

## **Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council**

### **September 23, 2014 Minutes**

**JPNC Attendance:** Kevin Moloney, Gerard O'Connor, Michael Reiskind, Anne Barrett, Anita Cooper, Benjamin Day, Bernard Doherty, Dana Gonsalves, Jamey Lionette, Kristy Nardone, Kyle D. Smith, Gert Thorn, and Jeffrey Wiesner.

**Other attendees:** Giovanni Valencia, Dottie Farrell, Martha Heath, and Michael Baker (Rep. Jeffrey Sánchez' Office).

Meeting called to order at 7:15pm by Kevin Moloney at Farnsworth House.

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

**II. Announcements:** There were three announcements this month.

- - The third meeting on the JP/South/Hyde/Jackson Design Projects will be on Monday, September 29 at the John F. Kennedy School, 7 Bolster Street at 6:00pm. It will concentrate on the area between Hyde and Jackson Squares.

- Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corp. will be having their Octoberfest Fiesta fundraiser on Thursday, October 23 from 6pm-9pm at the Samuel Adams Brewery.

- Gert Thorn said that there have been some community meetings on a proposed expansion of the Arbour Hospital in the Robinwood Avenue area off Centre Street. Please bring any issues you have to Gert Thorn's attention.

**III. Approval of minutes:** Motion by Kristy Nardone to approve the July 29, 2014 minutes. Seconded by Benjamin Day. Passed 8-0-2 (3 late).

**IV. 161 So. Huntington Avenue:** Benjamin Day reminded the JPNC members that there were two main parts to the settlement agreement between the JPNC and Boston Residential Group, developers of 161 So. Huntington Avenue, the former Home for Little Wanderers site. The first was better affordability: both more affordable units and greater depth of affordability. The second was a permanent pedestrian path on the right side of the building as seen from the street. This pedestrian path has not been included in the plans that were submitted to the City. It seems implausible that the plans would not be submitted at this stage of construction. Lighting utilities need to be built at this time. The language of the agreement left it to the developer "in good faith" to plan and build the path. If the path is not built, there is a penalty of \$150,000 payable to the JPNC. Motion by Kevin Moloney to send a letter to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and the developer asking why the pedestrian path is not in the original building package of plans, Seconded by Ben Day. Passed 12-0-0 (1 late).

**V. BRA Reorganization:** Benjamin Day spoke about a coalition which is working on reforming the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and the development process. In last year's mayoral election, candidate Marty Walsh promised to reorganize the BRA. This year, Mayor Marty Walsh appointed John Barros, who has experience as head of an agency that dealt with the BRA, as his Chief of Economic Development. Mayor Walsh also had a pro-bono audit done of the BRA, which reported problems in the internal management of the agency. Ben Day described them as a total mess. John Barros said that a consultant will be hired to do another audit looking at the development and community process. There's a coalition consensus that everyone would like to see master planning for the City, which would involve periodically updating the zoning for each neighborhood. The City may recommend a slightly smaller rezoning process. There's also consensus to see a City planning department independent of the City's development department. Folks were interested in improving the Inclusionary Zoning guidelines for the City; they are now at 15% of units at 70% of the AMI (Area Median Income) with a buy-out available to locate the affordable units off-site. The reform of neighborhood input in development and planning has led to two draft papers, one on a more formalized neighborhood council process and the other on reform of Impact Advisory Groups (IAGs) and Community Advisory Committees (CACs).

