

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
November 25, 2014 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Kevin Moloney, Gerard O'Connor, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Anita Cooper, Benjamin Day, Bernard Doherty, Dana Gonsalves, Jamey Lionette, Mike O'Connor, Daniel Perez Lacera, Carolyn Royce, and Gert Thorn.

Other attendees: Richard Heath, John Spears, Diane Spears, Mary Gibson, and Hannah Smith (City Councillor Matt O'Malley's office).

Meeting called to order at 7:12pm by Kevin Moloney at Farnsworth House.

I. Introductions: Members introduced themselves.

II. Announcements:

- The annual Holiday Trolley Tour and Tree Lighting will take place on Saturday, December 6 at 1:30pm at The Monument, and at 2:15pm at Hyde Square.

- John Spears, from the JP Progressives Steering Committee, handed out an information sheet on "A Living Wage" for discussion. Mr. Spears is asking folks in Jamaica Plain who own companies or residential properties to pay a living wage to all their workers. Businesses and building could then display a placard/notice on their storefront or front door. The Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee voted to pay a living wage to workers on properties of projects receiving public support. The Boston City Council passed a living wage ordinance for vendors in 1998. Mr. Spears said that there will be a forum on this issue in early 2015. Motion by Bernie Doherty to support the ongoing discussion of the issue of Living Wages. Seconded by Carolyn Royce. Passed 13-0-0.

III. Approval of minutes: Motion by David Baron to approve the October 28, 2014 minutes. Seconded by Kevin Moloney. Passed 12-0-1.

IV. 161 So. Huntington Avenue: Benjamin Day reported that the request for a permanent pedestrian walkway at 161 So. Huntington Avenue, to be built by Boston Residential Group, is still being considered by the Architectural Access Board. An exemption is needed to build steps because of the steep grade at the site.

V. BRA Reorganization: Benjamin Day reported that the coalition working on reform at the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) is planning a series of neighborhood meetings in 2015. Motion by Ben Day to host a BRA-discussion meeting in Jamaica Plain. Gert Thorn recommended coming up with anticipated discussion points that may be raised at the meeting. Jerry O'Connor hoped that the many Forest Hills area development proposals will be discussed at the meeting. Passed 13-0-0. Volunteering for a working group on the Jamaica Plain meeting were Ben Day, Kevin Moloney, Jamey Lionette, Jerry O'Connor, Gert Thorn, and Bernie Doherty.

VI. Committee Reports:

a. Ad-Hoc Committee on Forest Hills Construction and Development Projects: Jerry O'Connor, chair of the Committee, reported that the Ad-Hoc Committee met yesterday on November 24. They have created project-based subcommittees. The top priority is Casey Arborway and the Route 203 corridor because construction is starting soon. The Ad-Hoc Committee is asking to have our elected officials ask the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and the contractor (Barletta Heavy Equipment) to recognize the Ad-Hoc Committee as a resource in disseminating information on construction planning and mitigation. Motion by Bernie Doherty to authorize the Ad-Hoc Committee to contact our elected officials by phone and e-mail to ask MassDOT and Barletta to recognize the Ad-Hoc Committee as a resource. Gert Thorn asked that the Ad-Hoc Committee get back to the JPNC with which elected officials respond to our request. Seconded by Carolyn Royce. Passed 11-0-2.

The Ad-Hoc Committee met with Kairos Chen, chief planner at the BRA and Marie Mercurio, Jamaica Plain planner. The Washington Street corridor from Forest Hills to Jackson Square is a BRA priority. Separately, the Walsh administration is figuring out how to engage with neighborhoods.

b. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Jamey Lionette reported that the Committee met on November 5 and discussed the project at Washington and McBride Streets (3521-3529 Washington Street, the former Flanagan & Seaton site) with the developers. The public comment period ended on October 10. There has been a lack of public process on this project, and the Committee does not support it because of the lack of affordable units. The developer proposes 14.4% of the 132 units be affordable. The H&DC Committee would like 25%. The developers have met with the Stonybrook Neighborhood Association and have been responsive. This project has already passed the BRA Article 80 process. There was a lot of additional discussion on this project being luxury housing. Motion by Jamey Lionette to not support the project at 3521-3529 Washington Street. Seconded by Gert Thorn. Passed 9-2-1 (1 left early).

