

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council

February 25, 2020 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Kevin Rainsford, Max Glikman, Michael Reiskind, Vicky Arroyo, David Baron, Robin Cheung, Valerie Coimbra, Bernard Doherty, Marvin Mathelier, Peg Preble, Carolyn Royce, Emily Tabor, Gert Thorn, Esther Tutella-Chen, Trevor Wissink-Adams, Sam Wohlforth, and Priscilla Yang.

Other attendees: Dana Gonsalves, Emily Procknal, Arielle Frangipane, Julie Kaufmann, Eric Nolen-Doerr, Louise Robbins, Rahul Ganatra, Evan Delaney, Alan Benefeld, State Rep. Nika Elugardo, Liana Poston (Office of Rep. Liz Malia), Justin McClarey (Office of City Councillor Matt O'Malley), Lauren Bennett (Jamaica Plain Gazette), and Richard Heath (Boston Bulletin).

Meeting called to order at 7:04pm by Kevin Rainsford at Farnsworth House.

1. Introductions: Council members introduced themselves. Aides, elected officials, and press introduced themselves.

2. Approval of January minutes: Motion by Max Glikman to approve the minutes from the January 28, 2020 meeting. Seconded by Robin Cheung. Passed 13-0-3 (1 came late).

3. Announcements:

- The Shattuck Redevelopment Vision Plan is now available. It can be viewed at:

www.mass.gov/info-details/shattuck-campus-at-morton-street-planning

- There will be a Better Bus Project Open House featuring featuring Bus Network Redesign on Tuesday, March 10 from 5:30pm to 8:00pm at the Bruce Bolling Municipal Building Lobby, 2300 Washington Street in Roxbury (subsequently cancelled).

- City Councillor Matt O'Malley will be hosting an Irish Republic Flag Raising at Boston City Hall on Thursday, March 12. There will be a reception at 11am on the third floor, followed by the flag raising at 12:30pm on City Hall Plaza. (subsequently cancelled).

4. Rep. Nika Elugardo: State Representative Nika Elugardo started by saying that she has an African-American candidate from Area A wanting to run for the JP Neighborhood Council.

Her district encompasses half of Jamaica Plain, as well as some of Roslindale, Mission Hill, and Brookline. Her district priorities this year have shifted from Jobs, Public Safety, and Housing to Jobs, Housing, and Small Business Entrepreneurs/Artists. She promised to work on commercial spaces and progressive taxation. Rep. Elugardo has filed 35 bills and co-sponsored 435 bills. Last year, her number one bill was an Act to enable public housing authorities to borrow against real estate equity of [mainly surplus] publicly-owned properties. There is a \$1.2Billion inventory of surplus land which could be available for public housing or to use as capital for affordable housing. The Representative also sponsored a bill to give municipalities a local option for tenant protections (rent control is an option). The towns can target zones in the town, and three-unit owner-occupied buildings are exempt. There are also provisions on Just Cause Eviction, and to allow flexibility and exemptions on broker fees.

Questions: What about Mayor Walsh's proposal for an increased real estate transfer fee? The bill is still open to gain more sponsors. Why is there an exemption for three-unit owner-occupied buildings? To protect some property owners, especially the elderly. Gert Thorn asked about property tax exemptions for larger non-profits in the City, especially health care uses. He thought they should be looked at to make sure they are working for the good of the community. There is the PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) program, but it is voluntary. Some City Councillors have proposed tracking the PILOT payments and withholding some city services until payments are made. Rep. Elugardo has proposed financial incentives if the non-profit helps with affordable housing. She has also proposed a study of tax assessments with the idea of giving tax credits for job creation. Bernie Doherty said that the use of the AMI (Area Median Income) formula is a problem. The Representative said that incremental movement is happening. There are different ways to think about affordable housing. Public housing should also be thought about differently; there should be ways to gain the rise in equity of such housing. There was a question whether the state's 40B housing requirement should be raised from a 10% requirement to 15%. Rep. Elugardo said there are not enough votes in the House for this. Perhaps transfer 40B credits to a town if they build somewhere else. Julie Kaufmann thanked the Representative and her colleagues in the State House for their support of a single-payer health care system.

In summary, the Representative thanked the community for the more than one thousand toys that came in response to an urgent request for toys for housing developments during the holiday season.

5. Committee Reports/Recommendations:

5.1. Zoning Committee (ZC): David Baron gave a brief description of the work of the Zoning Committee and the community process it uses. Mr. Baron then reported on the work of the Committee over the last month. The Zoning Committee met on February 5 and three votes are needed tonight: 1) 91 Green Street, a request by Pauline Chen Halsey and Woodruff Halsey to construct an addition on the rear of the existing house to create an additional dwelling unit and a garage. There were lots of abutters who came to support, but the Sumner Hill Association sent a letter with concerns: the proposal was too close to neighbors and screening and landscape buffering is needed, permeable pavers should be used in

the driveway, and the driveway should be narrowed to match the curb cut. The recommendation of the ZC is to approve with provisos that applicant work with abutters on screening/buffering, use permeable pavers on parking area, and narrow driveway if possible to match curb cut. 2) 493 Walnut Avenue, a request by Seth Davis and Dorothy Fennell to construct new garage addition to existing single-family dwelling. This is a corner lot and the garage is actually off Park Lane. The rear and side neighbors are in support. There was no opposition. The recommendation of the ZC is to approve. 3) 84 Southbourne Road, a request by Lance and Alexandra Davis to add a rear one-story addition to single-family house. This is a lovely enclave. The proposal is to build a 180 sq. ft. one-story addition as a kitchen for the 670 sq. ft. dwelling. There was some opposition from a neighbor who would see the addition from the road. The owners agreed to use an arborist to try to save the roots of nearby trees and to seek design review. The recommendation of the ZC is to approve with proviso that applicant have an arborist consult on excavation of the basement. Motion by Carolyn Royce to support the recommendations of the Zoning Committee as presented on 91 Green Street, 493 Walnut Avenue, and 84 Southbourne Road. Seconded by Max Glikman. Passed 15-0-0 (2 left early).

