

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council March 25, 2014 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Gerard O'Connor, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Anne Barrett, Erin Colgan-Snyder, Anita Cooper, Benjamin Day, Bernard Doherty, Jamey Lionette, Mike O'Connor, Joseph Pendarvis, Daniel Perez Lacera, Carolyn Royce, Kyle D. Smith, Gert Thorn, and Jeffrey Wiesner.

Elected at the Meeting: Dana Gonsalves.

Other attendees: Dorothy Farrell, Giannalda Fontana, Peter Heaney, Doug Kinan, Virginia Marcotte, Martha Heath, Eric Herot, Justin Bensen (City Councillor Michelle Wu's Office), Ivon Indira Alvarez (City Councillor Michelle Wu's Office), Nathanael Shea (Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz' Office), Michael Baker (Rep. Jeffrey Sánchez' Office), and Chris Helms (Jamaica Plain News).

Meeting called to order at 7:07pm by Gerard O'Connor at Farnsworth House.

I. Introductions: Members introduced themselves and attendees introduced themselves.

II. Announcements:

- The Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (JP NDC) will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, May 22 at 6pm at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Hall.
- The 17th Annual Charlie Kelleher 5K Fun Run/Walk to benefit The Italian Home for Children will be on Saturday, April 26 starting at 9:00am in historic Forest Hills Cemetery. Registration will begin at 8:00am.
- Street sweeping of Jamaica Plain streets starts for the season on April 1. Don't forget to read the posted street signs and move your vehicle when appropriate starting on Tuesday, April 1.
- Community Servings will be having their 22nd Annual LifeSavor fundraiser on May 8 at the Langham Hotel,

250 Franklin Street, Boston. There is more information at www.servings.org/events.

III. Approval of minutes: Motion by Gert Thorn to approve the February 2014 minutes. Seconded by Mike

O'Connor. Passed 14-0-2.

IV. Presentation by Chris Helms: There was a brief presentation by Chris Helms, publisher of a new on-line news website, Jamaica Plain News. The slogan is "Fresh News from the Neighborhood You Love". Mr. Helms used to live on Weld Hill Street, but had to move to Salem. He will be returning to Jamaica Plain soon. He was formerly the editor of the Jamaica Plain Patch. Mr. Helms said that he hopes to publish three to five news items per day, as well as announcements and postings. The launch date is Thursday, April 3 with a launch party during First Thursday at

668 Centre Street from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. He can be contacted at chris@jpnews.com.

V. Election of new member: The Council next considered the matter of filling Council vacancies. There are two vacancies in Area A, and the JPNC is still recruiting in Area A for people to fill the seats.

Dana Gonsalves said that he works as the night manager for Pine Street Inn at Sister Virginia Mulhern House at 35 Creighton Street. The job is from 11pm - 7am six nights a week. He has been a maintenance man at The Brewery for seven years working for the JP NDC. Mr. Gonsalves said that he had been a member of the JPNC last year, but could not run for re-election in September 2013. Motion by Erin Colgan-Snyder to elect Dana Gonsalves as an

Area A member of the JPNC. Seconded by Anne Barrett. Passed 16-0-0. Mr. Gonsalves took his position on the

JPNC. There is still one vacancy in Area A on the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council.

VI. Resolution on Forest Hills Development:

- Bernard Doherty started by handing out a list of potential developments planned in the Forest Hills area from 2014 to 2018 and said that a "substantial construction tsunami" is coming without coordination. Mr. Doherty said that very little information is coming from many of the potential developments. He requested that the JPNC begin discussion of what its role should be in response. Folks thought it is a good idea to have effective planning in the area, go out to the neighborhood with information, and coordinate developments.

Bernard Doherty said that this was NOT about being against any one project. Members repeated that this was not a committee to stop any development and it was important that this committee NOT be an anti-surface pro-bridge committee.

Anne Barrett read an e-mail from Sarah Freeman which asked whether this was intended to stop the Casey Arborway project, which should not be delayed. Sarah Freeman and Giannalda Fontana thought smaller neighborhood groups or the City could do a better job planning for the area. Martha Heath and Dottie Farrell said there is a hidden agenda and the community will have no say if this is only a JPNC process.

JPNC members said that the City does not seem to have an effective planning agency. Members also thought that an

Ad-Hoc Committee might be better for this task because this Committee can include the community. Ben Day and Daniel Perez felt uncomfortable about the present draft language. A group of volunteers (Bernie Doherty, Mike O'Connor, Kyle Smith, Martha Heath and Giannalda Fontana) agreed to redraft the resolution and bring it to the next JPNC meeting. Motion by Gerard O'Connor to rewrite the resolution and bring it to the April JPNC meeting.

