has started and CCTV will go in once it opens.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 1 February 2005 at 7pm, Lorenzo's Restaurant (First Tuesday in the Month)