

**Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council**  
**October 30, 2012 Minutes**

**JPNC Attendance:** Ben Day, Red Burrows, David Baron, Erin Colgan-Snyder, Oliver DeLeon, Andrea Howley, Michael Reiskind, Ara Reyes, Martha Rodriguez, Ken Sazama, Courtney Snegroff, Jesse White, Jeffrey Wiesner, and Joseph Wright.

**Community Attendance:** Sarah Freeman, Judy Neiswander, Liz Blair, Steve Farren, David ???? , Rep. Jeffrey Sánchez, City Councillor Felix Arroyo, Heather Perez (City Councillor Felix Arroyo's office), Michael Baker (Rep. Jeffrey Sánchez's office), Jessica Taubner (City Councillor Ayanna Pressley's office), Chris Helms (Jamaica Plain Patch), and Rebeca Oliveira (Jamaica Plain Gazette).

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm by Ben Day at First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain.

**I. JPNC Member Introductions:** Members introduced themselves and audience members introduced themselves.

**II. Additions to/subtractions from Agenda:** The presentation by Ned Friedman about the Arnold Arboretum was removed from the agenda and will be given in November.

**III. Announcements:**

- Ben Day reminded folks to clear away dangerous obstructions such as tree limbs, which may have fallen during Tropical Storm Sandy, before Halloween Trick or Treat night tomorrow.
- The Boston City Council will vote on a new proposal to change City Council Electoral Districts tomorrow, October 31 at 12:00noon in the City Council Chambers at Boston City Hall.
- There will be a Boston Redevelopment Authority public meeting on the Norbert School redevelopment proposal on Thursday, November 1 at 6:00pm at the Hennigan School.
- There will be a Casey Arborway Design Advisory Group (DAG) Meeting on Thursday, November 1 at 6:00pm at Curtis Hall.
- There will be a Parks & Recreation Department public meeting to discuss turf replacement of the artificial turf fields at English High School on Tuesday, November 13 at 6:30pm at Curtis Hall.
- The Emerald Necklace Conservancy Annual Meeting will be on Thursday, November 15 starting at 5:30pm at the Northeastern University Curry Student Center Ballroom, 346 Huntington Avenue. The keynote speaker will be Coleen O'Connell talking on "Urban Parks: Ensuring a Resilient Future".
- There will be a film showing about the old Elevated Orange Line on Monday, November 19 at 6:00pm at the Connolly Branch Library, 433 Centre Street.
- The Friends of the JP Branch Library will be having a Fall Fete Fundraiser to celebrate the Friends 60th anniversary and raise funds for the JP Branch Library. It will be on Saturday, November 10 from 7pm to 9pm at the JP Branch Library, 12 Sedgwick Street.

**IV. Approval of July minutes:** Motion to approve July 2012 minutes by Red Burrows. Seconded by Ken Sazama. Passed 10-0-1 (11 present at time of vote). The September minutes will be presented at the next meeting.

**V. Discussion of New Redistricting Proposal/Impact on Forest Hills precincts:**

Ben Day reviewed the history of the City Council redistricting proposals. Two have already been passed by the City Council and vetoed by the Mayor. The current proposal is the third attempt. It places two Jamaica Plain precincts at risk of being moved into District 4 (Councillor Yancey): Ward 19, Precinct 12 and Ward 19, Precinct 7. Jessica Taubner, from City Councillor Ayanna Pressley's office, added that they have been working on redistricting for eighteen months. Since, by law, City Council candidates must live in their district for at least one year, the deadline to complete the process for the 2013 municipal election is November 5, 2012. Ben Day said that Ward 10, Precinct 8 is being moved from District 8 (Councillor Ross) to District 6 (Councillor O'Malley). Motion by Dave Baron that the JPNC favors keeping Jamaica Plain whole and in one district as much as possible, and asks the Boston City Council to redouble its efforts to do so. The JPNC calls on residents to write or call the Boston City Councillors

to support this effort. Seconded by Red Burrows. Passed 12-0-2.

**VI. Creation of Elections Committee:**

Red Burrows said that we need to get an Elections Committee geared up for the JPNC biennial election coming up in Fall 2013. Motion by Red Burrows to create an Ad-Hoc Elections Committee. Seconded by Dave Baron. Passed

14-0-0. Red Burrows will be interim chair. Volunteers please see Red after the meeting.

