

WABAN IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY

Our Village

Letter from Our President

Dear Neighbors,

The frost is starting to appear, and winter is slowly moving in. Yet the cold weather has not slowed down the Waban Improvement Society. We are sponsoring some great events this season, sure to keep you warm and cozy. There is a new twist this year to our annual Winterfun Tree Lighting and Sing-Along, so mark your calendars for December 3rd, and come and see for yourself.



In this issue, Waban's own Alderman Christine Samuelson has an update on the proposed parking meters in Waban Square. Read her article here and then log on to www.wabanimprovement.org and let us know if you would like to have a neighborhood meeting on the topic. We welcome your comments.

And we have a number of returning events for 2007. Plans are progressing for the Fourth Annual Progressive Dinner in March. We are already planning the Third Annual Waban Village Day and Second Annual Fun Run as a follow-on to our successful event this past May. Thanks to all the neighbors who came out to run and join in the fun. Make sure you sign up for the Second Annual Fun Run, sure to be more fun the second time around.

I wish you all a joyous and peaceful holiday season and hope to see you all at the Winterfun Tree Lighting and Sing-Along. Warm regards,

Theresa Fitzpatrick, *President*

'Waban Lights' Needs You!

The Waban Improvement Society strives each year to maintain a warm and family-friendly atmosphere in our village. In addition, we work to keep our green spaces clean and attractive to help beautify Waban.

This year, we invite you to help us in a new endeavor called "Waban Lights." We have engaged a professional outdoor lighting company to properly light our fabulous evergreen tree in the middle of Waban Square.

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Parking Meters Coming to Waban Square

By Christine Snow Samuelson, Newton Board of Aldermen, Ward 5

Waban is a busy village, and that's a good thing! But over the past 10 years, demand for parking in the square has increased due to changes in the businesses there. During that time, I have

received many concerns and complaints about the parking in Waban Square. These concerns have come from business owners, residents and visitors.

For example, I received a number of calls about the parking issues on Wyman Street, which is especially

affected by employees from the lower square who do not have parking. The short-term parking limit on Wyman is to facilitate customer access to businesses there, but many of the employees move their cars from spot to spot all day long. I have
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KEY DATES

- **Dec. 3, 2006**
4:00 pm
Waban Square
Waban Winterfun Tree Lighting and Sing-Along
- **March 24, 2007**
Progressive Dinner

Second Annual Waban Village Day and First Annual Waban Fun-Run



Held on May 21, the Second Annual Waban Village Day was a bright spot in the wettest spring season for decades. Though the weather was threatening at times, Waban residents and other guests gathered in Waban Square to enjoy world-class musical entertainment, children's rides, a petting zoo, cuisine from local restaurants and products from a selection of local vendors.

Waban Village Day was kicked off at 10:00 AM by the First Annual Waban Fun Run, a 5K walk-run-bike race that following the rolling hills of our village. More than 100 people of all ages participated in the race, which was organized by Natalie Tull Greene. Natalie was pleased with the turnout for the first-time event, and says she hopes to see more families and other residents participate this spring for the second annual Waban Fun Run.

With the Fun Run over, Waban Village Day swung into full gear by 11:00 AM. David Polansky delighted the young and young at heart with his light-hearted songs. Waltham native Tom Rudd's classic rock band Smilin' Jones entertained, with a rousing performance by keyboardist



and vocalist Ronnie Rizzo of Waban Salon. Rounding out the musical entertainment was the Metropolitan Boston Youth Jazz Project (MBYJP), created by veteran jazz musician and WIS board member Chris Pitts.

Children enjoyed the rides and the petting zoo, and families stretched out on the lawn of the Waban Branch Library to eat hamburgers and hot dogs cooked by WIS volunteers, while also sampling food from area restaurants. Everyone enjoyed mingling with neighbors and taking in the sights. Attendance at the Second Annual Waban Village Day was strong, and we hope the Third Annual event will be even more so. Vendors who would like to participate this spring, please email to Lauren.paul@comcast.net.
—Lauren Gibbons Paul,
Waban Village Day vendor liaison



Get Involved!

The Waban Improvement Society invites you to join your neighbors and lend a helping hand to one or more of our committees. Committees include events like Waban Village Day, gardening, the Waban oral history project, neighborhood advocacy and Welcome Neighbor. Please contact a WIS officer or board member to get involved today!

