

July 2011

JPNC Minutes

July 26, 2011

Attendance: Andrea Howley, Pamela Bender, Michael Reiskind, Karley Ausiello, Steven Backman, David Baron, Red Burrows, Dave Demerjian, Francesca Fordiani, Jeremy Harold, Orion Kriegman, Emily Wheelwright, Jesse White, Jay Zoldak.

Other Attendees: Ara Reyes, Ian Trefethen, Helen Matthews, Richard Heath, Dave Traggorth (First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain), Rev. Ashlee Wiest-Laird (First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain), Cheryl Alexander (Bridge Boston Charter School), Capt. Paul Russell (Boston Police Department E-13), Sgt. Eric Krause (Boston Police Department E-13), Officer William Jones (Boston Police Department E-13), Michelle Langone Danila (Toole Design Group), Richard Thal (JP Neighborhood Development Corporation), Andrew Winter (JP Neighborhood Development Corporation), Heather Perez (Councillor Felix G. Arroyo's office), David Foley (Rep. Jeffrey Sánchez' office), Jullianne Doherty (Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services), Chris Helms (Jamaica Plain Patch), Andy Zagastizábal (Jamaica Plain Gazette), John Ruch (Jamaica Plain Gazette).

Called to Order at 7:17pm at the First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain by Andrea Howley.

1. Introductions: Members of the JPNC introduced themselves.

2. Announcements:

The annual Neighbors Night Out celebration will be on Friday, July 29 from 5:00pm to 8:00pm at the Egleston YMCA, 3134 Washington Street.

First Thursday festivities will be on Thursday, August 4 from 6:00pm-8:00pm.

The first annual JP Music Festival will be on Saturday, August 20 at Pinebank Softball Field from 1:00pm-7:00pm.

Nomination papers for the JPNC Election are due back by 5:00pm on Friday, August 5 at the JP Branch Library. The Election will be on September 24.

3. Neighborhood Input:

Captain Paul Russell, the new police commander at District E-13 in Jamaica Plain gave a brief summary of his Boston Police Department career. He has served at Operations, commander at C-6 (South Boston), B-2 (Roxbury), and the citywide detail unit. He gave out his business card with his cell phone and e-mail (617-594-3982 and russellp.bpd@cityofboston.gov). Captain Russell said that his biggest concerns were residential burglaries and street robberies around the MBTA stops. He is also keeping his officers at a high level to prevent youth violence. He hoped he could work together with the community to reduce and prevent crime. Richard Heath said he appreciated the Safe Streets Team walking in Egleston Square.

In response to a question about the police response at the Whole Foods meeting at the Curley School on June 2, Captain Russell said that the people ejected did not keep to the stated ground rules for the meeting. Complaints have been issued against the three people.

Boston Bikes: Michelle Langone Danila from Toole Design Group gave an informational presentation on the Boston Bikes plans to install bike lanes on Centre Street from South Street to the VFW Parkway. There are already bicycle lanes installed on Centre Street in Roslindale and Jamaica Plain, and these lanes are needed to connect them. The Boston Transportation Department will own the lanes from the Monument to the Arborway (at Murray Circle) and the Department of Conservation & Recreation will own the lanes from Murray Circle to Centre and VFW Parkway. There has been no safe design developed for lanes within Murray Circle, so bicyclists will be asked to use the sidewalks in that area. There were many questions from the JPNC members. Steve Backman asked why bicyclists were being asked to use sidewalks in Murray Circle and how can bicycles get through Murray Circle safely. There were questions about plans for bicycle lanes through Forest Hills, and about plans from the Southwest Corridor Park to Franklin Park. Karley Ausiello said that Hyde Park Avenue south of Forest Hills is hazardous to bicycle. Richard Heath said that the crosswalks in that area are dangerous to pedestrians because they are not well marked and the light cycle is too short. People said that South Street south of the Monument is dangerous to bicycle. There was a request for better east-west bike connections and better enforcement of bicycle rules of the road. Andrea Howley asked how police can ticket a bicyclist if they are not licensed.

Building K: Richard Thal and Andrew Winter from the JP Neighborhood Development Corporation (JP NDC) presented their plans for a four-storey wood frame with 35 affordable apartments on the Building K site (former Parcel 69) at the Jackson Square development. It is behind the AIDS Action building and along the edge of the Southwest Corridor with a street number of 75 Amory Avenue. There are MBTA and Boston Water and Sewer Commission easements along the back of the building along the rail corridor. There will be a new street along the back of the building and parking will be at grade. 100% of the units will be available to those families at or below 60% of the Area Mean Income (AMI), and 20% available to those at or below 30% of AMI. There will be one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom units. Originally, this project was planned as a home-ownership project, but there is no money for home-ownership. Richard Heath liked the project, but asked if the affordability can be improved by lowering the 60% AMI. It was asked whether the renters can be restricted to current Jamaica Plain residents. Probably not by rule, but if the JP NDC does lots of local outreach. lots of local folks are attracted into the pool of applicants for the lottery. That is what happened at the Blessed Sacrament project.

