

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
July 28, 2015 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Kevin Moloney, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Anne Barrett, Dana Gonsalves, Jamey Lionette, Carolyn Royce, Kyle Smith, Meg Wood, Sebastian Zapata.

Other attendees: Sarah Freeman, Erik Mayberg, and Richard Heath (JP News).

Meeting called to order at 7:20pm by Kevin Moloney at Farnsworth House. Mr. Moloney noted there was no quorum present (11 needed) and so no official votes will take place at today's meeting.

I. Introductions: Members introduced themselves.

II. Approval of June minutes: Michael Reiskind said that two names were left off the "Other attendees" section of the June minutes: Jude Hutchinson and Roscoe Giles. Sense of the meeting to approve the June 23, 2015 minutes as amended. [No vote]

III. Announcements:

- The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) is starting a new planning study of the Washington Street corridor from Forest Hills to Jackson Square. It will be called PLAN:JP/ROX. There is an Open House between 5:00pm and 8:00pm tonight, Tuesday, July 28 at the Brookside Community Health Center at 3297 Washington Street.

- The 2015 Jamaica Plain National Night Out celebration will be at the Egleston YMCA on Monday, August 3 starting at 5:30pm.

- Sarah Freeman reported that Gerry Wright, in the persona of Frederick Law Olmsted, has been invited to the 150th anniversary celebration of Olmsted's speech at Yosemite National Park which helped lead to the National Parks system. Gerry Wright is traveling across the country by car visiting various parks as he goes to Yosemite for August 9 and can be followed via Twitter (#olmsted) and on dispatchesfromolmsted.org.

IV. Planning for the 2015 JPNC Election: Last month, an ad-hoc Elections Committee was started with four volunteers (Sebastian Zapata, Meg Wood, Carolyn Royce and Michael Reiskind.). Kevin Moloney is now asking for a few more volunteers for this Committee that will run the election. Anne Barrett volunteered.

V. Committee Reports:

a. Environment, Parks and Energy Committee (EPE): No report.

b. Zoning Committee (ZC): Dave Baron reported that the Committee met on July 8 and July 22. Two matters do not need a vote: a) 4 Westerly Street, a request by Isora Luberto to change legal occupancy from 2-family to 3-family dwelling. Structure has been used as a 3-family dwelling since 1960s. There was a tie vote and no recommendation is forthcoming from the Zoning Committee. b) 201-205 So. Huntington Avenue (Goddard House), an informational presentation only by Eden Properties and Samuels & Associates to rehabilitate and expand the existing building for residential use and construct a new free-standing building. The Goddard House developers will come back later for zoning relief. There are five matters that need a vote of the JP Neighborhood Council: 1) 57R Sedgwick Street, a request by Amy Murrett to change occupancy from garage to an in-law dwelling unit; demolish portion of existing garage and construct a 15 x 31 foot one-story addition. It was promised that the owner's son would live in the apartment. This was not controversial. Allowing a second unit is allowed because this is a large lot. The Sumner Hill Association and neighbors offered great support. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. 2) 20 Brookley Road, a request by Peter Janis to change use from office to day care (18 months to 6 years) in existing commercial building; cosmetic upgrades and fire alarm. This issue had a good deal of support and no opposition. An institution with a good track record, Copper Beech Day Care, is the proposed tenant. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. 3) 47 Forbes Street, a request by Mark Lepler to legalize second means of egress (exterior stairs) from Unit #2 to correct violation. This construction has already been built and approved by the City inspector. The violation was issued after it was finished. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. 4) 38 Hopkins Road, a request by Michael McGuire to construct a new 2 1/2-storey single-family dwelling. This involves a tear-down of an older house. It is on an odd-shaped unusual lot. All other houses on the street are 2- and 2 1/2-stories, too. The applicant had support from the local Jamaica Hills Association. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. 5) 25 Chestnut Avenue, a request by Arthur Choo to renovate 3-family dwelling and extend living space into basement. This application does not have a change of grade between front and back, so the basement is all below grade. The applicants gave a terrible presentation. The Zoning Committee recommends denial. It was noted that only 20 Brookley Road has a scheduled date in August before the Zoning Board of Appeal and so there was a sense of the meeting by David Baron to urge the JPNC Executive Committee to accept the single recommendation of the ZC on 20 Brookley Road. Seconded by Kyle Smith. Passed 10-0-0.

