

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council

Minutes, June 26, 2012, as amended July 31, 2012

JPNC Attendance: David Baron, Red Burrows, Benjamin Day, Francesca Fordiani, Andrea Howley, Michael Reiskind, Martha Rodriguez, Courtney Snegroff, Jeffrey Wiesner, Joseph Wight

Community Attendance: Kate-Marie Roycroft, Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez's office; Richard Heath; Sara Freeman; Kris Carter, Mayor's office; Rachel Szakmary, Boston Transportation Department; Sheila Nobles, Rosa Beato, Yolanda Leive, Luzmar Centano Valeri, Oiste; Marie O'Shea, Purple Cactus; City Councillor At-Large John Connolly; Martha Bixby; Rebecca Oliviera, JP Gazette; David Johnson, JP Citizen; Fernando Mercedes, City Councillor O'Malley's office.

Meeting called to order at 7:09pm by Ben Day at Julia Martin House, 90 Bickford Street.

I. **JPNC Member Introductions:** Members introduced themselves.

II. **Additions to/subtractions from Agenda:** Addition: Department of Neighborhood Development Hearings regarding Boylston and Dalrymple

III. **Announcements:** *see attached incorporated herein.* In addition, Arboretum Tree Mob (brief discussion with specialist) 6/27 at the top of Peter's Hill, Arnold Arboretum; 5th Annual Latino Health Fare, 7/7; Arborway Walk 7/17, 6pm, meet at wall by Eliot Street light.

IV. **Presentation by Boston Transportation Department on "Parklets" pilot project:** Kris Carter from the Mayor's office and Rachel Szakmary, Boston Transportation Department presented and explained that parklets are built-out decks 2-3 feet into the street, that provide public spaces where sidewalks are narrow. They reported that the city is moving forward with four pilot locations, including the commercial loading zone and two-hour parking on street between City Feed and the Purple Cactus on Seaverns Street. They reported that they will be maintained in partnership with businesses, and the city will install parklets where a neighborhood is in opposition. They reported that parklets started in 2008 in San Francisco, and there are now approximately 30 there, and are in limited application in New York City. They reported that the city has consulted with San Francisco regarding safety. They explained that the parklets can be seasonal, will not be wider than a parking space and will not permanently give up parking spaces. They expect that the pilot parklets will be in operation between March and October and that after the pilot project, businesses will be paying for design and build and responsible for getting support from abutters, and they will require permitting.

V. **Presentation by Oiste's Latinas for Change, on Hyde/Jackson Square year-round cleanup campaign:** Yolanda Leive presented and reported that Oiste was founded in 1999 in response to concern about the limited political influence and engagement among Latinos. She explained that this project was a volunteer effort as part of a course on political organizing and addressed concerns regarding trash in the sidewalks from Hyde Square to Jackson Square. Leive reported that they had conducted outreach to shop owners and neighbors to clean up streets, increase recycling and increase composting by restaurants, and that they have been in contact with a composter who will pick up materials for composting. Rosa Beato reported that they surveyed different types of businesses and

found that half were not recycling or composting, which led to the proposal that businesses start participating in a composting program. She reported that they have been in contact with MA DEP and Save that Stuff, and that DEP had referred them to Bootstrap Compost. She reported that businesses owners were concerned about the amount of trash on the sidewalks and in the streets, and on 7/7/12 Oiste joined a number of business owners for a walk around the neighborhood to identify what resources would be needed to provide more education and awareness regarding litter. She reported that business owners would like the city to provide more trash cans, preferably solar trash compacters. Fernando Mercedes, from City Councillor Matt O'Malley's office, who was in the audience, offered assistance with this. Ben Day suggested the group be in contact with Andrea Howley from the Parks and Open Space Committee.

VI. Presentation by City Councillor John Connolly on Plans for the Upcoming City Council Session and Q&A:

City Councillor At-Large John Connolly gave an update on the City Council Committee on Education, which he has chaired for almost three years, and which has oversight for budgetary and programmatic decisions for the Boston Public Schools. 1. Councillor Connolly reported that the City Council had held a hearing three weeks ago on the still-unresolved Boston teachers' union contract in order to give parents, students, and the community an opportunity to voice what they want to see in the teachers' contract. 2. Councillor Connolly reported that the City Council had held a hearing two weeks ago on teacher seniority and hiring practices. He reported that that the City Council supports changing legislation to allow quality to be the controlling factor in hiring and not seniority, as is currently the case. 3. Councillor Connolly reported that BPS's student assignment policy would be changing, and expressed his concern that process of review would not be transparent. He reported that he has held over 30 small group meetings in every neighborhood, different socio-economic groups, demographic groups and language groups. He stated that he feels that a new student assignment plan will only work if there is a quality reform plan also. He reported that there will be another community process in the fall, with a plan possible late fall and vote in January or February, 2013 and a new plan being in effect in 2014. 4. Councillor Connolly reported that he worked with Councillor Felix Arroyo on implementing single-stream recycling for BPS, and discussed increasing advanced work in schools, increasing and improving social services and services for students with special needs, and issues regarding BPS's program and capital budgets.

