

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
October 29, 2013 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Ben Day, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Anne Barrett, Erin Colgan-Snyder, Bernard Doherty, Jamey Lionette, Kevin Moloney, Gerard O'Connor, Carolyn Royce, Jeffrey Wiesner.

Community Attendance: Anita Cooper, Red Burrows, Gert Thorn, Kaveh Riahi, Ivanna Lara (City Councillor Matt O'Malley's office), Beatriz Rivera (City Councillor Matt O'Malley's office) and Emily Resnevic (Jamaica Plain Gazette).

Meeting called to order at 7:03pm by Ben Day at the First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain.

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

II. Changes to Agenda: The presentation of the City of Boston adult education program by Landon Dickey was subtracted from the agenda.

III. Announcements: No announcements

IV. Report from the JPNC Election Ombuds Board and the Elections Committee: Red Burrows, speaking on behalf of Pam Bender, chair of the Ombuds Board, reported on the results of the JPNC bi-annual election. The election took place on Saturday, October 19 and the counting of ballots was on Sunday, October 20 at the JP Neighborhood Development Corporation Brewery Building B. The results of the balloting is listed at the end of these minutes.

During the election it was discovered that Carolyn Royce actually lives in Area A, not in Area B where she was listed. As a result, any Area A residents who wished to vote for her (like her son!) were allowed to do so. The Ombuds Board recommends to the JPNC that Carolyn take an At-Large seat (she met the threshold of 50 votes) so that she can represent everyone who voted for her. Motion by Michael Reiskind to accept the results of the balloting with the proviso that Carolyn Royce be accepted as an At-Large elected member. Seconded by Ben Day. Passed 11-0-0.

Red Burrows, speaking as chair of the Elections Committee, reported that the 2013 Election went off pretty well. All three polls were covered all the time, but some volunteers had to do double duty. There were bilingual volunteers stationed at Jackson Square Stop & Shop. On the down side, the JP Gazette did not announce the Election in the nearest edition, nor did it publish the biographies of the candidates in the written paper. Also, the City of Boston Resident Lists seemed to be missing some clearly valid residents. Red recommended for next time that more volunteers be signed up and they be recruited earlier. Probably only 700-800 ballots need to be printed for 2015. Motion by Dave Baron to dissolve the Ad-Hoc Elections Committee. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. Passed 11-0-0.

Ben Day officially announced that there are eight vacancies on the JP Neighborhood Council: three in Area A, one in Area B, two in Area C, and two At-Large. The process is to nominate, or self-nominate, candidates at any of the next two JPNC meetings (November and December).

V. Approval of minutes: Motion by David Baron to approve the September 2013 minutes. Seconded by Kevin Moloney. Passed 9-0-2.

VI. Committee Reports:

a. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Jamey Lionette reported that the H&DC met on October 15. The Committee is looking for more members.

The Hughes Oil site at 3593 Washington Street was discussed. This is a large all-rental development with 281 residential units and 2 or 3 commercial units. Since the H&DC last met, the developers have increased the number of affordable units in the project, increased the number of larger-bedroom units, and reduced the criteria for affordability to allow more to qualify.

There was a question whether there were any guidelines for the H&DC regarding development in the neighborhood. Beside the stated goal of 25% affordability, there are written Healthy Housing Guidelines and Transit Oriented Development guidelines. Anne Barrett as about green or sustainability guidelines and Bernie Doherty asked whether the H&DC sends out the City of Boston Article 80 to developers, and whether the Committee members understand the Article 80 process.

The Committee meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm at the Bowditch School, 82 Green Street. The next meeting of the H&DC will be on November 19.

b. Parks & Open Space (POSC): The Committee needs a new Chair. No report.

There was a question about the new benches that have appeared on the sidewalks in the business district.

c. Zoning: Dave Baron reported that the Committee has begun to meet on Wednesdays, instead of Thursdays. The Committee met twice, on October 2 and October 16. There was one item that has already appeared before the Zoning Board of Appeal: 76 Mozart Street, a request by Filomania Falcucci (acting as agent for the owner, Thomas

Falcucci) to change occupancy from a single-family to two-family dwelling and to erect a second-storey addition over the garage and renovate as two units of housing. The Zoning Committee recommended approval subject to a statement of support from 74 Mozart Street and Chestnut Avenue neighbors.

