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The Committee for the Establishment of an Eruv
in Hendon and Golders Green

MINUTES

First Official Meeting of the Eruv Committee

Present: Brian Berenblut (Chair)
Sylvain Blumenfrucht
Michael Gillis
David Schreiber
Jerry Shatzkes

Rabbi Alan Kimche

Apologies were received from Laurence Begner

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Review

Rabbi Kimche reviewed the current situation, beginning with the first visit of Rabbi Shimon Eider, which took place the week after Succot. This included the visits to the Bet Din and various meetings with Rabbis and Lay Leaders, for example Frank Posen, Abba Duner and Willie Stern. Rabbi Pearlman, Alex Strom. In a nutshell, the position is that there is a large measure of sympathy from most quarters with the exception of Rabbi Feldman and Rabbi Roberts. The general view at the moment is that Rabbi Feldman is not open to persuasion, and thus no further action will be taken with Rabbi Feldman. However, it was considered that Rabbi Roberts might be open to persuasion and that it might be useful to elicit the help of a suitable member of his community, for example Noach Schwartz or Steven Greenman. In the end it was decided that Noach Schwartz should be approached.

Rabbi Kimche added in some information which was new to the committee. He had a meeting with Rabbi Chaim Halpern who, being extremely impressed with Rabbi Eider and the potential for constructing an Eruv, undertook to try and persuade Rabbi Roberts to drop his opposition.

Rabbi Kimche felt that the next step was to elicit the help of members of other communities and to widen representation on the committee. This was particularly important as it is counterproductive for the Eruv Committee to be composed entirely of members of Ner Yisrael. This was agreed in principle, although the timing was not felt to be appropriate for a great expansion of the committee. It was made clear that any invitation of membership to the committee had to be cleared by a majority of the membership of the committee.

Note was made of counsel received from Rabbi Shimon Eider that we should not push for a Rabbinical decision. If a negative decision were to be taken by Rabbi Padua, or other members of the Union-Bet Din this could create very difficult problems regarding Rabbi Shimon Eider's continuing participation in the project. Discussion continued on non-Rabbinical aspects and covered practical problems and local government problems. Sylvain Blumenfrucht had spent some time with Rabbi Eider surveying the 16 mile perimeter and he estimated that there would be up to a maximum of 200 places where some physical gaps would have to be bridged. Various other physical problems were discussed

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including maintenance of the Eruv after construction, but in general detailed discussion was shelved for future meetings devoted to these problems.

Suggestions were made on people who would be able to help with local government issues. These included Geoffrey Greenhouse, previously a local councillor, Alex Strum, who has aspirations to become a local councillor. A member of Monty Frankell's office was mentioned in respect of his being a senior representative in the local council.

Note was made of the fact that we will have to obtain official lease of the area for Halachic reasons - a period of 50-100 years was suggested. This must be obtained from a Jewish person in authority who has right of access to all places within the Eruv at any time. (Policeman, fireman, VAT officer). The person would also have to agree with the Halachic concept of the Eruv.

Some time was spent discussing the aspect of education and it was decided that at the appropriate time an educator should be brought in to assist with the setting up of programmes for schools, Shuls and youth clubs.

Responsibilities

The following responsibilities were agreed. It was made clear that delegations of responsibility would be in order.

Brian Berenblut

Laurence Begner

Secretarial

Sylvain Blumenfrucht

Michael Gillis

Local Government

Jerry Shatzkes

David Schreiber

Financial

Rabbi Alan Kimche

In conjunction with

Shimon Eider

Halachic

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Actions:

Rabbi Kimche: It was agreed that Rabbi Kimche would pursue his current line of attack which was to lobby and discuss with local Rabbis and lay leaders. He is also to prepare a compendium of information on the Eruv including classical responsa, statistical data and a prospectus and maps.

It was agreed that under the current circumstances a low key approach would be taken so that the local Rabbis would not be forced into making negative decisions.

Rabbi Kimche agreed to provide copies of relevant documentation including the perimeter map to committee members by the next meeting.

David Schreiber: David Schreiber agreed to prepare some headed paper for the Eruv committee.

Sylvain Blumenfrucht: Sylvain Blumenfrucht is to continue research work of information needed through local government channels. He pointed out that he will not meet local officials face to face because of conflict of interest.

Company Establishment

The idea of setting up a limited company was discussed. It was agreed that a company should be established. However, it was suggested that it might not be timely to formerly set up the company at this stage and it was agreed to leave the subject open for the next meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was agreed to be Saturday, 21 November 1987. The venue will be at Michael Gillis' house: Crossways, Greenbank Crescent, NW4 (tel: 01-346 3371).