

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



www.norwoodchamber.org.uk

For more information about the chamber, its objectives, minutes of the last meeting, copies of our newsletter and the opportunity to join the mailing list visit www.norwoodchamber.org.uk

Minutes of Meeting on 4 October 2005:

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 Solicitor - Geoffrey Harding - Bennett Welch
Sharon Parry Baldwin - Town Centre Manager
Mervyn Hing - Silk Route Dry Cleaners
Lorenzo Nargi - Lorenzo
Geoffrey Gibbs - Gibsons
Kevin Carleton-Reeves - Transport Consultant
Dr Nigel G Harris - The Railway Consultancy Ltd
Ray Hall - People and Places International
John Payne - Crystal Palace Community Association
Peter Austin - The Norwood Society

2. Apologies

Honorary Treasurer - Peter Runacres - Thornton Springer
Mark Rolfe - Rolfe and Jones

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were proposed by Kevin Carleton-Reeves and seconded by Sharon Parry Baldwin.

4. Matters arising

Flowers for Autumn will be planted in two weeks time. The hanging baskets are on order. The licence has been agreed for the Christmas lights and Sharon Baldwin is seeking raffle prizes. On Sunday 23rd October the Phoenix Centre are holding a market, Table Top Sale and grand raffle.

5. Chairman's Review

5.1 Membership and Finances

Another new member has joined the chamber this month. The chairman was pleased to welcome Rolfe and Jones Estate Agents to the chamber, although unfortunately they had given their apologies for tonight's meeting. There had been an enquiry for membership from Winkworths estate agents. Current circulation on the mailing list is 45.

5.2 Committee Vacancies

There is now a vacancy for the position of Honorary Secretary. Lucy Smith stepped down from the post of Honorary Secretary at the last meeting. The chairman thanked Lucy for all the time and hard work she had put in.

The chairman announced his decision to step down from the chamber at the end of the meeting because he will soon be moving out of the area. He wished to step down now to ensure a smooth handover to the future chairman. In the meantime, the committee can co-opt any member to replace the chairman in his place, and then elect the new chairman at the AGM. The chairman was confident that the Chamber would carry on because the constitution is sorted out and the finances have been worked through. There are some big topics coming up in the local area that the new chairman could get stuck into. All expressed dismay that the chairman was stepping down but thanked him for the work he had put into the chamber.

Sharon said it would be important who associated with the chamber in terms of big business. There was some discussion over who might be interested in the position of chairman. Chris Woods (editor of Palace People) could be approached to do a piece on the Chamber and about the current chairman and what he has achieved and advertise the fact that a new chairman is needed.

6. Closure of Morrisons (7.40pm)

There has been no official press release from Morrisons. They have given notice to their stores of a 90 day consultation process. The store will be closed on 16th December unless a buyer can be found. Many staff have already transferred to other stores. Cllr Ian Payne and Sharon Baldwin and Legal & General (freeholders of the site) met with Morrisons to find out what is going on. As the planning controlling body they wanted to be involved and find out what the impact would be on local people. There has been a raise in the rents and Morrisons have been trying to play on this. The management have never had a refit date for rebranding and the site is one of a few leased sites. Many customers have blamed the staff and new manager for the downfall of the area, so it has not been a pleasant experience for them.

The agents have not been told of any date for the sale. Tesco cannot buy the site as there is a limit on the number of Tescos that can be placed in any one area. Lidl's and Somerfield have been to look at the site. The lease is for 30 years and expires in 2014 and is subject to a five year rent review. Sharon has asked that the car park be left open for public use.

The Chair said a poll had been carried out on Virtual Norwood (www.virtualnorwood.com) and people wanted a Waitrose but thought they were likely to get a Somerfield. People said they were more likely to do more shopping online or in other areas and 35% were more likely to use existing local shops. A new Budgens will be opening shortly. The footfall for Morrisons is huge and has a major impact on the area. The area and local authority should lobby Legal & General.

At present Legal & General have not been given notice by Morrisons that they intend to close. Most freeholders are looking for multi-use but they aren't looking at that yet. Until Morrisons have formally registered their intent the local people are in limbo. Sharon said she had heard nothing about a rumour that Iceland are to move out of the area but they have a continuous recruitment problem.

7. Redevelopment of Crystal Palace Park (8.00pm)

The Westaway consultation process is coming to an end. LDA said they have been consulting for 18 months with the local community. There are a number of proposals and it is only right that they are all put on the table. The National Sports Centre has almost been agreed. Another proposal is that there should be a Crystal Palace in Crystal Palace (albeit a scaled down version). There will be a display about the redevelopments on 25th Oct at the bottom of the park and on the 27th October at the top of the park and roving display in Penge, Norwood, Upper Norwood and Sydenham.

The caravan park had a lease until 2019, but LDA said they would be compulsory purchasing the site and moving the caravan park to two new sites in Stratford and Croydon. That has cost £2 million but without any receipts for the sale of the land. The Queen's Hotel cannot sustain the number of bedrooms they have so there is the possibility of a smaller hotel and some luxury flats. The CPCA withdrew from the Westaway process because many assurances on building houses had been broken. They feel the level of intervention on the park will be too great. Once the principal is established, selling off parkland could occur all over London. Sharon said that opportunities like the park redevelopment only came around once and that if the local people didn't grab it then the area would deteriorate. All asked Sharon to ask the question about coordinating developments eg. East London line, Tramlink, National Sports Centre in order to minimise disruption to local businesses. There will be a UNIT meeting on 26 October. Geoffrey Harding is trying to get someone from the LDA to deal with all the questions. UNIT is asking so that everyone has something accurate that we can all discuss.

Ray Hall gave a synopsis of his proposal for the park, The Crystal Palace World Of Sport, which would look like the former Crystal Palace building and be dedicated to sport history. It would also be a conference venue and include sports facilities.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 A leaflet was passed round about a consultation meeting at the Phoenix Centre on life coaching.

8.2 Nicola Austen is offering free proof reading facilities. Call Nicola on 020 8699 9552 or email njausten@hotmail.com

8.3 An email has been received from Anna Welch from the Government Office for London who would like to meet with the Chamber.

8.4 Steven Govier (a prospective candidate for a councillor) would like to come and talk to the Chamber about crime prevention. The Chamber said that if they invited him they would have to invite all candidates.

8.5 March 2006 - TFL come out publicly for the trams consultation. The trams would not come before 2013.

8.6 People queried where the Safer Neighbourhood Team were as they are supposed to start on the 10th. Southwark will not join the scheme.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

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