

**Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council**  
**March 26, 2013 Minutes**

**JPNC Attendance:** Ben Day, Red Burrows, Michael Reiskind, Erin Colgan-Snyder, Oliver De Leon, Ayan Hassan, Andrea Howley, Jamey Lionette, Martha Rodriguez, Jen Rogers, Ken Sazama, and Natalie VanLandingham.

**Community Attendance:** Dave Traggorth, Matt Kiefer (Norbert School Associates), Nan Porter (Norbert School Associates), Ken Tangvik, Claudio Martinez, City Councillor Felix G. Arroyo, Eric White (City Councillor Ayanna Pressley's office), Heather Perez (City Councillor Felix G. Arroyo's office), Michael Baker (Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez's office), Bret Silverberg (Jamaica Plain Patch) and Damola Curtis (Jamaica Plain Gazette).

Meeting called to order at 7:04pm by Ben Day at the First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain.

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

**II. Council Vacancy:** Ben Day said that there is one new vacancy in Area A on the JP Neighborhood Council - Ara Reyes has resigned because of lots of schoolwork pressure. This is in addition to the previously announced vacancy in Area C. There were no nominations forthcoming at this meeting.

**III. Announcements:**

- There will be a community meeting about changes to services at Martha Eliot Health Center on Wednesday, March 27 at 7:00pm at the Family Resource Center, 1542 Columbus Avenue (across from Jackson Square T Station).
- "Next Stop Hyde Square", a meeting about extending the Green Line to Hyde Square will be on Thursday, April 4 at 7:00 p.m. at the Connolly Branch Library, 433 Centre Street. There will be a movie on Portland, Oregon and panel discussion with Fred Salvucci and others.
- The annual JP Spring Clean-Up and Boston Shines will be on Saturday, April 27 from 8:30am-1:30pm. Volunteers are being asked to clean up areas in your neighborhood.

**IV. Approval of minutes:** Motion by Red Burrows to approve the February 2013 minutes, and to correct the minutes of January 2013 on the vote to go into Executive Session - recording David Baron as voting Nay and Oliver

De Leon as voting Aye. Seconded by Jen Rogers. Passed 10-0-1(1 late).

**V. Committee Reports:**

a. Zoning: Michael Reiskind reported that the Committee met twice, on March 7 and March 21. There are four items that need a vote of the JPNC: 1) 21A Spring Park Avenue, a request by Joe Taylor to extensively rehabilitate a 2-family house, add a three-car garage, new rear decks and new dormers on roof. This property went through a lot of local community meetings, and the proposal changed in response. The developer changed it to be a two-family residence, there will be no external decks, and it will pull back to be within the side yard setback. The use of Goldsmith Place was a big issue. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been agreed to with the neighbors about the front steps, snow removal, underwater recharging and the parking spaces. The Committee recommends approval, subject to an MOU with the abutters and subject to no leasing of parking spaces to third parties. 2) 52 Eliot Street, a request by Electra Sevier & Joseph Nicholas to remove a portion on the side of the existing building and replace it with new construction. These are new owners since 2012. While the addition is modern style, the neighbors are happy with it. The Committee recommends approval. 3) 57 Round Hill Street, a request by Leroy Abraham to confirm the occupancy as a one-family dwelling and erect a new front entryway with roof. The long-time owner probably enclosed the front porch many years ago, but so did most of his neighbors on the street. His new front porch design is better than presently exists. The Committee recommends approval. 4) 55 Louders Lane, a request by Claire Sauvageot to install a new fence. This rear yard fence does not meet the rear yard setback because some panels are over 6-feet high, but there is a slope in the rear which requires the higher panels. The Jamaica Hills Association (JHA) voted not to oppose. The Committee did not hear this issue, but recommends approval based on Jamaica Hills Association process and agreement from the one neighbor affected. Motion by Red Burrows to recommend approval of the four requests at 21A Spring Park Avenue, 52 Eliot Street, 57 Round Hill Street, and 55 Louders Lane. Seconded by Andrea Howley. Passed 12-0-0.

The next two meetings of the Zoning Committee will be Thursday, April 11 and Thursday, April 25 at Farnsworth House, 90 South Street, at 7:00pm.

b. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Motion by Red Burrows to approve Jamey Lionette as chair of the Housing & Development Committee. Seconded by Ken Sazama. Passed 12-0-0.

