

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
October 25, 2022 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Will Cohen, Bernard Doherty, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Nicholas Chaves, Sarah Freeman, Omer Hecht, Daniel Perez Lacera, Peg Preble, Kevin Rainsford, Micah Sachs, Paige Sparks, Renée Stacey Welch, and Trevor Wissink-Adams.

Other attendees: Celeste Walker, Dana Gonsalves, Michael Epp, Aiden Foley, Janet Galloway, Franklyn Salimbene, Kane Dimasso-Scott, Jennifer Smith, Alex Long, Dale Cumberbatch, Kendra Halliwell, Louise Johnson, Gerard O'Connor, Brittany Gudanowski, Susan Moir, Jennifer Meakem, Kathryn S., (617)756-6847, Melissa Dullea (MBTA), Capt. John Hughes (Boston Police Department, E-13), Sgt. Ryan Cunningham (Boston Police Department, E-13), Officer Patti DaRosa (Boston Police Department, E-13), Emily Polston (Office of City Councillor Ruthzee Louijeune), Lena Shapiro (Office of Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz), and Richard Heath (Boston Bulletin).

The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm by Will Cohen.

1. Introductions: Council members introduced themselves.

2. Approval of September 2022 minutes: There was one correction to the September minutes submitted by Paige Sparks: under "Announcements", Mr. Root's first name should be spelled "Juston". Motion by Paige Sparks to approve the minutes from the September 27, 2022 meeting, as amended. Seconded by Peg Preble. Passed 12-0-1 (1 came late).

3. Announcements:

3.1 Council Vacancies: The Chair announced that there are still three vacancies on the Council. There are two vacancies in Area A, and one vacancy in Area B. Three attendees said that they are interested in serving on the Council: Gerard O'Connor of 22 Yale Terrace, Kendra Halliwell of 21 Lee Street, and Susan Moir of 9 Chestnut Square. Mr. O'Connor and Ms. Halliwell are presently community members serving on the Zoning Committee, and all three said they are interested in Zoning Committee issues. Ms. Halliwell is also interested in the Housing & Development Committee. David Baron mentioned that the Zoning Committee has its full complement of Council members, so there are no open Council slots. Susan Moir said that she is interested in Zoning Committee issues, so she withdrew her nomination. Paige Sparks reminded folks that Council members can still vote on Committee issues at the Council level. Motion by David Baron to nominate Gerard O'Connor and Kendra Halliwell for the JP Neighborhood Council. Seconded by Omer Hecht. Voting may take place at the November meeting.

3.2 Community announcements:

- Captain Hughes, commander of local Boston Police District E-13, reported that there was a home invasion and rape yesterday about 12:00noon at a residence on the Arborway. Due to privacy rules he could not say more, but the Boston Police Sexual Assault Unit is very actively investigating this incident.
- Bernie Doherty attended the recent Saturday rally at the Forbes Building. He further brought up that the JPNC should send a letter advocating strongly for these at-risk elderly tenants. A comment was made that substantive issues are more appropriate during the Committee Reports part of the agenda, not at Community Announcements.
- The 18th Annual Canine Costume Parade will take place on Saturday, October 29 with registration starting at 12noon outside the First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain. The parade starts at 1:00pm and goes up Centre Street to the Loring Greenough House where prizes will be awarded for the best costumes.
- Sarah Freeman said that Boston Police District E-13 will be hosting a Halloween Grab and Go Trick or Treat from 3:00pm to 8:00pm on October 31 just outside the District Station, Washington Street corner Green Street.
- Sarah Freeman said that there will be a Franklin Park Virtual Safety Meeting on Tuesday, November 1, 6pm-8pm. You can register at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84461212693>