VII. Approval of April and May minutes: Motion to approve April minutes with amendments by Red Burrows. Second by Andrea Howley. Passed 9-0-1. May minutes not available for approval.

VIII. Committee Reports:

a. **Zoning:** Dave Baron reported that the Zoning Committee met on June 14th and will be meeting again on June 28th and July 12th. He reported that no votes are necessary this month.

b. **Public Service:** Michael Reiskind reported that Karley Ausiello had chaired the last meeting of the Public Service Committee on 6/5. He reported that the Committee heard the following: Centre Street Sanctuary LLC, 365 Centre Street, on the Blessed Sacrament campus, applying for 7 day common victualler license with beer and wine, 12 midnight closing, seasonal patio and recorded music. Reiskind reported that no music will be piped to the patio, reported that the community supportive, that there was some concern expressed regarding the cost of food and gentrification in the area. He further reported that some parking in back to be assigned by landlord. He reported that the community would like a proviso that there be no trash pick up between 10pm to 7am. He reported that the owner would now like to add liquers to their application, as there had not

been one available at the time of the hearing, but there is one available now. Reiskind reported that since this is a substantial change to the request, so the Committee is asking the owner to come back to the next meeting, so no vote is required tonight. Reiskind further reported that the next meeting is 7/10 and noted that this is a change from the regular schedule due to the July 4th holiday. Joseph Wight requested that the owner be asked to do better outreach to people who live in the building for the next meeting. Reiskind reported that at the next meeting the Committee will also consider the application of Tres Gatos to add liquors, increase patio seating from 10 to 15 and for three live performers inside. Reiskind reported that the next meeting of the Public Service Committee will be 7/10 at Curtis Hall at 7pm.

c. Parks & Open Space Andrea Howley reported that the Parks and Open Space Committee met on 6/10 and discussed recruiting more people to be involved in park clean-ups, and the Committee's goal to have a group dedicated to each park. Howley reported that all but one of the tree inventories is complete. Howley reported that the design for the Tynan memorial traffic-calming sign on the Jamaicaway is being finalized and research is being conducted regarding the best material and mounting for the sign. Howley reported that there will be a meeting upcoming with City Councillor Matt O'Malley regarding traffic calming, and that the Committee will give input. Howley reported that the Committee is less than \$100 short of its \$7400 goal needed to receive a grant of matching funds. She reported that two of the twelve grants statewide came to Jamaica Plain efforts. Howley announced upcoming concerts at Pinebank, Sundays at 6pm, starting 7/8, and announced that Committee member Sara Freeman will be playing in the wind symphony on 7/22. Howley reported that the last Circle the City was last weekend and that the next is 7/15. She explained that Circle the City is sponsored by the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and is an effort to create car-free corridors and 7/15 streets between Jamaica Pond and Franklin Park will be closed to cars. w/e, next is July 15th. Howley reported that Committee member (and Council member) Cooper Renfro will be moving out of the country, but will finish his tree inventory before he leaves.

At this point, Ben Day announced a vacancy in Area B with the resignation of Cooper Renfro. He announced that the Council will be taking nominations at the July and September meetings and will vote in September if there are qualified nominees.

d. Housing & Development and 161 South Huntington Impact Advisory Group (IAG): Joseph Wight reported that the scoping determination regarding the proposed development at 161 South Huntington Street by Boston Residential Group by the BRA has been released. Wight reported that the scoping determination addresses specific concerns including the massing of buildings on Huntington Avenue, surface parking on the Huntington side of the project, and requested a traffic study, including the impact of Green Line/Heath Street MBTA service cuts. Wight reported that the BRA is requesting that new plans include at least part of the 1914 building. Wight reported that the Committee had planned to recommend the JPNC request the developer hold an additional community meeting, but, reported that the extent of the scoping determination would require the developer have another community meeting, so the Committee is not taking action on this at this time. Wight also expressed the Committee's appreciation for Representative Liz Malia, who was recently arrested in an eviction blockage, protesting the eviction of a tenant in a local bank-foreclosed property.

e. Ad Hoc Racial Justice Committee: Ben Day reported that the first meeting of this Committee is scheduled for 7/16 at 7pm, at a location to be announced.

f. **Casey Arborway Design Advisory Group (DAG):** Francesca Fordiani reported that the DAG met on 6/18 and reviewed the current design for both the east/west and north/south corridors of the project, reviewed proposed signalization at each intersection. Fordiani reported that the discussion had focused on whether the final design should be built to maximum capacity (2035 traffic projections) or if only the infrastructure for the 2035 projections be built, with a roadway to accommodate 2016 projections. Fordiani reported that DOT believes that it would be relatively inexpensive and uncomplicated to widen the road when necessary if the infrastructure has already been built. Fordiani reported that DAG members discussed the pro's and con's of this. She further reported that there continue to be questions from some community members regarding the design's ability to accommodate the expected traffic, as well as frustration regarding the amount of information available related to traffic studies.

h. **Jackson Square Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC):** No report.

IX. Next JPNC meeting: Tue, Jul. 31 at 7PM, Julia Martin House, 90 Bickford St.

Next Executive Committee meeting: Wed, Jul. 25 at JP Licks, 659 Centre St.

Meeting adjourned at 9:08pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Francesca Fordiani, Secretary