The following four recommendations do need a vote of the JPNC: 1) 75 Amory Avenue, a request by the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation to build a 4-storey residential building with 39 affordable units and build ancillary parking for 28 cars. The Committee recommends approval. 2) 144-146 South Street, a request by Maria Espiritusanto (acting as agent for the owner, Jonathan McConathy) to allow fortune teller as a listed use. This is for Botanica San Miguel which has operated here for many years, and has been having Tarot Card readings for clients. The Committee recommends approval. 3) 28 Zamora Street, a request by Pedro Sarango to refinish the basement and rebuild stairs to the first floor. The Jamaica Pond Association voted not to oppose. The Committee recommends approval. 4) 3593-3615 Washington Street, a request by Forest Hills Arborway LLC, doing business as The Commons at Forest Hills, (acting as agent for the owner, Arborway Corporation) to allow construction of a 285-unit development in two buildings with 281 residential units and commercial units on the first floor, including possible take-out restaurant, fitness center, day care center, and one or more car-sharing spaces. This was a well-attended meeting, with most people complimentary of the project, especially the Stonybrook Neighborhood Association (SNA). The developers have been responsive by moving the parking, stepping down the building, lowering the affordability criteria, increasing the number of affordable units, and increasing the number of larger-bedroom units to 38% 2-bedroom and 6% 3-bedroom. The SNA agrees that a Memorandum of Understanding between the developers and the neighbors is progressing and expect to soon continue to support the Zoning Committee's recommendation of approval. The Committee recommends denial of the take-out uses because no business tenants have been selected as yet. The Committee recommends approval as to the dimensional and parking variances, and approval as to the multi-family, day care, fitness center and car rental uses, but to recommend denial as to the take-out uses (small restaurant and large restaurant).

Bernie Doherty said that this development, along with the Casey Overpass coming down, will create a big mess in Forest Hills. He doesn't like the six-storey height and the boxy look of the project. Also, the 281 units of housing will have a deficit of parking because there are only 180 parking spaces being built. All residents will be able to get Resident Parking Program stickers so they will be allowed to flood the adjoining streets of the neighborhood. Bernie thought the project moved too fast through the process. Dave Baron said that Transit Oriented Development (TOD) guidelines should be looked at again, because parking issues like this always come up at every zoning request. Kevin Moloney agreed to looking at TOD again and said that the lack of adequate transit services is a major problem. Jerry O'Connor thought the developers were responsive and also extended the community comment period. He spoke in favor of the project. Jamey Lionette said that the developers responded somewhat to the H&DC concerns on affordability, but definitely not far enough.

Motion by Kevin Moloney to recommend approval of the first three requests at 75 Amory Avenue, 144-146 South Street and 28 Zamora Street. Seconded by Jerry O'Connor. Passed 10-0-1. Motion by David Baron to recommend approval of the request at 3593-3615 Washington Street as to the dimensional and parking variances, and approval as to the multi-family, day care, fitness center and car rental uses, but to recommend denial as to the take-out uses (small restaurant and large restaurant). Seconded by Michael Reiskind. Passed 8-3-0.

The next meetings of the Zoning Committee will be Wed., November 6 and Wed., November 20 at Farnsworth House, 90 South Street, at 7:00pm.

d. Public Service: Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee met on October 1 at the John F. Kennedy School. On the agenda was a request Centre Street Sanctuary at 365 Centre Street for an entertainment license for live performers. This will be for acoustic music only on some weekdays from 8pm to 10pm, as well as Saturday brunches. It will be open to local musicians. Comments from the audience were favorable, with no one speaking against the proposal. Some thought that more than a few nights could have live music. In fact the Committee recommended that the music end later than the proposed 10pm. Motion by David Baron to recommend approval of the request for live entertainment at Centre Street Sanctuary up to 10:29pm. Seconded by Kevin Moloney. Passed 11-0-0.

