

June 2010

JPNC Minutes

June 29, 2010

Attendance: Andrea Howley, Pamela Bender, Michael Reiskind, Jesse Abair, Steven Backman, David Baron, Red Burrows, Dave Demerjian, Francesca Fordiani, Jeremy Harold, Ben Knappmiller, Steven Laferriere, Peggy O'Connor, Emily Wheelwright, Jesse White, Jay Zoldak.

Other Attendees: Maria Morelli, Carol Amato, Fern Schlang, Peter Welsh, Ron Paulus, Charlotte Thompson, Polly Selkoe, Patrick Banfield, Maureen Horne, Charleen Regan, Kevin Leary, Kyle Robidoux (JP Neighborhood Development Corporation), Maria Mulkeen (JP Neighborhood Development Corporation), Andrew Winter (JP Neighborhood Development Corporation), Richard Thal (JP Neighborhood Development Corporation), Bob Taube (Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program), Lyndia Downie (Pine Street Inn), Ines Palmarin (Boston Redevelopment Authority), Michael Cannizzo (Boston Redevelopment Authority), Ivette Luna (Office of City Councillor Felix G. Arroyo), Melina Muñoz (Office of State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz), David Halbert (Office of City Councillor John Tobin), Colleen Keller (Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services), David Johnson (JP Citizen), David Taber (JP Gazette).

Called to Order at 7:08pm at Curtis Hall by Andrea Howley.

1. Introductions

- Members of the JPNC introduced themselves.

2. Announcements

- First Thursday festivities will be on Thursday, July 1 this month. Daniel Backman will be featured at The Hallway at 66a South Street. Once again the Parks and Open Space Committee will have a table at the Loring-Greenough House to raise funds for the Franklin Park Zoo.
- The twelfth annual Lantern Festival will be on Thursday, July 15, 6pm-9pm at Forest Hills Cemetery at Lake Hibiscus.
- The next Jamaica Plain Centre and South Streets Corridor Transportation and Streetscape Advisory Committee Meeting will be on Thursday, July 15 from 6pm to 8pm at the Agassiz School.
- The local celebration of National Night Out will be on Friday, July 16 from 5:30pm to 8:30pm at the Anna M. Cole Community Center, 10 Lamartine Street extension.
- State Representative Jeffrey Sánchez invited people to visit his Facebook page.
- The Tito Puente Latin Music Series will present a free concert by La Timbistica at Mozart Playground on Wednesday, July 8 starting at 7:00pm.
- The Emerald Necklace Conservancy and Friends of Jamaica Pond will present two free concerts in July at Pinebank at Jamaica Pond. On Saturday, July 11, the Boston Pops Brass Quintet will perform classical, jazz and modern music, and on Saturday, July 25, the Boston Landmarks Orchestra will perform. Both concerts starting at 6:00pm.

3. Minutes

- The minutes from the previous (May 25, 2010) JPNC meeting were handed out. Motion by Red Burrows to approve the minutes from the May 2010 meeting. Seconded by Dave Baron. Passed 14-0-1(1 absent).

4. New/Old Business

- There was no new business.

