

Ordinance to ~~create~~recognize Neighborhood ~~Area~~Advisory Groups

Be it ordained by the Framingham Council, as follows:

SECTION 1.

Article II of the Framingham Ordinances is hereby amended by adding at the end thereof the following new section:

Section 33: Neighborhood ~~Area~~Advisory Groups

33.1: Purpose

Our neighborhoods ~~—places of worship— homes and activities,~~ small businesses ~~and,~~ schools and recreational facilities, and places of worship -- connect neighbors together to build a community. It is ~~the~~these activities, associations and places that connect us ~~that~~and gives each neighborhood its own identity and history. Together, these diverse neighborhoods are pieces of our community fabric, ~~and all~~ woven together by our common interests and values.

The purpose of the Neighborhood Advisory Groups (Groups) ~~will~~is to assist each neighborhood in strengthening the bonds of its neighbors, defining its unique identity, and building a sense of community by harnessing ~~our neighbors' neighborhood~~ expertise, experience, and energy. These Groups will expand self-government and give our neighborhoods a louder voice ~~to preserve and promote neighborhoods, essential to in~~ preserving and promoting a healthy, vibrant, and thriving community ~~and will expand self governance to our neighborhoods.~~

33.2: Neighborhood Areas

33.2.1 Establishment

The council may, upon petition of area ~~voters~~residents, establish one or more neighborhood areas to represent or provide services that the Neighborhood ~~Area~~Advisory Group (Group) is authorized to undertake, ~~provided that the council shall not authorize more than one for any given area of Framingham:~~

(a) A petition may be submitted to the council requesting the establishment of a Neighborhood ~~area~~Advisory Group. The petition must be signed by ~~20~~five (5) percent of the registered voters residing in the area, but not fewer than ~~400~~150 such residents. The petition shall describe the general territorial boundaries of the proposed service area, and the Group's name, ~~and shall indicate the size of the Neighborhood Area Group.~~

(b) Upon receipt of the petition, the council shall submit the petition for verification of signatures to the City Clerk and, within 30 days following verification, the council shall hold a public hearing on the question of whether or not the requested neighborhood area shall be established. The hearing may be adjourned from time to time but shall be completed within 60 days of its commencement.

(c) Within 30 days following the public hearing, the council shall ~~by resolution~~ approve or disapprove the establishment of the requested neighborhood area.

~~(d) A resolution approving the creation of the neighborhood area~~(d) Approval of a Neighborhood Advisory Group may contain amendments or modifications of the area's boundaries, functions, or the size of the Neighborhood ~~area~~Advisory Group as set forth in the petition.

~~(e) A petition may include a request to the council to waive any, some, or all of the requirements of a Neighborhood Advisory Group enumerated below with the written reasons for each said request.~~

33.2.2 Boundary Changes

The council may, on the initiative of the council or pursuant to a request from a Neighborhood ~~area~~Advisory Group accompanied by a petition signed by at least ~~20~~five (5) per cent of the registered voters residing in the area to be added or deleted, enlarge, modify, diminish or otherwise alter the boundaries of any existing neighborhood area following the procedures set forth in subsections (b) to (d), inclusive, of section 33.2.1 above.

33.2.3 Considerations in Setting Boundaries

~~In establishing Residents petitioning to establish neighborhood area boundaries and determining those services to be undertaken by a Group, the council shall study and take into considerations~~should consider, but not be limited to, the following:

(i) the extent to which the area constitutes a neighborhood with common concerns and a capacity for local neighborhood initiative, leadership and decision making with respect to city government;

(ii) city agency authority and resources which may appropriately be needed;

(iii) population density, distribution and growth potential within a neighborhood area to assure that its boundaries reflect the most effective territory for local participation and control; and

(iv) citizen access to, control of and participation in neighborhood area activities and functions.

33.2.4 Dissolution of a Neighborhood Area

(a) The council may, after a public hearing, dissolve a neighborhood area on the initiative of the council or pursuant to a petition signed by at least ~~20~~five (5) per cent of the registered voters living within the neighborhood area; and

(b) The council shall give notice, in a newspaper of general circulation covering the neighborhood area, of its intention to hold a public hearing on a proposed dissolution. The notice shall be given not less than 14 days before the date of the public hearing.