Jamey Lionette reported that the H&DC met on March 19 at Farnsworth House.

- The Blessed Sacrament Church and Norbert School proposals were discussed. The Church developer, JP Neighborhood Development Corporation (JPND), has two other bids they are reviewing for the community space in addition to the

existing bid - Hyde Sq. Task Force and Hutchinson & White. There are no plans for another community meeting while they assess the bids.

- The Norbert School proposal has changed after hearing the outcry over 100% market rate units in the building They will now propose two affordable units out of 20 or 21 total units. Matt Kiefer, from the proposed developer Norbert School Associates, spoke about the new proposal. Affordability units will meet the 70% AMI (Area Median Income - household income in Boston statistical area) affordability. All units will meet the Workforce Housing criteria of 120% AMI. While the JPND is seeking the support of the JPNC for this plan, the Hyde Square Task Force is still strongly opposed to it, because of Norbert School issue and overall Blessed Sacrament issues. Oliver De Leon asked about parking. Mr. Kiefer said there will be 17 spaces for the 20/21 units, which is more than the City of Boston's requirement of .7 space/unit. There was no vote on the new proposal.

- The So. Huntington Avenue Corridor planning study will have its last meeting on April 2. No draft is yet available.

- Parcel U in Forest Hills was bid out by the MBTA and a developer was chosen. This is the empty MBTA space by Hyde Park and Ukraine Way. The proposal is for a large development with majority market rate housing and some retail space. The Forest Hills Improvement Initiative (FHII) said that this parcel should have at least 50% affordable housing. While this development will have more affordable units than the City of Boston requires, it is certainly less than 50% . The H&DC has submitted a draft letter. After some wording changes, there was a motion by Red Burrows to approve the letter to Peter Meade of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) asking the BRA to implement the FHII plan on Parcel U, specifically in five guideline areas. Seconded by Michael Reiskind. Passed 12-0-0

- The City's Middle Income Vacant Lots Program would sell off vacant lots at half (or reduced rates) to developers to build owner-occupied housing. There is some concern over the details of resale restrictions and about two J.P. lots on Barlow Street and Chestnut Avenue. Years ago, these two lots were included in a similar vacant lot program, but there was opposition to the details of the deal and the City backed off and left the two lots vacant. These two lots are in the Middle Income Vacant Lots Program. Michael Reiskind said that the Menino administration had agreed to a 9-step community process whenever they sell off vacant lots in Jamaica Plain.

The next meeting of the H&DC will be on Tuesday, April 16 at 6:30pm at Farnsworth House.

c. Parks & Open Space (POSC): The Parks and Open Space Committee met on Thursday, March 21 at JP Licks.

- Boston Shines will be on Saturday, April 27 from 8:30am-2:00pm. The POSC will clean up Parkman Playground, Arcola Park, Jefferson Field, and perhaps Mozart Playground.

- The POSC is identifying sites to replant trees in empty street tree pits in the business districts. A GPS application will be used to narrow it down to the top 10 places. They will then rewalk the area to pinpoint specific sites.

- The Committee is helping submit an application for a Grow Boston Greener (GBG) grant to refill in the Arborway hillside greenery. If awarded, JP will get up to 11 trees.

- Children's Hospital /Jackson Square Playground Project meeting to present the final design and construction impacts will be on April 1 at the Southwest Corridor headquarters, 38 New Heath Street. The park design will be high tech with playground equipment using zip lines.

- Bottle Bill has passed in the Senate and needs approval in the House. It has large support from the general public.

- JP Calendar: 1) Olmsted Birthday Weekend will be April 26-28 at the Olmsted National Historic site, 99 Warren Street, Brookline. There will be a replanting of the Olmsted Elm that had to be cut down, a climate change panel on "What would Olmsted Do?" at Simmons College, the Army Corps of Engineers will give an update on the Muddy River Restoration Project, a walk on "The History of Conservation and Trees" will take place at the Arnold Arboretum, and there will be a "Celebration of Olmsted's Visions, Life, Words and Works" at the First Church in JP.

2) The Emerald Necklace Conservancy 15th anniversary celebration will be at 6pm at the Rose Garden in the Fenway on May 14. On May 15, the Party in the Park Luncheon will be at 11am at the same location.