The next meeting of the Public Service Committee will be Tuesday, November 5 at the E-13 Police Station (subsequently moved to Urban Edge at 21542 Columbus Avenue) at 7:00pm. On the agenda will be requests of Ruggiero's at 3345 Washington Street for a transfer of its all-alcoholic beverages package store license and a request of Old Havana Restaurant at 349 Centre Street (former Tacos El Charro space) for a new beer & wine license.

VII. Old/New Business: Orientation for new members. Michael Reiskind usually offers an orientation session for new members of the JP Neighborhood Council. He will try to book two dates and contact the five new members to work out a schedule. This year participants from the JPNC Racial Justice Committee will also assist.

VIII. Discussion of settlement of legal appeal on 161 So. Huntington Avenue: Ben Day said that there is a possibility of a settlement of the JPNC's legal action on the 161 So. Huntington Avenue project. He then summarized the history of the project for the members. The proposed development is at 161 So. Huntington

Avenue, the former headquarters of the Home for Little Wanderers. The area is mostly institutional. Three variances and a permit to build 196 rental housing units were sought by the developer. The Jamaica Pond Association, the JPNC and its Zoning Committee, and the BRA-appointed Impact Advisory Group (IAG) opposed the proposal as submitted. There was opposition from all community levels at the public meetings. The concerns were over luxury housing, the loss of the 1918 Knight Building on the property, the design being too boxy and too dense, and the lack of sight corridors to the Emerald Necklace. The developer went before the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) anyway, and was approved unanimously. The JPNC appealed the ZBA decision in Superior Court, asking to invalidate the decision. The defendants are the ZBA and the developer. A main argument centered on the issue of standing, where an appellant has to live in the area or be a “municipal body” (not a government agency). The appeal suit was dismissed and the JPNC appealed to the Appeals Court. When a monetary bond was not imposed by the court, the developer began to negotiate. The main issue was trying to change the project, not stop the development. Motion by Kevin Moloney to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy on the legal matter relating to the 161 So. Huntington Avenue project. Seconded by Bernard Doherty. Passed 10-1-0 by roll call vote as follows:

David Baron - Aye	Anne Barrett - Aye	Erin Colgan-Snyder - Nay
Ben Day - Aye	Bernard Doherty - Aye	Jamey Lionette - Aye
Kevin Moloney - Aye	Gerard O’Connor - Aye	Michael Reiskind - Aye
Carolyn Royce - Aye	Jeffrey Wiesner - Aye	

Meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 8:39pm.

The JP Neighborhood Council came out of Executive Session at 9:05pm.

IX. Old/New Business:

Bernie Doherty spoke about Asticou Martinwood South Street Neighborhood Association (AMSNA) issues with the Casey Arborway project. MassDOT has a new plan for the exit of buses from the upper busway of Forest Hills T station. There will now be only two bus bays, not three, and no high wall at the end of Asticou Road. A berm and trees have been added at Forest Hill Station. This is much better for light pollution control, but the noise is still the same. Bernie also spoke about the use of Accelerated Bridge Program money going for a MBTA project. The money is now coming from another program, however Rep. Liz Malia had not heard about this change in funding.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next JPNC meeting: Tuesday, November 26 at 7:00PM, at the First Baptist Church
 Next Executive Committee meeting: Wednesday, November 20 at 6:30PM, JP Licks, 659 Centre Street

Election results for the JPNC Election on Saturday, October 19, 2013
 (245 ballots were cast)

At-Large

Michael Reiskind	157 votes
Dave Baron	137 votes

Area A

Martha Rodriguez	40 votes
Jeffrey Wiesner	34 votes

Area B

Erin Colgan-Snyder	65 votes
Carolyn Royce	63 votes
Jamey Lionette	56 votes
Jerry O’Connor	54 votes
Anne Barrett	50 votes

Area C

Kevin Moloney	46 votes
Benjamin Day	44 votes
Bernard Doherty	38 votes

