

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
September 25, 2013 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Ben Day, Red Burrows, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Erin Colgan-Snyder, Dana Gonsalves, Andrea Howley, Jamey Lionette, Martha Rodriguez, Jen Rogers, Ken Sazama, Natalie VanLandingham, Jesse White.
Community Attendance: Anita Cooper, Betsy Cowan, Pam Bender, Michael Baker (Rep. Jeffrey Sánchez's office), and Jullianne Doherty (Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services).

Meeting called to order at 7:01pm by Ben Day at Curtis Hall.

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

II. Announcements:

- There will be a second meeting about the new proposed development at the former Hughes Oil Yard site, 3593 Washington Street, to be called "Commons at Forest Hills", on Thursday, September 26 at 6:30 PM at the English High School Auditorium at 144 McBride Street.
- The JP Neighborhood Development Corporation's Octoberfest ¡Fiesta! will be on Wednesday, October 16 from 6pm to 9pm at the Samuel Adams Brewery, 30 Germania Street.
- The JP Neighborhood Council election will be on Saturday, October 19 from 10am to 7pm.
- Circle The City: Open Streets, Open World will take place on Blue Hill Avenue from Warren Street to Dudley Street on Sunday, September 29.
- Rep. Jeffrey Sánchez will be hosting a Gun Violence Forum on Wednesday, October 9 at 6:00pm at the Anna Mae Cole Center (Bromley Hall), 10 Lamartine Street Extension.

III. Approval of minutes: Motion by Red Burrows to approve the July 2013 minutes. Seconded by Martha Rodriguez. Passed 13-0-0.

IV. John F. Kennedy School garden: Anita Cooper, Co-Chair of the John F. Kennedy School Parent Teacher Council (PTC), spoke about the problems with vandalism at the students' garden behind the John F. Kennedy Elementary School. There are problems of dogs being walked and fouling the vegetable patches, stored items being taken, and water barrels being tipped over. The school cannot lock the gate because it is a second egress from the school. Also, a security light is shaded by maple trees and she can't get it trimmed. Suggestions offered were a one-way gate to allow egress but not entrance to the garden, a new fence around just the garden, and digital cameras feeding to a remote computer at her home. Ben Day recommended that she go to the next Public Service Committee meeting to continue the discussion.

V. Committee Reports:

a. Parks & Open Space (POSC): Andrea Howley said that the POSC did not meet in August.

b. Zoning: Dave Baron reported that the Committee met three times, on August 8, September 11 and September 18. There were three items that have already appeared before the Zoning Board of Appeal: 1 Roanoke Avenue, a request by Pine Village Preschool to change occupancy from 36 children to 46 children. This is a long-standing preschool in the St. John's Episcopal Church building. The Zoning Committee recommended approval. 27 Montebello Road, a request by Joseph Consalvo to use premises for on-site dumpster storage in conjunction with a curb cut application. The Zoning Committee recommended approval. 105A So. Huntington Avenue, a request by Cedar Valley Holdings, LLC, for a new 13-storey mixed-use building. with 195 residential units and a 147-space parking garage. The proposal has changed quite a bit since the first plans. There were still height and density concerns. The building is much higher and denser than allowed. The Committee felt that the affordability at 20% of the units at 70% of the AMI was not enough, and that there were not enough 3-bedroom units. It was not unanimous, but the Zoning Committee voted to recommend denial. The Zoning Board of Appeal approved the proposal.

The following two recommendations do need a vote of the JPNC: 1) 7 Bynner Street, a request by Andrew Kara (acting as agent for the owner Robert Flood) to expand the living space of unit 1 into the basement. This has been in existence since the 1980's. The variance was sparked by the need for a second means of egress. The Committee reluctantly recommends approval. 2) 19-21/23-25 Chestnut Square, a request by Wim de Kok and Priscilla McMullen to subdivide the existing lot, 19-21 Chestnut Square, and erect a new two-family house in the newly created lot at 23-25 Chestnut Square. There was extensive community process. There wasn't unanimous agreement on the plans, but it was acceptable. The applicant has agreed to withdraw to allow more time. The Committee recommends approval, subject to the MOU and further meeting with neighbors - including the nascent Glenvale Park Neighborhood Association - to talk about construction mitigation and more parking spaces. Construction workers won't be allowed to park near the site. Motion by Red Burrows to recommend approval of the two requests at 7 Bynner Street, and 19-21/23-25 Chestnut Square, subject to the MOU and further meeting with neighbors. Seconded by Dana Gonsalves. Passed 12-0-1.