The next meetings of the H&DC will be on December 3 at 6:30pm at the JP NDC at 31 Germania Street when the Economy Plumbing redevelopment proposal at 3190-3204 Washington Street will be discussed, and December 16 at 6:30pm at the Bowditch School, 80 Green Street when the proposal for 3383-3389 Washington Street (former Fried

Chicken restaurant) will be discussed.

c. Environment, Parks and Energy Committee (EPE): Ben Day reported that the Committee met on Monday, November 10. The Committee discussed the City's seven-year plan for Parks and Open Spaces. The Plan is too vague and has no action items for Jamaica Plain. The EPE Committee has developed a written comment sheet on the Plan, which was distributed to the JPNC members. It has five main themes: 1) Prioritize area with highest needs, 2) Reconnect the Emerald Necklace in two areas, 3) Set a goal for the tree canopy in Jamaica Plain, 4) Build climate preparedness into the Plan, 5) Encourage green space innovation. Motion by Ben Day to support the comments on the seven-year Plan. Seconded by David Baron. Passed 11-0-1 (1 left early). The proposed new language for the bylaws description of the Environment, Parks and Energy Committee was handed out in preparation of the December meeting. The names of the Committee members are needed for confirmation by the JPNC. The next meeting of the EPE will be on the second Monday of the month, December 8, at 6:30pm at the John F. Kennedy School, 7 Bolster Street.

d. Zoning Committee: David Baron reported that the Committee met three times at Farnsworth House on November 5, November 12 and November 19. There were two items that went before the JPNC Executive Committee because they appeared before the Zoning Board of Appeal before tonight: 1) 606-610 Centre Street, a request by Fancy Schmancy to change occupancy to include doggy day care with accessory retail. There will be no overnight boarding of dogs and no outdoor use. The Zoning and Executive Committees recommended approval.

2) 54-56 Iffley Road, a request to construct a 6'7" x 13' mudroom on the location of an existing right-side deck/patio. The Zoning and Executive Committees recommended approval.

The following request needs a vote of the JP Neighborhood Council: 41 Chestnut Avenue, a request to construct an addition and deck on the second floor above an existing kitchen. The side-yard variance is pre-existing; only the FAR is increasing. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. Motion by David Baron to accept the recommendation of the Zoning Committee on 41 Chestnut Avenue. Seconded by Ben Day. Passed 12-0-0 (1 left early).

The issue of 1 Park Place was heard in November at the Zoning Committee. The motion was to approve subject to an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding). If no MOU was agreed to, the motion was to recommend denial. At the scheduled date in front of the Zoning Board of Appeal on November 18, no MOU was agreed upon and the applicants asked for a deferral. Their new date is December 16. 1 Park Place will be on the Zoning Committee agenda again on December 3.

The Zoning Committee on November 12 was a very informative one with Marie Mercurio of the BRA talking about the Jamaica Plain zoning ordinance, Article 55.

The next Zoning Committee meetings will be on Wednesday, December 3 and December 19 at Farnsworth House.

e. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee met on November 4 and considered again the request of Caffè Nero for a new common victualler license at 733 Centre Street. Jay Gentile, president of Caffè Nero Americas Inc., and Jason Souza, the proposed manager, were in attendance. A Good Neighbor Business Agreement was developed by the Committee in October and Mr. Gentile has verbally committed to abide by almost all of the provisions. Active participation in local organizations, cleanliness and design and giving preference to local hiring were agreed to. Designating a specific percentage of revenue as annual contributions, paying a living wage, and offering senior discounts were not agreed to. At this meeting, there were audience members both in support and in opposition to the application. There was a lot of good discussion and the Public Service Committee recommends support of the request. Because the JPNC asked that this issue come back to the full JPNC meeting in November, the issue did not go to the Executive Committee. It was later learned that the Licensing Board approved this petition in mid-November. Motion by Michael Reiskind to accept the Public Service Committee recommendation of support for the request by Caffè Nero Americas, Inc., doing business as "Caffè Nero" at 733 Centre Street in Jamaica Plain for a 7-day common victualler license from 7:00am to 9:00pm, with 61 indoor seats and 11 outdoor seats on private property, with Jason Souza as manager. Seconded by Dana Gonsalves. There was extensive discussion about recommending a big chain for a Jamaica Plain business district and whether this is a good fit for Jamaica Plain. There was also talk about Caffè Nero's practice of tax avoidance. Michael Reiskind warned the JPNC against making decisions without attending the working committees and hearing both sides of the issues. Motion failed 5-6-1 (1 left early).

The next meeting of the Public Service Committee will be on Tuesday, December 2 at 7:00pm at Curtis Hall, 20 South Street. At that time, a request from Tres Gatos at 470 Centre Street for an all-alcohol license will be considered.

VII. Old/New Business: none

Meeting was adjourned at 8:54pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next JPNC meeting: Tuesday, December 23 at 7:00PM at Farnsworth House

Next Executive Committee meeting: Monday, December 16 at 6:30PM, JP Licks, 659 Centre Street