5. Neighborhood Input

- JP Neighborhood Development Corporation's plans for the redevelopment of 461 Walnut Avenue (former Barbara McInnis House): Richard Thal of the JPNDC said that the JPNDC is hoping to bring back an asset to the community, one that is vacant now. They were invited to redevelop 461 Walnut Avenue as medical respite care by the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program (BHCHP).
- He then introduced Bob Taube of BHCHP who gave a brief history of their past work at 461 Walnut Avenue. Seventeen years ago, they opened the first health care for the homeless facility in an old nursing home in Jamaica Plain and now there are facilities in more than fifty cities in the United States. The original Barbara McInnis Home had fifty beds when it was started, but demand resulted in increases to ninety beds as of 2 years ago. The facilities are now called medical respite care facilities, and have taken on more tasks, because over the last seventeen years hospitals have become smaller with more ambulatory care, and chemotherapy, advanced diagnostic procedures, and intravenous treatments moved to the home. Medical respite care is care for people with acute medical conditions who are homeless and whose illness is not acute enough for hospital care, but are far too sick to recover on the street or in a shelter. The plan for 461 Walnut is for a dual-purpose facility, with medical respite care the first floor and supportive housing for people who are medically vulnerable on the second floor. BHCHP will provide the health care program, and they looked for partners with experience to provide supportive housing for chronically homeless people.
- Pine Street Inn will be the partner, and Lyndia Downie, executive director of the Pine Street Inn, was introduced. She said that the Pine Street Inn has been working with health care for homeless for twenty-five years. In fact, the Bowditch School on Green Street in Jamaica Plain is one of their facilities. This type of residence helps reduce healthcare costs for MassHealth and Medicaid by about \$9,000 per person/year. The residents don't have cars, stay local, buy local, and use public transportation. The program is not for addictions or psychiatric diseases. The program is open to individuals – not families. The average age is about 50 years old – and the older profile tend to stay in the building.
- They will have a live-in manager and be staffed 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. 90% of those in this type of housing stay over 3 years. Pine Street Inn has worked with JPNDC in a similar project of 28 housing units at the Blessed Sacrament campus. They also partnered with Urban Edge at Egleston Crossing. Michael Reiskind said that there have been recent problems with no live-in manager at Egleston Crossing at 3091 Washington Street. They guaranteed that a live-in manager will be at this location on Walnut Avenue. Andrew Winter from the JPNDC, said that over the next few months they will work on zoning and design. It is a 1967 cinderblock building designed as a nursing home. It is not pretty, but will be rehabbed in way to give it a better appearance from the street. Perhaps more green space with extra parking spots – a few residents have cars. there are no plans to change the footprint. The medical facility (owned and operated by BHCHP), 9500 square feet, will be on the first floor with 20 beds. The second and third floors will be the supportive housing (owned by the JP NDC and managed by Pine Street Inn with residents from the Boston

Housing Authority waiting list), 16-17 units on each of the above floors with the live-in manager unit on second floor – total of 33. They might put a trash room on one side but no significant change to building. If everything goes smoothly, this project could begin construction in 2011 and finish with people moving in 2012.

- There will be an Open House on July 1 from 6-8 pm at 82 Green Street to show what type of housing this is and to meet some of the residents living in Pine Street Housing.
- Proposal for a Neighborhood Design Overlay District (NDOD) for Jamaica Hills: David Baron gave the presentation with Ines Palmarin and Michael Cannizzo from the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) in attendance to answer any questions. He said that the initiative for this proposed overlay district came from members of the community. The BRA conducted a survey, consulted with Boston Landmarks Commission and were persuaded this is an area that should be a neighborhood overlay. There are buildings which date from 1700s to today, representing all styles of suburban living. It works well within the topography of the hilly neighborhood. The proposed NDOD will cover all of Jamaica Hills that is not already subject to an overlay (Greenbelt, Conservation, or Neighborhood Institution). There are already seven neighborhood design overlay districts in JP. It is a mechanism for ensuring these neighborhoods don't lose what makes them special neighborhoods. The process creates another layer of review on top of the present zoning. The Inspectional Services Department will decide whether a project requires a variance, or if the overlay rules apply. Projects in the NDOD district, in excess of 350 square feet in terms of variance, above the roofline and visible from the street are subject to additional review over a 45-day period. This gives the community via the JPNC, Jamaica Hills Association and abutters an opportunity to comment. The BRA puts NDOD projects on their website, issues a flyer, has a fifteen-day comment period, and has the Mayor's Office hold community meetings, if needed. Pam Bender asked about who has final authority to decide and whether it is binding. The BRA design reviewer makes recommendations, but cannot prevent projects from going through. If the BRA doesn't approve, then an applicant can ask the Building Department to issue a permit after the 45 days. Usually, the developer go along with recommendations for design and mitigation. The community sees the BRA as mediators, not dictators. Jesse White asked whether this process could be used to prevent affordable housing being built. This area is already a 1F-9000 district which sets a high threshold for building here. This zoning would still be in place.

6. Committee Reports

- **Zoning Committee** – Dave Baron reported that there were two matters looked at by the Zoning Committee at their meetings on June 3, June 17, and June 24. There was also a joint meeting with the Housing & Development Committee on the implementation of the Healthy Housing Guidelines.
- 2-6 Hyde Park Avenue; request by Clear Wireless LLC, as agent for 2-16 Hyde Park Av LPS for permission to install and modify wireless communication equipment on roof of building. This is equipment for wireless broadband, not cell phone communications. The matter was deferred by the applicant. They will return later in the summer. No JPNC action needed.
- Proposed NDOD for Jamaica Hills: The meeting was well attended and everyone spoke in favor. The Zoning Committee is asking that the JPNC recommend the proposed NDOD. Motion by Red Burrows to recommend the Jamaica Hills NDOD to the Boston Zoning Commission. Seconded by Emily Wheelwright. Passed 15-1-0. The BRA will take up this matter on July 12 and hold a public hearing on this matter in September.

