

# March 2010

## JPNC minutes

### March 23, 2010

**Attendance:** Andrea Howley, Michael Reiskind, Jesse Abair, Karley Ausiello, David Baron, Dave Demerjian, Francesca Fordiani, Jeremy Harold, Ben Knappmiller, Steven Laferriere, Edith Murnane, Emily Wheelwright, Jay Zoldak.

**Elected at the meeting:** Jesse White.

**Other Attendees:** Tahlia Adler, Greg Kornbluh, Drew Devereaux, Samantha Roy (Office of Rep. Jeffrey Sánchez), Melvin Colón (Census 2010), Heather Perez (Office of City Councillor Felix G. Arroyo), Anna Sylvester (Office of City Councillor John Tobin), David Johnson (JP Citizen), David Taber (JP Gazette).

**Called to Order at 7:12pm at Curtis Hall by Andrea Howley.**

#### 1. Introductions:

- Members of the JPNC introduced themselves.

#### 2. Announcements:

- There will be an Open Meeting of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library (BPL) at 3pm on March 24 at the Central Library in Copley Square.

#### 3. Neighborhood Input:

- US Census 2010: Melvin Colón from the United States Census 2010, a former member of the JPNC, said obtaining a true count in the neighborhood is vital for receiving a fair share of funding for services in Jamaica Plain. There is \$400 Billion given out nationwide using census data for housing, jobs, infrastructure, schools, and health. It is especially important to the JP Neighborhood Council since we work with zoning and housing issues.
- Jamaica Plain has some of the hardest-to-count areas in the city. Boston, so far, is slightly ahead of the national average (17% to 16%). While some areas of Jamaica Plain are doing quite well, with over 60% returns, others, such as Egleston/Jackson Square, are returning less than 1%. People can track how their community is doing online at [2010.census.gov](http://2010.census.gov) and clicking on Take10.
- Census forms will be accepted by mail only until April 19 and then people will go door to door. The census still has jobs available at \$22.75 an hour. People can call about jobs at (866) 861-2010.
- April 10 will be Census Blitz Day, a last ditch effort to do mobilizations around the country, especially in hard-to-count census tracts. The reasons for low returns tend to be related to distrust of the census, because people relate the census to immigration agencies, such as ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement). But the census workers must keep information confidential and 1) Not ask questions about status (citizenship, legal residence etc.), 2) Not share information with other agencies, 3) Each census worker takes an oath not to share information under penalty of 5 years in jail or \$250,000.00 fine.

- Jay Zoldak asked whether Massachusetts in danger of losing a Congressional seat? Melvin Colón answered yes, and that is one of the reasons for needing a full count.
- Michael Reiskind asked, besides undocumented residents, what other issues cause people not to respond? The answer was language is a big issue. Concentrations of Spanish-speaking people tend to respond at a lower rate. There are Questionnaire Assistance Centers that help people fill out forms in any one of sixty languages. Michael asked whether the form is mailed out in Spanish. He got it only in English. It is only being mailed in English and Spanish, but available in 5 other languages (Russian, Vietnamese, and 3 more).

#### 4. Minutes:

- The minutes from the previous (February 23, 2010) JPNC meeting were handed out. Motion by Francesca Fordiani to approve the minutes from the February 2010 meeting. Seconded by Edith Murnane. Passed 12-0-1.

#### 5. Council Business:

- Election to Fill Vacancy in Area A — There are presently two candidates for the open seat in Area A: Carlos Icaza and Jesse White. Carlos Icaza was at another meeting, attending the Centre and South Street Corridor Transportation Action Planning meeting.
- Jesse White spoke for her candidacy: A 5-year resident of Jamaica Plain and attorney, she volunteers and does community work, especially on the legal rights of women in prison. She would like to get more involved in neighborhood issues, and has started to attend meetings of the Housing & Development Committee. She recently went around Area A and gathered statements of support from 70 Area A residents.
- Michael Reiskind spoke for Carlos Icaza. Carlos is presently at a meeting as the representative of the JP Business & Professional Association. He worked to reestablish the Sumner Hill Neighborhood Association. He is a union carpenter, Local 67. He ran for the JPNC in 2009 and was elected, but stepped down for various reasons after the election. He is a strong worker on the Public Service and Parks & Open Space Committees of the JPNC. Dave Baron also spoke Carlos Icaza's behalf. He said that Carlos has a commitment to the Council and its work. He was active on the Ad-Hoc By-Laws Committee. The JPNC needs people who are able to commit their time and Carlos has shown that he has done that.
- A written ballot was taken, with the vote counted by Anna Sylvester and Samantha Roy. Jesse White won by majority.

#### 6. Committee reports:

- **Ad-Hoc Website/Communications/Outreach Committee** – Dave Demerjian and Ben Knappmiller reported that the website, [jpnc.org](http://jpnc.org) launched in early February, with great help from Mimi Kantor, Greg Hunt and Steve Backman. After the home page, visitors have seven choices, such as working committees, monthly meetings, and local resources. A logo was created for the JPNC and is on the website. There is a plan to have the pages in Spanish, too. There was a discussion on whether Committee chairs can have e-mail accounts to respond to residents under [jpnc.org](http://jpnc.org) or would it be easier and cheaper to have gmail accounts. Dave Baron asked how we can get [jpnc.org](http://jpnc.org) higher in the google display list. The plan is to disband the Website Committee and then become an Outreach Committee. Members can volunteer for the Outreach Committee at the end of the meeting. Andrea Howley asked how hard it would be to set up a Standing Outreach Committee, rather than an Ad-Hoc one. It would require a 60-day waiting period to abide with By-Laws. The next

Ad-Hoc Website/Communications/Outreach Committee meeting will be on Sunday, April 18 at 7:00pm.

- **Ad-Hoc By-Laws Committee** – Dave Baron summarized the proposed changes that he had previously sent out by e-mail to all members. Most of the changes are clarifications and do not make changes in the intent of the by-laws. A change that is proposed is making the JPNC Secretary/Treasurer a member ex-officio of all Council committees, like the Chair and Vice-Chair are. The proposals will be considered at the next meeting.
- **Parks & Open Space Committee(POSC)** – Jay Zoldak reported the Committee met on Tuesday, March 16. The most important priority is recruiting new members for the Committee. They will be going to the Spring Equinox Celebration to reach out for new members. In April, the Committee is starting their clean-ups of parks and playgrounds with Boston Shines on April 24. The POSC will work on closing down Parkman Drive for weekend days in the summer. The next meeting will be on the third Tuesday of April, April 20, at 6:30pm at JP Licks.
- **Housing & Development Committee(H&DC)** – Steven Laferriere reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, March 16. The Committee drafted a letter to Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) expressing concern that the BRA may be turning away from housing guidelines and traffic improvements developed during the planning process. Motion by Francesca Fordiani to send the draft letter submitted by the H&DC to the BRA. Motion failed for lack of a second. Ben Knappmiller asked why the JPNC Zoning Committee did not sign on to the letter. Because the H&DC felt that the BRA planning process is the main concern, not the zoning amendments requested by WCI Corp., the developers of Parcels V and W in Forest Hills. Dave Baron thought that the present wording of the draft letter may hint at opposition to WCI, not opposition to the BRA role. There was agreement to reformat the letter. Motion by Steven Laferriere to approve concept of the letter with formatting changes to go to the Executive Committee. Seconded by Dave Baron. Passed 14-0-0. The next meeting will be on the third Tuesday of April, April 20, at 7:00pm at the Bowditch School.
- **Jackson CAC** – No report.
- **Public Service Committee** – Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee meeting was held on March 2 at Curtis Hall. The Committee has started a new initiative regarding billboards in the neighborhood: the consensus seems to be for trying to get them taken down, because they are ugly and create an atmosphere incompatible with walkable shopping districts. The first step will be to inventory the billboards in JP, with a goal to get as many down as possible. This may take a few years. The Committee is also continuing to work on the survival of Route 48 (JP Loop) bus. It is slowly progressing with help from Rep. Malia, Rep. Sánchez, and Councillor Tobin. The Public Service Committee is mandated to deal with three or four main issues. In order to keep the Committee focused, the Committee is proposing a list of initiatives to work on over the next two years. Motion by Michael Reiskind to approve submitted list of initiatives. Seconded by Ben Knappmiller. Passed 14-0-0. Motion by Michael Reiskind to approve the submitted list of Public Service Committee members. Seconded by Jay Zoldak. Passed 14-0-0. Andrea Howley asked whether a JPNC opening on the Public Service Committee might be available in the future. The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on the first Tuesday in April, April 6, at 7:00pm at the old Cheverus School. On the agenda will be a neighborhood hearing on a license transfer for the Alchemist Lounge at 435-439 So. Huntington Avenue.
- **Zoning Committee** – Dave Baron reported that there were five requests looked at by the Zoning Committee at their meetings on February 25, March 4 and March 18. MBTA Parcels V and W in Forest Hills; WCI Corporation request to change the zoning map from Open Space to Neighborhood Shopping. The Committee had a meeting exclusively on this issue on March 18, and there will be a second meeting on March 25, 2010. No JPNC action needed. 275-277

Chestnut Avenue; request by Pudding Stone Common LLC to create a legal parking lot use with open space. The Committee voted to recommend approval with the proviso that none of the existing trees be removed and the parcel be sold to a neighborhood trust, with proviso for Zip Cars and signage. Recommended for approval by the Executive Committee. No JPNC action needed. 2-18 Perkins Street; request by Clearwire Wireless, an affiliate of Sprint Spectrum, as agent for Leader Earle Trust, for an extension of non-conforming use to install additional antennae including a GPS antenna for super WiFi on rooftop. Their hearing date at the Zoning Board of Appeal was March 9, but they have asked for a deferral for local meetings. Recommended approval with deferral to the local Jamaica Pond Association to have a neighborhood hearing. 42-44 Danforth Street; request by Spontaneous Celebrations to create ancillary off-street parking for 15 vehicles at 45 Danforth Street. Recommended for approval by the Executive Committee, with condition for a sign. No JPNC action needed. 36-38 Haverford Street; request by Mai Phung, as agent for Narendra Dixit, to erect a rear addition to the building to expand an existing dental practice. Recommended for approval by the Executive Committee. No JPNC action needed. Motion by Dave Baron to recommend approval on 2-18 Perkins Street, but defer to the local Jamaica Pond Association to have a neighborhood hearing. Seconded by Ben Knappmiller. Passed 14-0-0. Motion by Dave Baron to approve the submitted list of Zoning Committee members. Seconded by Jay Zoldak. Passed 14-0-0. The next Zoning meetings will be on Thursday, March 25, April 1, and April 15 at Curtis Hall at 7:00pm.

#### **7. New Business:**

- There was no new business to discuss.

**The next meeting of the full JPNC will be on Tuesday, April 27 at Curtis Hall.**

**The next meeting of the JPNC Executive Committee will be on Thursday, April 22 at 7:30am at Ula Café.**

*Meeting was adjourned at 8:39pm.*

*Minutes submitted by Ben Knappmiller and Michael Reiskind*