Section 3: Neighborhood AreaAdvisory Groups

33.3.1 Election;~~Vacancies~~

(a) A Neighborhood AreaAdvisory Group (Group) shall be ~~duly organized as~~ a non-profit entity with ~~an 11 to 19 member executive committee, with~~ membership open to

all residents of and local businesses in the neighborhood area as set out in the Group's bylaws. While the Group may collect dues, ~~it is or in-kind services in lieu of dues from its members, dues shall~~ not be required to participate in ~~Group or vote at meetings and to vote on Group actions.~~ The Group's membership shall be open to all Framingham ~~voters residing~~ residents, property owners, and businesses within the neighborhood area. ~~The Group's composition shall reflect the demographic and geographic diversity of the service area.~~

(b) The Group's executive committee shall be elected at-large by and from voters residing in the neighborhood area at an annual meeting each year as stated in Group's bylaws. ~~The district councilor and district school committee member who represent any portion of the area included in a neighborhood area shall serve, ex officio with no power to vote, as members of the Group.~~

~~(c) A vacancy in the executive committee shall be filled by the Group by election at a duly posted meeting. Members so appointed shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term and until their successors are qualified.~~

33.3.2 Powers and Functions

A Neighborhood ~~Area~~ Advisory Group may exercise any powers and perform any functions within the neighborhood area expressly authorized by the council, which may include but not be limited to:

(i) represent neighborhood interests with the mayor, council, school committee, and multiple member bodies;

(ii) initiate self-help projects, such as supplemental refuse collection, beautification, minor street and sidewalk repair, establishment and maintenance of neighborhood community centers, street fairs, block parties, and festivals, community gardens, cultural activities, recreation and housing rehabilitation;

(iii) ~~acceptance of~~ accept funds from public and private sources;

(iv) advisory or delegated substantive authority or both, with respect to such programs as a community action program, urban renewal and other physical development programs, crime prevention, health services, and recreation;

~~(v)~~ evaluate impacts of and propose mitigation for local development or signage projects before local permitting authorities finalize approvals;

(vi) evaluate municipal services;

(vii) suggest sustainability strategies;

(viii) disseminate information through City lists and website;

(ix) propose traffic or parking improvements, including a resident parking sticker; and

(x) expenditure of monies to support neighborhood area projects.

33.3.3 ~~Compensation; Meetings;~~ By-Laws

~~(a) Members of a Group shall receive no compensation but may receive reimbursement of actual and necessary travel and other expenses incurred in performance of official duties.~~

~~(b)~~ A Group shall adopt ~~by-laws~~bylaws providing for the conduct of its business and the selection of a chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and clerk. Copies of the Group's by-laws shall be posted on the municipal bulletin board and made available to the public upon request.

~~(e)~~ A majority of the Group's executive committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but business should be transacted at a regular meeting whenever possible where all area residents are invited and have an equal vote. Each member entitled to vote shall have one vote.

~~(d) The Group shall adhere to the uniform procedures governing multiple member bodies in accordance with Article I, Section 7.~~ The Group shall keep a notification list and notify area residents of all meetings and decisions of the Group.

33.3.4 Annual Report

Each Group shall make an annual report of its activities to the mayor and council which shall be posted on the municipal bulletin board. The council shall annually convene all Groups.

33.3.5 ~~Financial Records~~

~~Each Group shall keep complete financial records which shall be subject to inspection and audit by city.~~

~~33.3.6~~ Meetings

The Group shall meet as necessary to carry out its duties, but in any year shall hold no fewer than six meetings, including an annual meeting.

SECTION 2.

Article II of the Framingham Ordinances is hereby amended by inserting at the end of Section 1 the following new subsection:

1.11 Neighborhood Advisory Groups

The mayor ~~shall annually~~may periodically assess the strengths, challenges, and needs of Neighborhood ~~Area~~Advisory Groups and make recommendations to the council for changes to ordinances and municipal services to create a neighborhood blueprint for Framingham. It will serve as our road map for promoting, preserving, and protecting our neighborhoods.

SECTION 3.

Article I of the Framingham Ordinances is hereby amended by inserting at the end thereof the following new section:

Section 6. Neighborhood Advisory Groups

6.1 Multiple member bodies and municipal officers shall provide advance notification of any municipal-related public works or utility project taking place or of a public hearing for a

license or permit sought within or adjacent to the Group's area. Multiple member bodies shall solicit mitigation plans from a Group for development projects within a Group's neighborhood area.

6.2 Multiple member bodies shall, upon the request by vote of a Group, make time on its agenda to hear the concerns and ideas of the Neighborhood AreaAdvisory Group.

6.23 Upon the request of a Neighborhood AreaAdvisory Group, multiple member bodies and municipal officers shallmay waive all necessary fees for permits and licenses, and provide technical and financial assistance, for said Groups to conduct an annual neighborhood block party. And municipal officers shall make reasonable accommodations during regular hours of operation for Groups to utilize public meeting spaces at no cost to the Group.

SECTION 4.

Severability

If any provision of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, then such provision shall be considered separately and apart from the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 35.

Effective Date

This ordinance shall take effect immediately.