

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council

November 26, 2019 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Kevin Rainsford, Max Glikman, Michael Reiskind, Robin Cheung, Valerie Coimbra, Samantha Montano, Peg Preble, Carolyn Royce, Emily Tabor, Gert Thorn, Trevor Wissink-Adams, and Priscilla Yang.
Elected at the meeting: Will Cohen.

Other attendees: Dana Gonsalves, Sarah Freeman, Dorothy Farrell, Louise Robbins, Aidan Foley, Alex Grey, Lauren Grey, Jennifer Uhrhane, Michael Epp, Kayla Myros, Sagie Tvizer (JP Counts), Rachel Nagin (Office of City Councillor Annissa Essaibi-George), Justin McClarey (Office of City Councillor Matt O'Malley), Lauren Bennett (Jamaica Plain Gazette), and Richard Heath (Boston Bulletin).

Meeting called to order at 7:07pm by Kevin Rainsford at Farnsworth House.

1. Introductions: Council members introduced themselves. Aides of elected officials and the press were introduced.

2. Approval of October minutes: Motion by Samantha Montano to approve the minutes from the October 22 meeting. Seconded by Trevor Wissink-Adams. Passed 9-0-3. The approval of the July and September minutes was tabled.

3. Announcements:

- The Egleston Square Neighborhood Association, Egleston Square Main Street, and the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (JP NDC) are hosting a Summit for a Safe & Healthy Egleston on Thursday, December 5 at 9:00am at Brookside Community Health Center, 3297 Washington Street.

- The annual Tree Lightings will take place on Saturday, December 7. The Monument Tree Lighting will be at 2:30pm and the Tree Lighting at Hyde Square will take place at 1:45pm.

- The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) had a meeting on the Arborway Parkways Improvement Project last week on November 21. Comments can be made up to December 16.

- There is a proposal for a new development in the Stonybrook neighborhood at 10 Stonley Road (35 Brookley Road). Comments can be made up to November 29.

- City Councillor Matt O'Malley is hosting a Holiday Celebration on Tuesday, December 10 at 6:30pm at West on Centre, 1732 Centre Street in West Roxbury.

4. Presentation on 2020 Census: Sagie Tvizer, a community organizer at the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (JP NDC), spoke about how the NDC is co-ordinating the outreach to under-counted populations during the 2020 census. It is important to count every person in Jamaica Plain, especially the historically under-counted: minority or at-risk residents. The JP NDC is co-ordinating the work of the JP Counts Committee, working with the three Main Streets, elected officials, and the three health centers. They meet once-a-month. The next meeting will be on December 12. They will be handing out literature at the transit stops and group homes, This census is mostly filled out via an on-line form. The self-response form will be available starting on March 23, 2020.

5. Election to Fill the Vacancy on the Council: Three candidate introduced themselves and spoke briefly about themselves asking to fill the vacancy of an At-Large seat. Aidan Foley from 40 Chestnut Square has lived in Jamaica Plain twice: eight years presently and one year previously. He is a developer of solar energy projects - mostly out of state - as well as working on energy efficiency, urban design, and parks. He would be interested in the Zoning Committee, Housing & Development Committee, or the Parks + Committee. He is active in school issues, too. He has an office on Green Street and spends a lot of time on public service boards.

Will Cohen from 61 Walk Hill Street said that he works at Utile as an urban planner and designer of neighborhood master plans. He works on affordable housing and demographics in changing neighborhoods. He would be interested in the Zoning Committee or Housing & Development Committee.

Alex Grey from 68 Wenham Street said that he has lived in Jamaica Plain for eight years. He is involved in The Footlight Club and Community Servings. He has worked with the homeless, and is currently at the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development. He brings to the table the perspective of the disabilities community. He has worked in the Patrick administration as a policy analyst in transportation and public safety. He would be interested in the Education Committee. Michael Epp and Dana Gonsalves did not want to be considered as candidates.

Will Cohen was elected an At-Large member by written ballot and took a seat at the table at the end of the meeting.

6. Committee Reports/Recommendations:

6.1. Zoning Committee (ZC): Max Glikman reported that the Zoning Committee met on November 6 and November 20 and six requests were considered. Two requests have already gone to the Zoning Board of Appeal: A) 378-380 Centre Street, a request by Michel Soltani (the Brendan Behan Pub) to add an outdoor patio with 23 seats and access to existing bar; no work to be done; and B) 71-71R May Street, a request by Meredith McGuirk to change occupancy of a rear building from garage to single-family residence and expand and renovate rear building per plans. This work has already been done by a contractor who absconded with the funds and has left the country. So there is little chance to rectify the situation. The Jamaica Hills Association is in opposition, but some neighbors are in support. The sixth request was for

Neighborhood Design Overlay District (NDOD) comments only: 73 Sheridan Street, a request by Lee Goodman to construct three townhouses with eight residential units in the Hyde Square Neighborhood Design Overlay District. The Inspectional Services Department determined that this proposal is as-of-right. Comments on the proposal were sent by the Zoning Committee. Only three votes are needed tonight. 1) 135 School Street, a request by Maya Gaul to convert an existing single-family residence to a two-family residence, per plans. This is to build a full-size doorway to the basement. The recommendation of the ZC is to approve. 2) 48 St. John Street, a request by Seneca Francione for two applications: (a) curb cut and off-street parking for two cars on Rockview Street side of property, and (b) extend living space into basement per plans. There were no objections from neighbors. The recommendation of the ZC is to approve. 3) 10R Burr Street, a request by Gregory Shores and Patrick Donovan to build a detached one-car garage. The recommendation of the ZC is to approve. Motion by Priscilla Yang to support the recommendations of the Zoning Committee as presented on 135 School Street, 48 St. John Street, and 10R Burr Street. Seconded by Emily Tabor. Passed 12-0-0.