The next meetings of the Zoning Committee will be Wed., October 2 and Wed., October 16 at Farnsworth House,

90 South Street, at 7:00pm.

c. Public Service: Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee met on August 6, September 10 and September 17. On the August agenda were requests from Bukhara at 701 Centre Street for a change in its beer & wine license to add the serving of liqueurs, and a request of American Legion Post #76 at 280 South Street for a change in manager. The first issue was sent to the Executive Committee because of time constraints. The Public Service Committee actually met twice on the Bukhara issue - on October 2, 2012 and on August 6, 2013. There was 6-0-0 vote to recommend denial of this proposal at the Public Service Committee meeting on October 2, 2012. At the Public Service Committee meeting on August 6, 2013, there was 6-0-1 vote to not approve this proposal until the labor issues are resolved. Discussion centered on the issue of wage violations at Bukhara and two other restaurants owned by the same management group. Payment of employees at less than minimum wage and nonpayment of overtime were the accusations. The JPNC Executive Committee voted to recommend denial. The Licensing Board voted to allow the extension of liqueurs at Bukhara. The second issue was discussed as part of a longer discussion on simplifying the licensing process for applicants: As a matter of course, the Licensing Board approves applications for a change in manager when there has been no violations for a long period of time. The Committee felt that it should follow the Licensing Board lead and exempt such applications from the neighborhood hearing process. Also as a matter of course, the Entertainment Board approves applications for incidental music (recorded music, CDs and radio) without a hearing. The Committee felt that it should follow the Entertainment Board lead and exempt such applications from the neighborhood hearing process.

On the September agendas were requests of The Dogwood Café in Forest Hills for an outdoor patio in the rear, a new coffee shop at 7 Pond Street, and a transfer of a package store license at Stony Brook Wine & Spirits near Stony Brook T Station. The Dogwood Café and 7 Pond Coffee Bar were discussed: the issue of take-out at 7 Pond was discussed and the Committee was comfortable with this owner. The Public Service Committee recommended approval. The Stony Brook Wine & Spirits issue was discussed at both September meetings: The history of the new owner at their other stores on 616 Shawmut Avenue and 368 Warren Street was the main issue. There was also discussion of whether the Stamatatos family was willing to sell this package store business, and confusion over a separate proposal involving a package store and the Stamatatos family at 626 Centre Street. After the second meeting, the community felt comfortable with the transfer on Boylston Street and the Public Service Committee recommended approval, with provisos. Motion by Michael Reiskind to recommend approval of the three requests 1) Hale Marketing, Inc., doing business as "The Dogwood Café", at 3712 Washington Street for a change in its 7-Day Common Victualler All-Alcoholic Beverages License to add a seasonal outdoor patio in the rear for 22 seats with the hours of 11:30am to 12 midnight, 2) Café Fixe, Inc., doing business as "7 Pond Coffee Bar" at 597-605 Centre Street (7 Pond Street) for a 7-Day Common Victualler License with the hours of 6:30am to 9:30pm, with Maks Milstein as manager, and a take-out license if needed that remains with this business owner only, and 3) Stony Brook Wine & Spirits, Inc. at 78-80 Boylston Street for a transfer of its Retail Package Store All-Alcoholic Beverages License to PVG Liquors, Inc., doing business as "Brothers Wine & Spirits" at the same location, with Victor Fernandez as manager, provided that no nips or single beers be sold at this store and the hours, security cameras and absence of grates remain the same. Seconded by Red Burrows. Passed 12-0-1. Motion by Michael Reiskind to appoint Jeffrey Wiesner as vice-chair of the Public Service Committee and to allow two exemptions from the neighborhood hearing process - incidental recorded music and a change in manager if there have been no violations for five years and there are no neighborhood complaints. Seconded by Andrea Howley. Passed 13-0-0. The next meeting of the Public Service Committee will be Tuesday, October 1 at the John F. Kennedy School at 7 Bolster Street at 7:00pm. On the agenda will be a request of Centre Street Sanctuary at 365 Centre Street for an entertainment license for live performers.

d. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Jamey Lionette reported that the H&DC met on August 20. The Hughes Oil site, a 283-unit development at 3593 Washington Street, was discussed. Jack Brennan from the development company made the presentation. This is a large all-rental development with 281 residential units and 2 or 3 commercial units. The site was heavily polluted with petroleum and coal, but it is all clean now. The two present tenants will be leaving and new construction will take place. The developer has been very responsive to community requests. The buildings have reduced the Burnett Street building height and moved the buildings around to produce 0% net change in shadow, more retail and larger residential rentals at the ground level allowing for more retail in the future. They have increased the number of 3-bedroom units. A bicycle path along the Orange Line is still a maybe. There will be 10 surface parking spaces: 2 Zip Car, 2 handicapped and 6 standard spaces. The H&DC would like to see more affordable housing units (more than 13-15%) and there are still many changes that have not come before the H&DC. Motion by Jamey Lionette that the JPNC is not ready to support this project at 3593 Washington Street without better affordability, even though they are encouraged by other changes. Seconded by Red Burrows. Passed 12-1-0.

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

e. Casey Arborway Design Advisory Group (DAG): Red Burrows said that the MassDOT had a public meeting on

August 8 at English High at which the exit of buses from the upper busway of Forest Hills T station was discussed. Also on the agenda were bicycle/pedestrian design refinements, landscaping and open space, and parking & curbside allocation. They changed the plan for the upper busway and the flow is much better, but the Asticou Martinwood South Street Neighborhood Association (AMSNA) still thinks that there are too many buses in the upper busway.

f. Ad-Hoc Elections Committee: Red Burrows reported that the Elections Committee had extended the deadline for accepting nominations by two weeks to September 20. There are now twelve certified candidates for the JPNC Election on Saturday, October 19. Kevin Moloney had resigned from the Ombuds Board to run as a candidate. The Ombuds Board is now comprised of Karley Ausiello, Pam Bender and Kosta Demos. Red reminded everyone to get three volunteers for the two-hour shifts on October 19. He also needs help with setup and the counting of ballots on Sunday, October 20. Red also said that folks could run for the Council as write-ins or wait two months for the new JPNC to fill any vacancy.

g. Ad-Hoc Racial Justice Committee: After meeting with all the JPNC Committees for discussions on racial equity issues from each committee's perspective, the Committee has come up with three recommendations: 1) Develop off-site workshops to train JPNC committee members on racial equity issues, 2) Have the JPNC write to the Mayoral and City Council candidates to ask them to adopt the Seattle Plan on racial equity, 3) Have the JPNC conduct voluntary training sessions with a racial justice orientation, especially at the new member's orientation at the beginning of a new Council's term. Motion by Red Burrows to adopt recommendations 2) and 3). Seconded by Jesse White. Passed 13-0-0.

VI. Old/New Business: The issue of changes at the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services was raised in the context of a new mayor coming to office in January 2014. It was hoped that the importance of a good Jamaica Plain liaison at the Mayor's Office was understood at City Hall and the JPNC would like to keep Jullianne Doherty. Motion by Ben Day to keep Jullianne Doherty as the Jamaica Plain liaison at the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services and prohibit her from leaving. Seconded by Dave Baron. Passed 13-0-0.

- There were heartfelt goodbyes to and from members who will be leaving the JPNC after this meeting. Someone said that being on the JPNC was like having a voice in the Jamaica Plain family.

VII. Update on legal appeal to 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. Motion by Red Burrows to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy on the legal matter relating to the 161 So. Huntington Avenue project. Seconded by Jen Rogers. Passed 9-4-0 by roll call vote as follows:

David Baron - Aye

Red Burrows - Aye

Erin Colgan-Snyder - Nay

Ben Day - Aye

Dana Gonsalves - Nay

Andrea Howley - Nay

Jamey Lionette - Aye

Michael Reiskind - Aye

Martha Rodriguez - Aye

Jen Rogers - Aye

Ken Sazama - Nay

Natalie VanLandingham - Aye

Jesse White - Aye

Meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 8:37pm. As before, the JPNC will keep minutes of the Executive Session, but not release them until after the litigation would not be affected.

The JP Neighborhood Council did not return from Executive Session.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:57pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next JPNC meeting: Tuesday, October 29 at 7:00PM, at the First Baptist Church

Next Executive Committee meeting: Wednesday, October 23 at 6:30PM, JP Licks, 659 Centre Street