Ben Day asked for some informal thoughts and recommendations to the coalition for short-term reforms. Gert Thorn and Bernie Doherty agreed that the City planning department should be the lead City agency, independent of the City's development department. Gert also thought we should look at where development is needed as well as where it is overloaded. Mr. Thorn did not like the inclusionary zoning buy-out option. Kevin Moloney thought that rezoning of Jamaica Plain is needed at this time. Jeffrey Wiesner thought that there needs to be clearer guidelines for good development. The BRA used to send a planner to all the Zoning Committee meetings. Volunteering to assist Ben Day were Gert Thorn, Jamey Lionette, Anne Barrett, 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 on Forest Hills Construction and Development Projects met once, on Monday, September 22. The Committee did not meet in August. Mr. O'Connor said it was a good follow-up to the July meeting. John Barros, the City of Boston Chief of Economic Development, promised to appoint a BRA

planner as liaison to the Ad-Hoc Committee. The Department of Neighborhood Development (DND) is also very interested in working with the Committee as long as it is representative. The Committee does have good coverage except for a few side streets off South Street.

There is still one vacancy on the Committee that needs to be filled. Jerry O'Connor asked whether the member should represent South Street. Bernie Doherty also asked for representation from the Washington Street Business Group (WSBG). Jerry Mello, from the WSBG, had come to the last JPNC meeting to gather information to bring back to the Group and submit a name. Marie Turley and Giannalda Fontana have also expressed interest in the Committee. Benjamin Day also asked whether the Committee has adequate representation from renters.

b. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Jamey Lionette reported that the Committee met last week Tuesday, September 16 at the Bowditch School. The Committee continues to have a series of neighborhood groups presenting. This month Urban Edge spoke about their forty year history in the areas of Jackson Square and Egleston Squares. They have recently conducted a survey of vacant lots and dilapidated buildings in Egleston Square. The issues with City Realty Group as landlord were discussed at the H&DC. There have been foreclosures and talk of evictions at a commercial block with seven tenants on Washington Street. Representatives Malia and Sánchez have sat down with the BRA on the issue. City Councillor Tito Jackson is having a City Council hearing on October 20 at 4:00pm in City Hall.

There are two Article 80 developments that have had community meetings: Urbanica (MBTA's Parcel U at Forest Hills) and The Commons at Forest Hills (3593-3615 Washington Street). Both projects' public comment periods end on October 10.

The next meeting of the H&DC will be Tuesday, October 21 at the Bowditch School, 82 Green Street at 6:30pm. There will be a presentation from ESAC and their GED program.

c. Environment, Parks and Energy Committee (EPE): The Committee is still struggling to get started. The next meeting of the EPE will be on Monday, October 20 at 6:30pm at the John F. Kennedy School, 7 Bolster Street.

d. Zoning Committee: Anne Barrett reported that the Committee met twice at Farnsworth House on September 3 and September 17. There was one item that went before the JPNC Executive Committee because they appeared before the Zoning Board of Appeal before tonight: 27 Seaverns Avenue, a request by Tyler Langlois to construct a new shed dormer and renovate the third floor adding about 500 sq., ft. to the top unit of a 2-family house. The Zoning and Executive Committees recommended approval. The following four requests need a vote of the JP Neighborhood Council: 1) 11 Pershing Road, a request by Scott Stoneburner to construct a new shed dormer on third floor according to plans, to include a new master bedroom, bathroom and storage space. The Jamaica Pond Association does not oppose. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. Motion by Kevin Moloney to accept the recommendation of the Zoning Committee on 11 Pershing Road. Seconded by Kristy Nardone. Passed 13-0-0. 2) 81 Sedgwick Street, a request by Eve Sorum and John Fulton to renovate interior basement space to create a bedroom/recreation room and full bath. This basement is on a hill and has a walkout egress. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. Motion by Michael Reiskind to recommend approval of the variances on 81 Sedgwick Street. Seconded by Dana Gonsalves. Passed 12-0-1. Bernie Doherty reported on the next two requests. 3) 86 Wyman Street, a request by Arthur Frontczak to renovate basement and first-floor space to extend living space from Unit 1 into basement. There was quite a bit of debate on this request, especially about the sink in the basement. This building is on a hill and the basement has a walkout exit. There was a question about hard wiring of smoke detectors in the unit and Ben Day asked about the Healthy Housing Guidelines. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. Motion by Bernie Doherty to recommend approval of the variance requested on 86 Wyman Street. Seconded by Gert Thorn. Passed 9-2-2. 4) 38-42 Hyde Park Avenue, a request by Fred Starikov and Steve Whalen as principals of ATOD02130, LLC to demolish an existing one-storey building and erect a new four-storey dwelling with nine residential units and ground-level retail space. A large group of folks, including business representatives, came from all over Jamaica Plain to oppose this request. They educated the Zoning Committee on the bad landlord track record of this developer. The two principals left the meeting early and did not return to speak on their behalf or withdraw their application. The developer had met with the "4Ws Association" (Woodlawn, Weld, Wachusett, Wenham) which is supporting the application. Nobody from 4Ws came to speak in favor and there was no audience member supporting the application. The Zoning Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial. Kyle Smith asked whether affordability was discussed. Motion by Bernie Doherty to recommend denial of the nine variances requested on 38-42 Hyde Park Avenue. Seconded by Anne Barrett. Passed 12-0-1.