## **VII. Committee Reports:**

a. Public Service: Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee met on October 2 at Curtis Hall. There were two licensing issues before the Committee, one of which needs a vote of the JPNC: Harvest Coop is proposing to open a new grocery store in Forest Hills at 3815 Washington Street with beer and wine available in an area inside the new store. Since they are not closing their existing South Street location, they are asking for a new beer & wine package store license. People were very happy with the proposed opening, but the owner of nearby Archdale Liquors came to express his concern about competition. Harvest promised that they would not be selling Budweiser, Corona or other similar national brands and the Committee felt that there was no direct competition. Harvest Coop Markets also received support from the Jamaica Plain Business and Professional Association, the Washington Street Business Group, and the Asticou/Martinwood South Street Association. Motion by Red Burrows to approve the recommendation of the Public Service Committee for The Boston Food Cooperative, Inc., doing business as "Harvest Coop Markets", at 3815 Washington Street in Forest Hills for a 7-day malt & wine package store license with a 10:00pm closing, with Marc Cutler as manager. Seconded by Ken Sazama. Passed

13-0-1.

In addition, Michael Reiskind said at the September JPNC meeting where there was no quorum, he brought up the request of a common victualler and entertainment license for a chinese restaurant at 3510 Washington Street (former Joy Luck Restaurant location). He would like to confirm the resolution of the September JPNC meeting. Motion by Red Burrows to approve the recommendation of the Public Service Committee for G & P Billy, Inc., doing business as "JP Kitchen", at 3510 Washington Street for a 7-day common victualler license with an 11:30pm closing, with Rui Zhang Gao as manager, and an entertainment license for recorded music and one TV only. Seconded by Andrea Howley. Passed 14-0-0.

In addition, Michael Reiskind said that Centre Street Sanctuary in the Blessed Sacrament campus, which had been recommended by the JPNC at its July 2012 meeting for a new beer, wines and liqueurs license and an outdoor patio, had also been recommended by the Public Service Committee at its July meeting for an entertainment license. He would like to add that now. Motion by Michael Reiskind to approve the recommendation of the Public Service Committee for Centre Street Sanctuary, LLC, doing business as "Centre Street Sanctuary", at 365 Centre Street for an entertainment license for recorded music and TVs only. Seconded by Andrea Howley. Passed 13-0-1.

The next meeting of the Public Service Committee will be Tuesday, November 13 at Greater Eggleston High School (3134 Washington Street) at 7:00pm. On the agenda will be a followup discussion of Coco's Lounge all-alcohol

license at 3169-13171 Washington Street (former Old Stag location).

b. Parks & Open Space: The regular October meeting was cancelled. Andrea Howley reported that the Committee is recommending that when developments propose to remove trees in Jamaica Plain, the existing trees be inventoried and replaced at a 1.5 to 1 ratio. If the developer cannot replace them at 1.5/1, it should be done at least 1 to 1 and the trees be replaced on the same lot or in the neighborhood. Motion by Andrea Howley to ask developers who propose to remove trees in Jamaica Plain, that the existing trees be inventoried and replaced at a 1.5 to 1 ratio

anywhere in Jamaica Plain. Seconded by Red Burrows. Passed 14-0-0.

c. Zoning: Dave Baron reported on the following: There was one item that was brought to the JPNC Executive Committee: 98 Rockview Street, change occupancy from church to three residential units.

161 South Huntington Avenue, construction of a new 5-story, 196-unit residential building with one level of underground parking. The October 11 neighborhood hearing was well-attended and people spoke on both sides. The union carpenters favored a development of some kind. The opposition issues were that it did not offer enough affordability, parking and traffic issues were not addressed, it was too dense, there was a lack of two- and three-bedroom units, the historic Knight building was not being preserved, and the design was unattractive. The Zoning Committee unanimously recommended denial. Also, the appointed Impact Advisory Group (IAG) recommended denial.

The following four recommendations do need a vote of the JPNC: 1) 284 Centre Street (Yely's Coffee Shop), allow food truck operation. Issues were noise and opening before permitted. Committee recommends approval with three provisos: allow zoning relief for 90 days only, the applicant return for review after 90 days, and that operations close at 10:00pm. Oliver DeLeon said that he thought 11:00pm would be a more appropriate closing time, some of the noise came from other causes, and have any other truck operations come to the Zoning Committee? Dave Baron said that two trucks were approved at the Loring-Greenough House with provisos recommended by the neighbors. 2) 597-605 Centre Street (Grass Fed), allow take-out. The Committee recommends approval with two provisos: that the take-out use stay with the current owner and business, and a second meeting of the Zoning Committee be held if the Jamaica Pond Association opposes. 3) 296 Pond Street, demolish and rebuild existing addition, and expand the kitchen area toward back of property. The Committee recommends approval with the provisos that the applicants provide construction plans to the neighbors and

they communicate with neighbors about construction mitigation. 4) 470 Centre Street (Tres Gatos), change occupancy to allow live entertainment. The issue of live entertainment was heard by the Public Service Committee at its July 10 monthly meeting. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. Motion by Dave Baron to recommend approval of the four requests as presented by the Zoning Committee. Seconded by Red Burrows. Passed 11-0-3. The next meetings of the Zoning Committee will be Thursday, November 8 and Thursday, November 15 at