The next Zoning Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, December 4 at 7:00pm at Farnsworth House.

6.2. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee met on November 5 at Curtis Hall. On the agenda was a request by a new Dunkin' in the newly-built building at 37 So. Huntington Avenue. They are asking for a new common victualler license with a 5:00am opening. Motion by Michael Reiskind to support the petition of Jes Donuts, Inc., doing business as "Dunkin", at 37 South Huntington Avenue in Jamaica Plain for a 7-Day Common Victualler License with the hours of 5:00am to 9:00pm, with Janel Silveira as manager. Seconded by Kevin Rainsford. Passed 12-0-0.

The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, December 3 at 7:00pm at Curtis Hall. On the agenda will be a request of City Feed and Supply at 672 Centre Street. They are selling the business and asking for a transfer of their beer & wine package store license to the new owner.

6.3. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Carolyn Royce reported that the H&DC met on November 19 at the Bowditch School. On the agenda was an update from the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (JP NDC) on the Mildred Hailey Apts. renovations. The JP NDC plans to renovate and replace about existing 200 units and add additional market rate units to the campus. The JP NDC will apply to change the development's zoning to a Planned Development Area (PDA). Community meetings will start in 2020 and construction is expected to begin in 2022. Also on the agenda was a request for a comment letter for the Article 80 process on 10 Stonley Road (35 Brookley Road). Carolyn Royce submitted a draft letter from the H&DC. This is a four-story apartment building with 45 rental units. There are ten affordable units with five designated as artist work space. The affordability meets Plan:JP/Rox guidelines. The developers were asked to lower the number of affordable units and deepen the affordability by lowering the Area Median Income (AMI) thresholds. The community process is not finished at the Sionbrook Neighborhood Association (SNA). Motion by Carolyn Royce to approve the draft letter with three amendments. Seconded by Gert Thorn. Jennifer Uhrhane, co-chair of the SHA sub-committee on 10 Stonley said that this development has an oversized footprint, with serious issues about neighborhood context, shadows, setbacks, and stepbacks. It was noted that the developer has to come back for community review at the Zoning Committee. Passed 11-0-1.

The next H&DC meeting will be on Tuesday, December 10 at 6:30pm. On the agenda will be a presentation from the developers of 3326 Washington Street for their Article 80 community review.

6.4. Ad Hoc Parks + Committee: Robin Cheung reported that Esther Tutella-Chen had her baby. She said that the Committee met on October 24. There were 35 attendees to listen about the Shattuck planning process. The meeting was a platform to listen and learn.

The next Parks + Committee meeting will be on Monday, December 9 at 8:30pm at JP Licks. The Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) might come to a future JPNC meeting.

6.5. Ad Hoc Education Committee: Trevor Wissink-Adams reported that the Committee met on Wednesday, November 13 at 7:00pm at Curtis Hall. Boston Public Schools (BPS) Superintendent Brenda Cassellius came to The English High School on November 25 for a listening tour for Jamaica Plain, Roslindale, and West Roxbury. About 125 people attended. with 25 folks from the Hyde Square Task Force. BPS came and presented their priorities and the meeting broke into ten break-out sessions. BPS will collect all comments and gather them into a strategic plan to be issued in February 2020.

There will be a registration and information session for the January sign-up period on Monday, December 9 at the Connolly Branch Library, 433 Centre Street.

The next Education Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, December 11 at 7:00pm at JP Licks. There is space on the Committee for volunteers from the community.

6.6. Ad Hoc Outreach Task Force: Max Glikman said that the Outreach Task Force met on November 11. The Task Force focussed on the next JPNC election scheduled for April 2020. They want it to be more competitive and recruit more volunteers for all the Committees. They are developing a master events calendar for JPNC events and other groups. The next Outreach Task Force meeting will be on Monday, December 9 at 6:00pm at JP Licks.

7. New Business:

- Gert Thorn spoke about the deplorable construction at 701 Centre Street, slated to become a Chase Bank. This building is in a Neighborhood Design Overlay District (NDOD). There are very few office buildings on Centre Street in the

NDOD. This building was chosen because of its quality. The issue is that, with this bad design, we are losing our amenities and quality of place; our comfortable built environment. Residents expected to see a restored storefront when revealed. The Inspectional Services Department (ISD) mistakenly said it was not in a NDOD and did not need a design review. The drawings that were filed were different than built. A stop order was promised, but it did not stick. Several residents went to the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) to inform them about the issues and asked them to conduct a design review or restore the facade to the original wooden frames (like Carrot Flower next door). Gert Thorn submitted a draft letter for support. Motion by Carolyn Royce to support the draft letter with changes to be worked on by the Executive Committee. Seconded by Max Glikman. Passed 11-1-0. Gert Thorn said that folks also have a problem with the City's standards on disability access.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:08pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next JPNC meeting: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 at 7:00PM at Farnsworth House
Next Executive Committee meeting, Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 7:00pm at JP Licks.