The next Zoning Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, March 4 at 7:00pm at Farnsworth House. On the agenda will be 3368 Washington Street (residential use with 202 units, office use of 14,000 square feet), 150 Chestnut Avenue, 101-103 Green Street, and 3171 Washington Street.

5.2. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind briefly summarized the work of the Public Service Committee in Transportation, Public Safety and Licensing, and Public Works. Mr. Reiskind then reported that the Public Service Committee met on February 4 and considered a request by Jamaica Mi Hungry at 225 Centre Street. The applicants had originally requested a beer & wine license, but were now seeking an all-alcohol license, an outdoor patio, and an extension of hours until 1:00am. They intend to stay open until 10:00pm on weekdays and 11:00pm on weekends - but would like to stay open until 1:00am about three days a year. They also have three TVs which they use for sports events. There was no opposition, and a resident living upstairs in the mixed use building attended and was a strong supporter. The applicants agreed to serve alcohol with food only and use waiters to serve. All staff will be TIPS-trained in alcohol service. Motion by Max Glikman to support the petition of Jamaica Mi Hungry LLC, doing business as “Jamaica Mi Hungry” at 225 Centre Street in Roxbury for a 7-Day Common Victualler All Alcohol License with a closing hour of 1:00am, a seasonal outdoor patio for 15 seats, and an entertainment license for three (3) TVs, with Ernie Campbell as manager, with the proviso that alcohol be served with food only. Seconded by Emily Tabor. Passed 15-0-0 (2 left early).

The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, March 3 at 7:00pm at Curtis Hall. On the agenda will be a request of Third Cliff Bakery & Café at 3531 Washington Street for a 7-Day Common Victualler License.

5.3. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Carolyn Royce summarized the work of the Housing & Development Committee: it has been working on Article 80 proposals, the Shattuck campus plans, and the Arborway Yard future. They have created a Jobs Policy as guidelines for businesses in Jamaica Plain. Ms. Royce then reported that the H&DC met on February 18 at the Bowditch School at which there was a discussion of the process for Article 80 developments. There was also an informational discussion from Save Doyle’s about the possibility of its reuse as a restaurant/bar/meeting place. There was lots of historical background. There may be a buyer for the building at the corner of Washington Street and Williams Street.

The next H&DC meeting will be on Tuesday, March 17 at 7:00pm at the Bowditch School (subsequently moved to a virtual meeting).

5.4. Ad Hoc Parks + Committee: Esther Tutella-Chen summarized the work of the Parks + Committee as an advocate for parks. At their last meeting, they worked on the vision plan for the Shattuck Campus Redevelopment and the Franklin Park Master Plan. Sarah Freeman reported on the City’s community meeting on the Master Plan for Franklin Park. There were hundreds of attendees and a presentation which can be viewed on-line. The Parks + Committee will try to have a clean-up of Mozart Park in the spring.

The next Parks + Committee meeting will be on Monday, March 9 at 7:00pm at JP Licks.

5.5. Ad Hoc Education Committee: Trevor Wissink-Adams summarized the work of the Education Committee. It acts to give information on Boston Public Schools (BPS) to the community and brought the BPS listening tour to JP. At the Education Committee’s February 12 meeting, the revised draft Strategic Plan was discussed and comments were submitted to BPS. The Superintendent’s Revised Strategic Plan will be presented at the BPS Board meeting on February 26 at 6:00pm at the Bolling Building, 2300 Washington Street.

The next Education Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, March 11 at 7:00pm at JP Licks.

5.6. Ad Hoc Outreach Task Force: Max Glikman summarized the work of the Outreach Task Force. It works on the JPNC’s social media and website presence. They also work on the JPNC community election. They have developed a dynamic calendar of community meetings.

JPNC Election: The next biennial JPNC Election is scheduled for April 25, 2020 from 10:00am to 5:00pm.

Candidate nomination packets are available now at the JP Branch Library and will be available from the website and at the Connolly Branch, Egleston Square Branch and Curtis Hall. Papers with signatures need to be returned by March 20 to the JP Branch Library. Biographies of the candidates will be published in the Jamaica Plain Gazette and Jamaica Plain News. The three polls will be at the Stop and Shop, JP Licks, and Forest Hills T Station. Volunteers are needed for poll workers, counting the votes and for ombudspeople.

6. Community questions about the JP Neighborhood Council and the election:

7. New Business:

- The City of Boston is encouraging the use of Nesterly, a group that works on intergenerational homesharing.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:41pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next scheduled JPNC meeting: Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at 7:00PM at Farnsworth House (subsequently cancelled).