Farnsworth House, 90 South Street, at 7:00pm.

d. Housing & Development (H&DC): 161 So. Huntington Avenue - Ben Day spoke about the press release of October 23 on the proposed development. He offered to meet after the JPNC meeting to create a policy for JPNC members and the Chair when making public statements. Motion by Ben Day to create a policy - or multiple proposals - for JPNC members and the Chair when making public statements. Seconded by Martha Rodriguez. Extensive discussion by Dave Baron about the press release, Francesca Fordiani's resignation and 161 So. Huntington development. Ken Sazama temporarily took over as chair of the meeting. There was discussion by Red Burrows about open communications within the JPNC. Passed 13-0-1. Further discussion by Ara Reyes and Jesse White that Francesca Fordiani's resignation is a big loss for the JPNC, but the important information in the press release needed to be heard. Oliver DeLeon, Andrea Howley, Martha Rodriguez and Ben Day disagreed on the press release's impact. Steven Lussier formally asked that Ben Day step aside as chair of the JPNC because he stepped out of line, and went outside the proper process.

Ben Day spoke about the JPNC-sponsored October 15 neighborhood meeting on the development at 161 So. Huntington Avenue. It was well-attended. 92 people came and 48 filled out comment cards. The sentiments echoed the comments from the IAG and public meetings: The proposed development is too large and the rents are too-high. The Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) will meet on the variances requested on November 13. The Parks Commission will meet on this issue on November 19. The H&DC met twice on this issue and twice voted against because it did not follow the Healthy Housing guidelines and the Affordability guidelines. Motion by Dave Baron to recommend denial at the ZBA and Parks Commission for the reasons stated in the Zoning Committee report. Seconded by Red Burrows.

Passed 14-0-0. Motion by Red Burrows to allow JPNC members to call elected officials and ask them to oppose the 161 So. Huntington Avenue proposed development. Seconded by Ara Reyes. There was discussion on this motion. Motion by Michael Reiskind to table the motion until after the JPNC discussion on policy for JPNC members and the Chair. Seconded by Courtney Snegroff. Passed 7-5-2.

Ben Day spoke about the JPNC-sponsored October 23 neighborhood meeting on the development at 105A South Huntington Avenue. The meeting had a different tone, even though the proposal at 161 So. Huntington overshadowed the issue. Fewer people attended. Red Burrows thought that most of the attendees were opposed to the project in its present form. Even though the developer emphasized his "localness", there were many of the same issues of density, height and expensive rents. The JPNC's guidelines from the Housing & Development Committee are still not met. Dave Baron said that we should be planning for the area in a deliberative way with a master plan,

not through the zoning variance process.

e. Ad Hoc Racial Justice Committee: *No report*.

f. Casey Arborway Design Advisory Group (DAG): The DAG met on November 1, and then met on November 17 to discuss traffic issues only. On November 1, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) proposed a swap of the spaces used by hackney cabs and the Route 39 buses. The cabs would move away from New Washington Street to the area north of the station where the 39 buses are now. The 39 buses would move south to a new widened area of bus lanes within the station to be built over the Orange Line tracks and parallel to the present "high side" bus lanes. In addition, the exit for all buses on the "high side" would be moved further south away from South Street to a new signalized exit opposite Asticou Road. This new proposed exit has generated the most controversy because of noise and light pollution. The 25% design for the project has been released on-line with no MEPA (Mass. Environmental Policy Act) review as yet. Motion by Ben Day that JPNC ask MassDOT to protect the residents of Asticou Road from noise and light from the project. Seconded by Ken Sazama. Passed 14-0-0.

The next DAG meeting will be on November 1 at 6:00pm at Curtis Hall. On the agenda will be bicycle lanes along Washington Street. Red Burrows said he would take the position of JPNC liaison on the DAG until a replacement for Francesca Fordiani could be found.

g. Jackson Square Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC): Ara Reyes reported that September was a transition month for the CAC as John Fitzgerald from the BRA has moved away from the project and there were no October meetings. There have been no November meetings scheduled yet. She feels worried about the process.

**After the regular agenda**, the JPNC met longer, in a session chaired by Ken Sazama, about allowing JPNC members to call elected officials and ask them to oppose the 161 So. Huntington development. There was also a brief discussion of the

other issue of creating a policy or multiple policies for JPNC members and the Chair when making public statements. There was agreement that this second issue will need more much more time for discussion. It was agreed that the Council will schedule a series of special meetings on the policy issue. It was agreed that JPNC members can call elected officials and ask them to oppose the 161 So. Huntington Avenue proposed development.

**Meeting was adjourned at 9:26pm.**

*Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind*

Next JPNC meeting: Tuesday, November 27 at 7:00PM, place TBA.

Next Executive Committee meeting: Wednesday, November 21 at 6:30PM, JP Licks, 659 Centre Street