The next Zoning Committee meetings will be on Wednesday, September 2 and September 16 at Farnsworth House.

c. BRA Principles: Kevin Moloney led the discussion on a draft letter that Benjamin Day transmitted titled "Guiding Principles for Imagine Boston 2013". This is similar to a letter dated May 2014 that was sent to the JPNC, but with the four principles more delineated: 1) Imagine Boston 2030 must include racial equity and other equity goals,

2) city planning must be independent of the City's development department, 3) public resources should only be used for the public good, 4) Imagine Boston 2030 must be accountable to the City's neighborhoods. Folks felt that more information was needed from Ben Day on the four principles. There were questions about why there are so few signatories (9); is it because it is early in the process? The NC needs more clarity on the overall vision. Will it generate controversy by being too anti-development? There was a sense to take no action until the JPNC gets more clarity. Then if time allows, it will come before the September JPNC meeting, or if time is of the essence, it will go to the JPNC Executive Committee.

d. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind reported that the Committee met on July 7 at Curtis Hall. There was a discussion about starting a program for recycling of cigarette butts in the City. Control of litter and reduction of environmentally-hazardous waste are the main goals. Salem, Massachusetts and Portland, Maine have recently started programs. Shipping and recycling of the cigarette butts is free.

In addition, the Public Service Committee started consideration of the new proposed design for the Arborway from Forest Hills through Murray Circle/Route 203 to Kelley Circle at Jamaica Pond.

The next meeting of the Public Service Committee will be on Tuesday, August 4 at 7:00pm at Bethel AME Church. This will be a neighborhood hearing on a request from El Fogon Tipico Dominicano at 264 Hyde Park Avenue for a Seven-Day Common Victualler license.

e. Ad-Hoc Committee on Forest Hills Construction and Development Projects: Kyle Smith reported that the Committee did not have a July meeting. At their May meeting, there was just one attendee. The question of how active is the Committee will be discussed at the September meeting.

f. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Jamey Lionette reported that the H&DC met on July 21 at the Bowditch School and was supposed to have a presentation from the Boston Tenants Coalition. The presenter was sick, so the presentation will be in September.

Matt Kiefer and Noah Maslan, developers of the former Goddard House at 201-205 So. Huntington Avenue gave an informational presentation on their proposal to rehabilitate and rebuild the existing building for residential use and also build a brand new free-standing building. There will be 167 units (with 70 studios, 63 one-bedroom, 34 larger - bedroom). They plan to keep the existing building, but plan only the minimum number of affordable units (22).

There was a heated discussion on the need for affordable units. The developers will come back for a later meeting. The next meeting of the H&DC will be on Tuesday, September 15 at 6:30pm at the Brewery, 31 Germania Street. A proposal of the JP Neighborhood Development Corporation (NDC) for General Heath Square (Heath Street and Parker Street) will be discussed. This is a 100% affordable project. Also on the agenda may be Goddard House and the Boston Tenants Coalition.

VI. Old/New Business: Sarah Freeman reported that there will be a local celebration of the 150th anniversary of Frederick Law Olmsted's speech at Yosemite National Park which helped lead to the National Park system. Dayton Duncan, writer and producer of the PBS series "The National Parks: America's Best Idea" and others will read aloud excerpts of the report. It will be held at the giant sequoia specimen tree in the Arnold Arboretum on Sunday, August 9 at 10:00am.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next JPNC meeting: Tuesday, September 22 at 7:00PM at Farnsworth House

Next Executive Committee meeting: Monday, September 14 at 6:00PM, JP Licks, 659 Centre Street