The next meeting of the POSC will be on Thursday, April 18 at 6:30pm at JP Licks.

d. Public Service: Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee met on March 5 at District E-13 Police Station. On the agenda was a request of Bartlett Square Café at 154 Green Street for a new 7-day common victualler license. The café is in a new commercial/residential building diagonally across Amory Street from the Green Street MBTA Station. It would have about 60 seats inside and about 50 seats outdoors. They will feature breakfast pastries made from scratch, local ice cream and bread, as well as coffee, soups, salads, sandwiches, and some prepared foods and retail items. Residential support was very strong for this license, especially from residents of Jamaica Plain Cohousing. Motion by Michael Reiskind to recommend approval of a new 7-day common victualler license for Bartlett Square Café at 154 Green Street with the hours of 7:00am to 10:00pm with Philip Peterson as manager, with a seasonal outdoor patio for 50 seats, and also an entertainment license for recorded music only. Seconded by Red Burrows. Passed 10-0-2. The Committee also met with the owner of a new proposed café at 617 Centre Street to be called The Goods JP.

The next meeting of the Public Service Committee will be Tuesday, April 9 at the John F. Kennedy School,

7 Bolster Street at 7:00pm. On the agenda will be requests of Subway at 315 Centre Street and The Goods JP at

617 Centre Street for new common victualler licenses.

e. Ad-Hoc Racial Justice Committee: There will be special racial equity training session for JPNC members this week on Thursday, March 28 at the Southern JP Health Center. Members should RSVP to the Health Center. All Committees will be carving out time at the monthly meetings in April or May for a discussion on racial equity

issues from each committee's perspective.

f. Casey Arborway Design Advisory Group (DAG): *No report.* The next public meeting will be Wednesday, April 3 at English High School starting at 6:00pm.

g. Jackson Square Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC): *No report.* A new representative is needed from the JPNC to the Jackson Square Citizen Advisory Committee. The March CAC meeting was cancelled. The next CAC meeting

will be the first Tuesday or Wednesday in April.

**VI. Presentation by City Councillor Felix G. Arroyo:** Ben Day introduced Councillor Felix G. Arroyo who spoke about five issues important to the City and him.

- Invest in Boston: Councillor Arroyo spoke about his proposed ordinance that would reconstitute the Boston Banking Commission to take into consideration where and how Boston's cash in banks is invested when making its investment decisions. Right now only safety and the interest rate is considered. The ordinance would need nine votes in the City Council to be veto-proof. Ben Day offered to start a JPNC organizing campaign on this issue. City Council hearings on this proposal will begin at the end of April or beginning of May.

- Youth issues: The Councillor spoke about youth employment and summer jobs. The federal government has decreased Boston's money for youth jobs from \$3M/year to \$0.

- Asthma: Councillor Arroyo said that Suffolk County is the third worst county in the country for diesel in the air. ACE (Alternatives for Community and Environment) says that 40% of diesel pollution comes from construction vehicles. The Councillor would like to have all construction vehicles retrofitted to reduce diesel pollution.

- Suicide prevention: The Councillor said that untreated and undiagnosed mental illness is a major cause of suicide. The stigma of the disease is the biggest hurdle to overcome in order to raise the rates of treatment. He is working with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and Latino Health to have insurance reimbursement rates become equitable with other disease groups.

- Curbside composting: Arroyo said that trash could be reduced up to 78% if composting were introduced. The City of Portland, Oregon went to trash pickup every two weeks after it started curbside composting pickup.

### **VIII. Old/New Business:**

- Hubway stations will begin to open in April around the Boston area.

- There was a mugging on the Arborway near St. Joseph Street on Wednesday, March 20 at 8:15pm. The resident was tackled by one person and another came and held her down. They took anything of value and then ran off.

- Update on legal appeal to 161 So. Huntington Avenue: Ben Day said that some Charlestown residents, who are suing the Charlestown Neighborhood Council there under the state Open Meeting Law, have asked the court to merge their lawsuits with the JPNC's legal action on the 161 So. Huntington Avenue project. April 3 is the date set

for a hearing in court on this merger issue.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:58pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next JPNC meeting: Tuesday, April 30 at 7:00PM, at the First Baptist Church.

Next Executive Committee meeting: Wednesday, April 24 at 6:30PM, JP Licks, 659 Centre Street