Visit www.wabanimprovement.org

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We welcome your calls and/or emails:

Don't forget to visit
www.wabanimprovement.org

Waban Sound Barrier Update

The Waban Sound Barrier Project received the go-ahead in June after the results of the Impact Evaluation showed there would be no significant effect to the wetlands or the conservation land that borders the proposed site. The funds are not yet in place; however,

state legislators and city officials maintain their support for this project and join local residents in their efforts to secure funding. For more information, please visit **www.wabansoundbarrier.com**— Sona Petrossian, neighborhood advocacy committee.

Newton Food Pantry Opens in Waban

This past April the Newton Food Pantry opened its doors at its new location in the basement of the Waban Branch Library. Volunteers donate their time there to organize and distribute non-perishable food items to local citizens. The new space offers much larger storage facilities than the previous location, as well as a pleasant space for

clients and staff to interact.

Donations of wholesome, sealed, non-perishable items are welcomed during the pantry's hours of operation, which are the first, second, fourth (and fifth when applicable) Wednesdays of the month from 1:30 to 3:30 PM and the Saturday of the third week each month from 12 to 1 PM.

Waban Lights (Cont.)

In past years, the WIS has arranged the tree lighting, but we think hiring a professional service to do it befits our landmark evergreen and is in keeping with the WIS mission to continually improve our village. To help cover the costs, the WIS will need to receive contributions from businesses and homeowners alike. Waban is our village and pride has never run deeper, especially after such runaway successes as the Second Annual Waban Village Day this past spring. Please join us and help "Waban Lights" by making a contribution to the project.

Everyone's hard work and planning will culminate in our annual Waban Winterfun Tree Lighting and Sing-along on Sunday, Dec. 3 at 4:00 PM with refreshments for all. We will sing carols around the tree and then enjoy the warmth of friends, neighbors and hot cider in the Waban Branch Library.

Please be a part of the ongoing renewal of Waban's celebrated spirit as a true neighborhood village, and enjoy the results with all of us! Please contribute online via PayPal at **www.wabanimprovement.org** or send in your donation via the enclosed dues membership envelope.

Sincerely,

Keith Munsell, board member and co-chair Waban Lights, and Sarah B. Gardella, co-chair Waban Lights

WIS Thanks Retirees

The Waban Improvement Society recognizes two longtime members who recently retired from their profession: Hookie Darrack, the former secretary, and Anne Stephans, the former merchant representative.

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Parking Meters (Cont.)

even gone to the bank when an employee was parked right out front! There is a Wyman Street petition before the Traffic Council that will be coming up some time over the next few months.

In the upper square, the employees do not use the private lot behind the shops as often as they should because of the condition of the lot and lack of maintenance. The landowner is responsible for the condition of the lot but is an absentee landlord and does not keep up the property.

The Board of Aldermen has voted to install parking meters in the square. For some, it was a matter of equity. There are meters in all the other villages. For me, it was also a matter of organizing the parking and making sure that the police department can effectively enforce the time limits. Not only will meters make enforcement easier, they will serve to protect pedestrians on the sidewalk beside the angled parking spaces on Beacon Street. This year alone there have been two instances of cars crossing the sidewalk and hitting the buildings. One of these incidents (the second one) involved a pedestrian who miraculously was NOT badly injured, but she did spend a day or two in the hospital for observation

and remains fairly traumatized to this day. Her dog was uninjured as well, but could have been killed. After the first accident this year, I urged the Public Works Department to install curb stops for the cars. They were in place at the time of the second accident. The meters will create a second barrier, serving as some protection between cars and pedestrians.

In an effort to address the employee parking issue, I tied the parking meter petition to improvements to the Waban Library parking lot. Employees have started parking there all day. However, if the lot were resurfaced and long-term meters were added it would greatly improve the situation. Parking meters will most likely not be installed anywhere in the square until next spring.

I recognize that change is hard, and we all have an interest in preserving the character of the square. I also have to look at what has already changed in the square and try to address the concerns of all the stakeholders. Having a thriving business center benefits us all. Waban Square has the same kinds of issues that are present in all of our village centers. Managing the parking demand and maximizing the access for customers of the businesses is a challenge but one that we aim to meet.