4. Committee Reports/Recommendations:

4.1. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind introduced Franklyn Salimbene, from the Arborway Committee on Public Transit (ACPT), to give a summary of the presentation he made at the October Public Service Committee meeting about how the MBTA's proposed Bus Network Redesign affects Jamaica Plain. Before he started, he spoke briefly about the advocacy of the ACPT for an extension of the Green Line from Heath Street to Hyde Square - a plan that the JPNC has already voted to support. The MBTA's proposed Bus Network Redesign has two major changes for Jamaica Plain. Firstly, the plan is to combine the present Route 38 (Wren Street-Faulkner Hospital-Forest Hills) and the present Route 41 (The Soldiers Monument-Nubian Square-JFK/UMass). The plan would reinstitute Sunday service on the new route. This is an hourly bus, with 30-minute service in rush hour. Secondly, and creating the most consternation, is the proposal to divert the Route 39 bus at Brigham Circle along Francis Street to the BU Bridge, to Central Square Cambridge, to Union Square Somerville, and terminate at Porter Square Cambridge. The route would have 15-minute service or better. This route, while creating a single-seat ride to Cambridge, eliminates the single-seat ride to Copley Square. It would be difficult to keep its schedule, because there is no bus priority guarantee in Cambridge and Somerville and a lack of an inspector/starter at Central Square and Union Square. Michael Reiskind then introduced Melissa Dullea, the MBTA's Senior Director of Service Planning, who said that the original MBTA plan was released in May 2022. It was based on bus ridership data as well as cell phone data showing origin and destinations of riders. The MBTA conducted outreach sessions in-person and virtually and received over 20,000 comments. The Route 39 was in the top ten list of comments. Riders concerns were the loss of the single-seat ride to downtown, and Brigham Circle being a bad place to transfer. Ms. Dullea said that a revised plan will be released in two days at noon, and the new plan will keep the present Route 39 with the single-seat ride to

downtown. The MBTA will be enhancing the Route 47 (Ruggles-Longwood Medical Area-BU Bridge-Cambridge) to improve connections to Cambridge. Will Cohen asked what the JPNC could do; political support is needed for the MBTA Board to approve the revised plan in November. Michael Reiskind asked about the proposal to eliminate Route 14 service from Heath Street station in JP/Mission Hill. The revised plan will now somewhat restore Route 14 service from Heath Street to Nubian Square to South Bay.

Michael Reiskind reported that the Committee had a neighborhood hearing in October on the request for a new brewery and adjacent brew pub in the new building at the corner of Washington Street and Montebello Road. All attendees were in favor, and some very strongly in support. The plan is also for an outdoor patio in front on Washington Street and a few TVs for soccer and rugby games. Motion by Michael Reiskind to support the request by Drawdown Brewing Company, LLC (doing business as "Drawdown Brewing Company") at 3204 Washington Street for a Farmer Series Pouring Permit with a closing hour of 11:00pm, with Elizabeth Nicol as manager, with an outdoor seasonal patio in the front for 23 patrons and an entertainment license for 3 TVs only.

Michael Reiskind reported about two draft letters from the Subcommittee on Police Procedures that the Subcommittee would like to send on police reforms - civilian flaggers, clear rules for traffic stops, and more transparent data. Council members pointed out one typo in the first letter: Under second issue, "As a committee" should be "As a Council".

Motion by Michael Reiskind to send the draft letter - with one correction - to the Mayor, Chief of Streets, and Police Commissioner about three issues (civilian flagging, pretextual stops by police, more transparent data collection and dissemination). Seconded by Paige Sparks. Passed 11-0-2 (1 came late). Motion by Michael Reiskind to send the draft letter on civilian flagging to Councillor Kendra Lara, with copies to the four At-large Councillors. Seconded by Paige Sparks. Passed 12-0-1 (1 came late).

The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, November 1 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda will be a request from the Brendan Behan Pub for a later closing hour for its rear outdoor patio.

4.2. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Kevin Rainsford reported that the H&DC met on October 18 and discussed seven issues; he reported on two issues tonight. Regarding the Forbes Building, the landlord says he is now working towards 100% affordability in the building. Otherwise there is not very much new information. The H&DC has no recommendations while negotiations are continuing with the owner, City, and State. The owner promised to freeze all rents for leases expiring this year. Bernie Doherty wants the JPNC to advocate more strongly for the tenants in their time of need. He said the owner has not been truthful and said the Council should be asking for a written promise on the freezing of rents. Will Cohen asked Mr. Doherty to draft a letter on the issue. Kevin Rainsford said that at least two letters have been sent by the JPNC, and the H&DC has been trying to hold the owner to their previous commitments. Micah Sachs thought that the most effective strategy is to keep communications open between the owner and the Council. He believes the owner's promise on freezing rents.

Kevin Rainsford updated the JPNC on the initiative to strengthen the City's noise regulations. The H&DC has drafted a letter to Councillor Kendra Lara which was sent to all JPNC members. Motion by Kevin Rainsford to send the draft letter on noise regulations to Councillor Lara. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. Aidan Foley thought the letter was appropriate as written. Passed 13-0-0 (1 came late).