- **Parks & Open Space Committee (POSC)** – Jay Zoldak reported that the Committee discussed the rubber tire mulch at city playgrounds.
- A letter was sent to Parks Commissioner Toni Pollak in opposition of the decision to cut the Parks Ranger Mounted Unit out of the FY2011 Budget. The next park clean-up will be on Saturday, July 10. Meet at 8:30am at Curtis Hall. The POSC will have a booth at the Loring-Greenough House at the July 1 First Thursday to raise funds for the Franklin Park Zoo. They will also hand out flyers about the JPNC. The next meeting of the POSC will be Tuesday, July 20 at 6:30pm at JP Licks.
- **Housing & Development Committee (H&DC)** – Steve Laferriere reported that the Committee had a joint meeting with the Zoning Committee on June 17 at Farnsworth House about the Healthy Housing Guidelines.
- The Committee talked about outreach regarding the upcoming state ballot question in November on Chapter 40B, the affordable housing law.
- The H&DC discussed the new development in Forest Hills.
- Steve Laferriere passed out a list of committee members. Motion by Steve Backman to approve the membership list. Seconded by Red Burrows. Passed 15-0-1(1 absent).
- The next scheduled meeting of the H&DC will be on Tuesday, July 20 at the Bowditch School.
- **Public Service Committee** – Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee meeting was held on June 1 at 7:00pm at English High School. On the agenda was the request for a 7-Day Common Victualler beer & wine license for Cill Dara, Inc., doing business as “Napper Tandy’s”, at 3700 Washington Street (a former barber shop), with a 1:00am closing hour, with John Jacob as manager.
- In addition, there was a pledge of this license to the Bank of Canton, and a request for an entertainment license for up to three performers for three nights a week (Wednesday, Friday and Saturday). The applicant promised to serve food until 11:00pm, with the main menu to 10:00pm. Because of scheduling of the alcohol licensing at City Hall, the request has already been sent to the JPNC Executive Committee and has been approved by the Licensing Board of the City of Boston.
- However, the Entertainment License is yet to be heard, so the Public Service Committee is asking for a recommendation of approval for the entertainment license. Motion by Michael Reiskind for a recommendation of approval for the entertainment license for up to 3 live performers at 3700 Washington Street. Seconded by Andrea Howley. Passed 15-0-1(1 absent).
- The next meeting of the Public Service Committee is Tuesday, July 6 at Old Cheverus School at Blessed Sacrament at 7pm. On the agenda will be a request for a change of hours for Latino Restaurant at 302 Centre Street.
- **Jackson CAC** – Red Burrows reported that the CAC will be off in July. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, August 4 at 6:00pm. The location has not yet been determined. They are trying Wednesday nights to try to increase attendance.
- **Ad-Hoc Outreach/Communications Committee** – Dave Demerjian reported the Outreach/Communications Committee met on Sunday, June 13 at 7:30pm at JP Licks.
- The Committee is working on setting up a general communications infrastructure to create Council awareness within different JP constituencies. They are starting with establishing a page or group on Neighbors for Neighbors, JP Moms, JP Mens Group, and Facebook.

- They are creating content for a JPNC flyer to hand out at First Thursdays. They are posting meeting updates and links to articles of interest on the JPNC website, and figuring ways to measure the website's impact.
- Ben Knappmiller is developing a letterhead/logo for the Council. They hope to begin translating JPNC.org into Spanish soon.

The next meeting of the full JPNC will be on Tuesday, July 27 at 7:00pm at the First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain, near the Post Office.

The next meeting of the JPNC Executive Committee will be on Thursday, July 22 at 7:30am at Ula Café.

Please note that there will be no August JPNC meeting.

It is expected that Curtis Hall will be closed for renovations starting in September. The September meeting of the JPNC will be at the First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:38pm.

(Minutes submitted by Ben Knappmiller and Michael Reiskind)