Seconded by Michael Reiskind. Passed 17-0-0.

VII. Committee Reports:

a. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Jamey Lionette reported that the Housing and Development Committee met on March 18 at the Bowditch School to consider a proposal from Allan Ihrer, a Stonybrook Neighborhood resident, to move the MBTA Arborway Yard to a site on American Legion Highway. This was an informational meeting only. Motion by Jamey Lionette to promote a community meeting about this issue to be held on Wednesday, April 30 at 6:30pm at The English High School. The Council will promote this meeting by e-mail. Seconded by Michael Reiskind. Passed 17-0-0.

The H&DC considered and is recommending a letter of support for the Urbanica proposal which is coming before the Boston Zoning Commission on April 9 for a zoning map amendment. There will be lots of additional community process for requested zoning changes and the Article 80 process. This letter of support is only for the map amendment and not a blanket approval. Motion by Benjamin Day to write a letter of support for the zoning map amendment, changing the Jamaica Plain mapping at Parcel U from Parkland Open Space to Multi-Family Residential. Seconded by Kyle Smith. Passed 17-0-0.

The next meeting of the H&DC will be Tuesday, April 15 at the Bowditch School, 82 Green Street at 6:30pm.

b. Zoning: Dave Baron reported that the Committee met twice at Farnsworth House, on March 5 and 19. At the second meeting, the Urbanica development for Parcel U in Forest Hills returned. The Committee also recommended a letter of support for the Urbanica proposal on the map amendment which was just passed. There were also one item that had to go before the JPNC Executive Committee because it appeared before the Zoning Board of Appeal today: 81 Amory Street, a request by Pam & Stone LLC to demolish the existing building and erect a new 4-story, 9-unit residential building with 9 on-site parking spaces. The developer wants to demolish an old blighted building. Their original proposal was compatible with affordable housing guidelines, but they were asked to increase the affordability. The Committee felt that market rate housing is not right in that area. The Zoning and Executive Committees recommended approval, with the proviso that the interior plan be modified to create 12 units (rather than 9), including six 1-BR and six 2-BR units and at least one affordable 1-BR unit and one affordable 2-BR unit; the developer is encouraged to make the street level facade of the building more inviting/interesting.

The following two items need a vote of the JP Neighborhood Council: 1) 16 Pond View Avenue, a request by Barry and Joyce Schwartz to expand the living space of Unit 2 into the third-floor attic, and add a bedroom, bathroom, and deck. The deck is visible by one neighbor who has approved. The other resident in the condominium building has also approved. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. 2) 377 Centre Street, a request by Boston Buddy LLC (Matt Virzi) to change the occupancy from restaurant to restaurant with take-out; no work to be done. This is the Aurum Restaurant (the former Kennedy Fried Chicken), now with a new owner. The Zoning Committee recommends approval with the proviso that take-out use be limited to this business and this applicant only. Motion by Bernard Doherty to accept the recommendations of the Zoning Committee on 16 Pond View Avenue and 377 Centre Street. Seconded by Carolyn Royce. Passed 16-0-1.

David Baron submitted a written list of proposed members of the Committee: In addition to the three officers, Kevin Moloney, Gerard O'Connor, and Michael Reiskind who are ex-officio on the Committee, the proposed members are David Baron, Anne Barrett, Bernard Doherty, Kyle Smith, Jesse Abair, James Greene, Jake Hart, Andrea Howley, Kevin Leary, Steve Lussier, Josh Muncy, James Seagle, Jon Truslow, and Marie Turley. This leaves one JPNC vacancy available. Motion by Anne Barrett to accept the proposed list as members of the JPNC Zoning Committee. Seconded by Bernard Doherty. Passed 17-0-0.

The next meetings of the Zoning Committee will take place on April 2 and April 16 at 7:00pm at Farnsworth

House, 90 South Street. The Committee will hear a report on the new Article 89 regulations on Urban Agriculture.

c. Public Service: Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee met on March 4 at Curtis Hall. On the agenda was discussion of the initiatives of the Committee for the upcoming two years. Centre and South Streets planning was also discussed, with folks agreeing that more money will be needed for real planning along this important corridor. A list of JP streets that need repaving and JP crosswalks that need restriping was developed and sent to City Hall.

The next meeting of the Public Service Committee will be Tuesday, April 1 at Curtis Hall, 20 South Street at

7:00pm. On the agenda will be finalizing the Committee initiatives, and Centre and South Streets planning.

VIII. Old/New Business:

- Environment, Parks and Energy Committee: Benjamin Day, Martha Rodriguez and Dottie Farrell volunteered to revitalize the Committee.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next JPNC meeting: Tuesday, April 29 at 7:00PM, at Farnsworth House

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