The next Housing & Development Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, November 15 at 7:00pm (not held). The next Arborway Yard Subcommittee meeting will be on Wednesday, November 9 at 7:00pm.

4.3. Zoning Committee (ZC): David Baron said that the Zoning Committee met on October 12. The Committee heard two proposals that need votes tonight. 1) 78 Child Street, a petition by Karen Wheeler and Mary Ann Kopydlowski, for an addition of a sunroom and bathroom to an existing single-family residence. This is an owner-occupied dwelling and the owners want to enclose a rear porch. Two adjoining town houses have already done so. The ZC recommends approval. 2) 7 Zamora Court, a petition by Gerald Autler and Laura Rosenfield, to build additional living space in attic to expand existing upper unit, including new staircase, additional bathroom, two bedrooms, and study. Add shed dormers. This proposal went back and forth at the local community process. It is an expansion into an attic with the addition of shed dormers. The new building will have the same roof ridge line. One immediate neighbor was very concerned about loss of privacy and increased shadows. The owners did an informal shadow study which showed not much change because the ridge line is the same. The local Jamaica Pond Association voted not to oppose. The ZC recommends approval. Motion by David Baron to support the recommendations of the Zoning Committee on 78 Child Street and 7 Zamora Court. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. Passed 13-0-0 (1 came late).

The Zoning Committee has noticed that recently less detail has been coming from the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) when they issue their denial letters; even the applicants being denied have little information on reasons for denial. The ZC has drafted a letter to the Plans and Zoning Commissioner at ISD requesting some detailed information. Motion by David Baron to send the draft letter to the Plans and Zoning Commissioner at ISD. Seconded by Paige Sparks. Passed 13-0-0 (1 came late).

The next Zoning Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, October 26 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda will be proposals at 56 Boylston Street, 6 Park Lane, 378 Centre Street, and 3381 Washington Street.

4.4. Parks Committee (Environment, Parks & Energy Committee): In the absence of Alexis Rickmers, Nicholas Chaves reported that the Parks Committee has been working on the Southwest Corridor Park double path to improve the signage delineating which path is for bikes and which for pedestrians. The present signs are inadequate and the Committee is asking for more signs. Jamaica Pond Park could use better bicycle signage, too. Dave Baron said that painted bike icons right on the bike lane pavement - like Melnea Cass Boulevard - would be very helpful.

The Parks Committee has drafted a letter asking for help from the Mayor to improve safety in Franklin Park. They are asking the City to conduct forums and keep the JPNC informed on progress. Motion by Nicholas Chaves to send the draft letter on Franklin Park safety to Mayor Wu. Seconded by Dave Baron. Passed 12-0-1 (1 left early).

4.5. Outreach Committee: Paige Sparks said that the Committee met on Tuesday, October 11 at 7:00pm via Zoom. The current roster up for approval is Paige Sparks, Omer Hecht, Peg Preble, and Daniel Perez Lacera - all Council members. There are no community members as yet. Motion by Paige Sparks to approve this slate of four as the Outreach Committee roster. Seconded by Omer Hecht. Passed 10-0-1 (3 left early).

The Committee is again asking all Committee Chairs to make a list of their accomplishments to help with outreach. The Brewery is being asked for a JPNC outreach posting at a public bulletin board. Schools are being contacted to attract more youth to participate in the Council.

There was a new proposed bylaw change submitted by the Committee. In Article 4 paragraph 2, the proposal is to add full-time students over 16 years old attending Jamaica Plain schools - but who do not live in the neighborhood - to be eligible for membership on the Council. This will allow them to have a say where they spend the majority of their day. Bernie Doherty thought this proposal goes too far; should we also include employees who work in JP? No vote on the change is needed at this meeting.

Recapping the request for a bylaw change to Article 7 about term limits for community members on committees, Paige Sparks reiterated the reasons for the amendment: She said that without this change, there tends to be lifelong appointments on committees and a lack of availability for new community members who have an interest. Aidan Foley, speaking as a community member of the Housing & Development Committee, said that he feels this change is inappropriate.

5. Old Business/New Business:

- There was a brief discussion about JPNC meeting dates during the holiday season in November and December. Motion by David Baron to keep the regularly-scheduled November 22 date for the November JPNC meeting. Seconded by Trevor Wissink-Adams. Passed 11-0-0 (3 left early).

6. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:03pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next scheduled JPNC meeting: Tuesday, November 22 at 7:00PM via Zoom.

Next scheduled JPNC Executive Committee meeting: November 17 at 7:00PM via Zoom.