The next Zoning Committee meetings will be on Wednesday, October 1 and October 15 at Farnsworth House.

e. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee met twice, on August 5 and September 9. At the August meeting, a request of Tikki Masala for a new beer and wine license with take-out at 3706 Washington Street was considered. The applicant, Mr. Somdutt Sharma, promised to not have any pulldown security grates, keep the place litter-free, have bilingual menus, and discourage double-parking. He promised to serve the beer and wine with food only. While Mr. Sharma is proposing the hours of 10:30am to 10:00pm, seven days a

week, the Committee is recommended a later licensed closing hour of 11:00pm as appropriate in the area. At the September meeting, a request of Ten Tables at 597 Centre Street for an extension of their closing hour from 10pm to 12midnight was considered. The applicant, Ms. Krista Kranyak, said that many customers come in for the fine dining and quiet atmosphere, but can only be seated by 8:30pm because of the type of restaurant service they have. They have had many requests from patrons for later seating hours. Discussion centered on the issues along the back alley which abuts 9-11 Pond Street. Residents were concerned about more trash and later noise coming with the later hours. The neighbors and applicant to write up a Good Neighbor Agreement to address the issues. Motion by Michael Reiskind to recommend approval of both requests 1) Request of Punjab Foods, Inc., doing business as "Tikki Masala Indian Restaurant", at 3706 Washington Street for a common victualler seven-day wines and malt beverages license and a take-out license with a closing hour of 11:00pm, with Somdutt Sharma as manager, with the proviso that alcohol be served with food only. 2) Request of KLK, Inc., doing business as "Ten Tables", at 597 Centre Street to extend the closing hour of its present Common Victualler Seven-Day Wines and Malt Beverages with Liqueurs License from 10:00pm to 12midnight, subject to a Good Neighbor Agreement and provided Ten Tables has a follow-up community meeting with their neighbors and the JPNC six months after the longer hours are established. Passed 13-0-0.

The Committee also continued the discussion of bicycle accommodation on Centre and South Streets. A representative from Boston Bikes came to the August meeting. New art projects such as murals in JP were also discussed at the September meeting, with three folks volunteering to curate public art projects in the neighborhood. The next meeting of the Public Service Committee will be Tuesday, October 7 at 7:00pm at Curtis Hall, 20 South Street. At that time, a request of Caffè Nero for a new common victualler license at 733 Centre Street will be considered.

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

- Michael Reiskind brought up the issue of KENO-To-Go requests on Centre Street. In a recent legal public notice from the Massachusetts State Lottery Commission, there were requests for such a Keno use at El Patio Market, 371 Centre Street and 4 Star Gas at 561-579 Centre Street. There was agreement that such a use is not appropriate in the Centre Street business district.

**Meeting was adjourned at 8:51pm.**

*Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind*

Next JPNC meeting: Tuesday, October 28 at 7:00PM at Farnsworth House

Next Executive Committee meeting: Thursday, October 23 at 6:30PM, JP Licks, 659 Centre Street