

THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE

ERUV COMMITTEE



To: Dayan Ch. Ehrentreu
Mr. Jonathan Lew
Mr. Elkan Levy
All Committee Members

From: David Schreiber

CONFIDENTIAL

Update as at 14th July 1993

Planning

Barnet have now set down their procedure and timetable for handling Application B. It will be referred to Public Works this month and a report will go tonight to the TP&R Committee, with the officers' recommendation regarding the consultative process. In essence they recommend that consultation is restricted to people concerned with Wildwood Rd.

This would mean that subject to Public Works approval, we expect the application to go to the TP&R Committee Sept/October. We cannot take the approval of Public Works for granted as the likelihood is that it will not be dealt with under executive powers but will be referred to the full committee and even though we had no opposing votes last time, we suspect that there will be an attempt to refer the matter to the full Council and this would only require a motion supported by 4 councillors. Don Goodman, the Chairman of PW, is taking legal and procedural advice on this over the next few days.

If it is referred to the full Council, it is likely to be defeated and this is not subject to any appeal procedure. In that event, any planning approval won in TP&R or on appeal would not be useable. We therefore have to be clear that we could win the appeal on the original application alone. Of course, with a positive appeal decision, we could then build the eruv *with* the poles in Wildwood Rd and there would then be a strong argument to say that if we are going to build it anyway, Barnet should agree to the modified scheme in order to avoid unnecessary additional street furniture in the conservation area.

You will recall that in February the vote was 11 to 7 against us. One of the 11 is now Mayor and we therefore need two full votes to swing or a greater number of abstentions. Having carefully reviewed the likely attitude of councillors, we would wish to focus our efforts where there is the best chance of a pay off. Among the Tories, there is every reason to look for a change of heart from Edward Bunn, councillor for Hendon, and I have already asked our Raleigh Close contingent to take this up in order to make the views of the Community as a whole known to Mr. Bunn.

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Committee

Laurence Begner, Brian Berenblut, Edward Black, Joe Bloomberg, David Cohen, Daniel Drukarz, Alfie Frei, Jeremy Hershkov, Michael Goldblatt, David Marriott, Graham S Morris, Mark Moss, Michael Posen, David Schreiber, Syma Weinberg

Rabbinic Panel

Rabbi Isaac Bernstein (Finchley), Dayan Ivan Binstock (Golders Green), Rabbi Edward Jackson (Hampstead Garden Suburb), Rabbi Alan Kimche (Ner Yisrael), Rabbi Sidney Silberg (Hendon)

Supervisory Authority

Chief Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks, Dayan Chanoch Ehrentreu, Head of the London Beth Din

United Synagogue Liaison

Elkan Levy (Honorary Officer)

Technical Officer Alan Perrin B.Sc.

The balance therefore is held by the Labour councillors and I would welcome any views and suggestions as to how best we can persuade Labour not to sit on the fence as last time, when they simply divided their votes. Please contact me with any ideas.

We have been notified us that the appeal will be heard by an Inspector who will give his recommendations for a final decision to be taken by the Secretary of State himself. We now understand that the decision to go for a public inquiry was led by Barnet's insistence on this method. The Inspectorate proposed a date for the appeal of 14/15th September, which is obviously not suitable because of Rosh Hashanah and because we are unlikely to have a decision on Application B known before proceeding to incur costs. We have now agreed that the Appeal will be on 30th November, probably at the Boroughs, and 3 days have been reserved.

The 'Legal Sub-Committee' had a briefing and conference with Counsel on Monday, 12th July. Having read the papers, the QC's opinion is that we have a sound and strong case. We went through the full background defining the categories of non-planning opposition and a discussion of strategy both for the lead-up to the appeal and for the appeal itself. Counsel's view is very clearly that we will require political lobbying directed both at the Inspector and the Secretary of State, even though his overall approach is a very low key one. I will detail under separate cover the form that this lobbying is to take and who can do what to help on that front.

Fund-raising

As of today we have collected £4,296 (less direct costs of £900) from the popular phase of The Appeal Appeal. There have been 217 donations for an average of about £20 each. I view this very positively as a broad indication of popular support (and some welcome funds) and indeed a lot of comments that came with the cheques were most encouraging.

As a second phase, we will be looking to extend the appeal to shul mailing lists. The Ner Yisrael appeal went out last night and I would ask each of the other shuls to now organise their own mailout to members using either the letter that went to the petition signatories or the revised A4 poster, of which I attach a copy.

Phase 3 is now being prepared in detail, which is to approach individual potential guarantors. We can do this once we know how much has been raised by other methods and once we have a better estimate of the costs that we face on appeal. The intention is to prepare lists of potential guarantors over the next two/three weeks and to mail the opening letter to them at the end of August for meetings to be held during the two weeks prior to Rosh Hashanah.