Bridge Boston Charter School: Dave Traggorth, moderator of The First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain, and Cheryl Alexander, president of the Bridge Boston Charter School, gave an informational presentation about a school use at The First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain. Bridge Boston Charter School is renting space for their school for one year only starting on September 6. The school has 72 students in K-1 or K-2. Most of the students are from Dorchester, Mattapan and Roxbury and half the students are coming from the Epiphany School. Boston Public Schools will supply the two school buses. The school emphasizes small groupings and provides full social needs for its students. There will be

classes in music, art and drama. In response to a question, the school would use a play space behind the parsonage and near houses on Grovenor Road. The school does not know where it will go next year - maybe the Lucy Stone School, Dickerman School or even the Agassiz School.

4. Minutes:

The minutes from the previous (June 28, 2011) JPNC meeting were then handed out. Motion by Red Burrows to approve the minutes from the June 2011 meeting. Seconded by Pam Bender. Passed 11-0-3.

5. Committee Reports:

Because of the length of the presentations, Committee Reports were limited to necessary business.

Zoning Committee - David Baron reported that the Zoning Committee had two meetings this month – on July 7 and on July 21 at which four matters were considered. Three matters came up today, July 26, at the Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) and so had to go before the Executive Committee: 222-224 Amory Street, a request by Pedro Reyes, (acting as agent for the landlord Oscar Tejeda), doing business as “Amory Restaurant, Inc.”, seeking transfer of the take-out use to the new business owner at the Amory Restaurant space. The Zoning Committee recommended approval with the proviso that the take-out use remain with the new business and owner only. The Executive Committee recommended approval. 254 Amory Street, a request by Alan Genovese to remove an existing one-storey porch and existing rear staircase and replace it with a two-level porch/deck with attached staircase, and attach a new door. The Executive Committee recommended approval. 43-45 Montebello Road, a request by Luis Leon to extend living space into the basement. The Zoning Committee recommended approval with the provisos that there be no carpeting and no additional plumbing in the basement. The Executive Committee recommended approval. No JPNC actions are needed. In addition, 6 Alveston Terrace, which was requesting a variance to build a two-storey addition and roof deck was deferred at the Zoning Committee. The applicants did not appear at the ZBA and were denied without prejudice.

268-274 Centre Street, a request by Themistocles Vlahoulis, doing business as “Boston’s Seafood and BBQ”, for a change of occupancy for a new restaurant with take-out use. The Zoning Committee recommended approval with the four provisos that 1) agree to the six requests in the Hyde Jackson Square support letter about loitering, drugs, healthy foods, parking spaces, window graphics, and deliveries, 2) the business be required to seek three 15-minute parking spaces directly in front of the building, 3) the take-out use remain with the tenant only, 4) the business be required to go before the Public Service Committee for its Common Victualler license. Motion by Red Burrows to recommend approval of the petition at 268-274 Centre Street with the four provisos. Seconded by Michael Reiskind. Passed 14-0-0.

The Zoning Committee will not meet in August. The next meeting is on Thursday, September 1 at Farnsworth House at 7:00pm.

Elections Committee -- Red Burrows reported on Bi-Annual JP Neighborhood Council Election on Saturday, September 24. He reminded people that signatures are due back on August 5, and he urged folks to get the word out.

Ad-Hoc Whole Foods Committee - Andrea Howley asked for a summary of the survey of Jamaica Plain organizations made by JPNC members about the Whole Foods issues. Organizations were asked their reaction to the Report from the Ad-Hoc Whole Foods Committee, whether their group would sign on a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) with Whole Foods, and what points would they like to see in a CBA. The following organizations were contacted: Hyde/Jackson Square Main Street, Hyde Square Task Force, Friends of Nira Rock, Sen. Chang-Diaz, Rep. Jeffrey Sánchez, City Councillor Felix G. Arroyo, City Councillor Matt O'Malley, Whose Foods, JP for All, Jobs with Justice, JP Business & Professional Association, Jamaica Pond Association, and the Jamaica Hills Association. Jesse White said that Steve Laferriere has asked her to recommend the creation of a small negotiating committee to talk to Whole Foods directly. She said that the JP Neighborhood Council needs to decide whether to ask for a Community Benefits Agreement. She said that it also needs to decide whether a CBA is enforceable or to leave it up to the good will and public agreement with Whole Foods. Motion by Jay Zoldak to dissolve the Ad-Hoc Whole Foods Committee. Seconded by Dave Demerjian. Motion passed 13-0-1 (left early). Motion by Jesse White to create a small Community Benefits Agreement negotiating group. Seconded by Francesca Fordiani. Motion passed 9-2-3 (1 left early). Volunteering for the group were Andrea Howley, Pam Bender, Karley Ausiello, Francesca Fordiani, and Jesse White. Motion by Red Burrows to approve the five volunteers as the negotiating group. Seconded by Jeremy Harold. Motion passed 13-0-1 (left early).

Housing & Development Committee (H&DC) – No report.

Public Service Committee - No report.

Parks & Open Space Committee (POSC) – No report.

Ad-Hoc Outreach/Communications Committee - No report.

Jackson CAC - No report.

Centre/South Corridor CAC - No report.

CPCAY - No report.

Casey Overpass Working Advisory Group (WAG) - No report.

New/Old Business:

Motion by Red Burrows to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Jay Zoldak. Passed 13-0-1(left early).

Meeting was adjourned at 9:29pm.

The next meeting of the full JPNC will be on Tuesday, Aug. 30 at 7:00pm at First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain.

The next meeting of the JPNC Executive Committee will be on Thursday, Aug. 25 at 7:30am at Ula Café.

(Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind)