

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
December 22, 2020 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Kevin Rainsford, Max Glikman, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Bernard Doherty, Will Cohen, Marvin Mathelier, Samantha Montaña, Peg Preble, Carolyn Royce, Kyle Smith, Gert Thorn, Trevor Wissink-Adams, and Priscilla Yang.

Other attendees: Anna Callahan, Jacob Mathews, Marcus Johnson Smith (KG Collective), Michael Pires (KG Collective), Justin McClarey (Office of City Councillor Matt O'Malley), Lindsey Santana (Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services), Lauren Bennett (Jamaica Plain Gazette), Richard Heath (Boston Bulletin).

Meeting called to order at 7:04pm by Kevin Rainsford via Zoom.

1. Introductions: Council members introduced themselves. Aides to elected officials introduced themselves.

2. Approval of November minutes: Due technical difficulties, the approval of the minutes from the November 24, 2020 meeting was tabled to the January 2021 meeting.

3. Announcements:

3.1. Second Announcement of Council vacancy: Kevin Rainsford announced the JPNC vacancy in Area B. He then asked if there were any nominations for her Area B seat. There were no nominations. Nominations will also be accepted at the January 2021 meeting.

Kevin Rainsford also said that Valerie Coimbra has resigned, so there will also be a JPNC vacancy in Area C. He will make the first official announcement at the January 2021 meeting and nominations can be accepted at the January and February meetings.

3.2. Other Announcements:

- The Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) process on the Shattuck campus has passed another step. Sarah Freeman spoke at length about their missteps and mistakes. She thought DCAMM can go in a different direction.

- The next JPNC Executive Committee meeting, scheduled for January 21, 2021 at 7:00PM, has been cancelled. Instead, there will be a special JPNC Meeting at 6:00pm that day to discuss progress on Plan:JP/Rox with the community and the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA).

4. A presentation by KG Collective LLC on their proposal to open an adult-use cannabis retail business at 1589 Columbus Avenue: [Kyle Smith recused himself on this discussion, as he had represented a previous landowner of this property.] Marcus Johnson Smith and Michael Pires introduced themselves as co-founders of KG Collective and made the presentation for a cannabis retail operation in Jamaica Plain at 1589 Columbus Avenue at the corner of Amory Street. They have operated a cannabis accessory shop (Kush Groove) at 1536 Tremont Street in Mission Hill. They emphasized their local roots, deep experience in the business, their commitment to diversity and customer service. KG Collective has a ten-year lease on 1589 Columbus Avenue, which is a three-minute walk from Jackson Square station on the Orange Line. It is compliant with all state rules as being far enough away from schools and any other cannabis dispensary. It is an Equity Empowerment application. They hope to open in the summer/fall of 2021. It is a 3,500 sq. ft. building on a 4,200 sq. ft. lot. A driveway easement on the left side of the building will be used with a side door for deliveries and employee entrance. Handicapped access will be via the front door where a new wheelchair lift will be built. The front door vestibule, where IDs are checked first, can accommodate up to ten people. IDs are checked a second time before customers can enter the sales floor. There will be eight stations on the sales floor. There will also be a Kush Groove retail shop selling accessories inside the building. The store can accommodate up to forty customers at a time. The exterior will be enhanced with stucco and wood slats, and a small discrete sign. Windows will be covered so that no one can see inside. In anticipation, Messrs. Pires and Marcus Smith addressed concerns they had heard at previous community presentations. Safety and security: at least two security on-site at all times when the business is open. No one under 21 years old is allowed inside, and no loitering or smoking will be allowed around the building. Motion detectors, cameras and lights will be in operation. Transportation and parking: there is not much parking available - it will be used for loading only. There will be no off-street customer or employee parking. However, there is an existing loading zone next door at the auto parts store. Discussion has started discussions with abutters (Urban Edge) about the possibility of leasing off-street spaces. Messrs. Pires and Marcus Smith talked about their three community partners: Women With Purpose, Minorities for Medical Marijuana, Beat The Odds. KG Collective is also pursuing two other dispensary licenses, one in Cambridge and one in Brockton. They anticipate fourteen employees at this location, with 50% hires being local (City of Boston) and 75% minority/veterans/disabled/ex-prisoners. There are no plans for delivery out of this location; although they may do deliveries out of a warehouse location. Messrs. Pires and Marcus Smith have already met with Urban Edge, Academy Homes, Egleston Square Neighborhood Association (ESNA), Egleston Square Main Street, and Horizons for Homeless Children. They have also reached out to the Dimock Center. Gert Thorn asked for professional traffic and parking studies to accommodate the up to forty customers. KG Collective may go to the Boston Cannabis Board in February 2021, the Zoning Board of Appeal in April, construction start in May. Motion by Kevin Rainsford to send a letter to City Councillor

O'Malley expressing non-opposition to KG Collective LLC moving forward in their application for a retail cannabis dispensary at 1589 Columbus Avenue, as long as the applicant continues with the community process, communicates with community on feedback and requests, including attendance at the Zoning Committee, and the JPNC has input on the City of Boston Host Community Agreement. Seconded by Priscilla Yang. Gert Thorn asked for a traffic and parking study before the JPNC votes on this motion. Passed 13-0-0 (1 recusal).

5. "Good Cause Shown" Removal: Kevin Rainsford said that he has not heard back at all from Sam Wohlforth about whether he would like to remain on the JP Neighborhood Council (Area A). He has not been attending JPNC meetings since March. Motion to remove Sam Wohlforth from the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council for good cause shown (absence). Seconded by Max Glikman. Passed 13-0-1.

6. Committee Reports/Recommendations:

6.1. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Marvin Mathelier reported that the H&DC met on December 15 via Zoom. The Subcommittee on Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Construction updated the H&DC. The H&DC also discussed the project at 3371 Washington Street. [Will Cohen recused himself from the discussion on this project, because he works for the architect. Max Glikman and Samantha Montaño also recused themselves, because they are affiliated with the developer, the JP Neighborhood Development Corporation (JP NDC). Kyle Smith did not recuse himself from the vote.] This is a 5-story building with 38 residential units for low- and extremely-low income seniors. It is right next to Turtle Swamp Brewing. There will also be one commercial/restaurant space. There is lot of support for the project because it all affordable and must be built to new sustainability standards. The residential units may be built as compact living units with open space and design guidelines. There is no parking off-street. Abutting neighbors on Union Avenue have continuing issues about the height (it is one-story higher than Plan:JP/Rox guidelines). Discussions are continuing. Motion by Dave Baron to submit an Article 80 comment letter to the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) regarding 3371 Washington Street that will be a 5-story building with 38 residential units for low- and extremely-low income seniors, plus 1 commercial/restaurant space. Seconded by Gert Thorn. Passed 10-0-1 (3 recusals).

Kevin Rainsford said that a vote is also needed on the Carolina-Call project that was discussed last month as 71-85 Call Street (Southwest Corridor). [Max Glikman and Samantha Montaño recused themselves, because they are affiliated with the developer, the JP Neighborhood Development Corporation (JP NDC). Kyle Smith did not recuse himself from the vote.] The developer, the JP NDC, had changed the affordability rates from four rental units and four home-ownership units to all eight units being home-ownership with the affordability rates going from 60-80-100% of AMI (Area Median Income) to 80-100% of AMI. The JPNC would like the City to add more subsidy to retain the two 60% AMI units, but the City has contributed a lot of money already on this project and may not be able. Motion by Kevin Rainsford to send a letter of support for the change of affordability on the Carolina-Call project (71-85 Call Street). Seconded by Kyle Smith. Passed 11-0-1 (2 recusals).

The Net Zero Carbon Construction subcommittee will meet next on Monday, January 18 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

The next H&DC meeting will be on Tuesday, January 19 at 7:00pm via Zoom. MassHousing will probably be on the agenda.

6.2. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind said that the Public Service Committee met on December 1 via Zoom. There was continued discussion on how to reform the police. Three areas are priorities for the Committee: police accountability, a second Boston Police reform initiative, and reducing police officer stress. Also discussed was the issue of JP streets needing repair, and crosswalks and bike lanes needing repainting. After sending a letter in the spring with a list of requests, the Committee followed up with a list in the fall saying how few had been completed. In answer to why the City had done so few (even though some requests had been repeated for several years), the City's reply is that their engineers assessed the requests as "not needing repair". The Public Service Committee strongly disagrees with the engineering assessment, especially since the City's own Public Works Department website had these streets listed on their 2020 Resurfacing List. Gert Thorn also said that the City's Chief of Streets came by and said that Robinwood Avenue (on the Committee's and PWD lists) was in bad shape and absolutely needs to be done. On the Committee's agenda for January, we will start to develop an education campaign about the confusing new striping on Jamaica Plain roads. The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, January 5 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

6.3. Zoning Committee (ZC): David Baron reported that the Zoning Committee met on December 2 and December 16 as a virtual meeting. Four matters were heard and three need votes tonight. 1) 15 Nira Avenue, a petition by Dauntless Path LLC (Donald Casale) for a gut renovation of an existing single-family residence. No change in use or change in footprint. There was no opposition and the recommendation of the ZC is to recommend approval. 2) 8 Robeson Street, a petition by 8 Robeson Street LLC (Andrew Litchfield) for a renovation to add a third unit to an existing two-family residence, add dormers and extend living space into basement; building to be sprinklered at all levels. This proposal is from a developer who is a "restorer" that keeps the look of the building and spruces it up. People on the Committee liked the design after a lot of discussion. Also, the building is to be fully sprinklered. There was no opposition and the recommendation of the ZC is to recommend approval. 3) 49A Walk Hill Street, a petition by Moss Hill Investments, LLC (Brian Gault) to construct a three-unit dwelling with three off-street parking spaces per plans. This proposal fits in with the look of the street and was generally favorably received, but there was concern about the front setback. There is no sharp front setback along the

street, but the discussions about the modal setback (the “average” for the street). It was felt that the building should be pulled back further from the street. The developer complied, so the recommendation of the ZC is to recommend approval, with the proviso that the main facade of the building be aligned with the abutting building that is closest to the street. 97 and 99 Williams Street is not up for a vote tonight. These are two adjoining parcels in the Stonybrook area. They are borrowing some land from one parcel to the other. It had a very lively discussion at the ZC about the process at the Stonybrook Neighborhood Association (SNA). This proposal has been at the SNA for ten months. The applicant was willing to go back to the SNA, so the matter was deferred until January 20.

Motion by Carolyn Royce to support the recommendations of the Zoning Committee on 15 Nira Avenue, 8 Robeson Street, and 9A Walk Hill Street. Seconded by Gert Thorn. Passed 14-0-0.

The next Zoning Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, January 20 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda will be 97 and 99 Williams Street, 1785 Columbus Avenue. 3371 Washington Street will be on for the February 3 meeting.

6.4. Outreach/Election Committee: Max Glikman said that the Committee met on Monday, December 14 and discussed plans for the next JP Neighborhood Council Election. The Committee is looking at ways to maintain everyone’s safety, with electronic signatures for the nomination packet, and mail-in ballots or drop-off boxes for ballots. In-person voting will also be offered with volunteers sitting further apart. The Election is scheduled for April 24, 2021. Nomination packets will be available at the end of February 2021. Peg Preble would like to see a “job description” for JPNC members and Committee members available on the JPNC website; there are descriptions of the Committees, but not anything for the members. How do folks make decisions and who do they represent? If we want folks to run for the Council, we should be clear on what they get to do. Max Glikman and Michael Reiskind will work on an “orientation package” for Council members. Marvin Mathelier worried about lack of electronic access for some neighbors. In answer to a question, JPNC members are always encouraged to attend their local community meetings and talk about the JPNC and its good work. Volunteers are still needed to assist during the Election at the polls, as Ombudspersons, and as vote counters.

The next Outreach/Election Committee meeting will be on Monday, January 11 at 6:30pm via Zoom.

7. Old Business/New Business:

- Discussion of plans and drawings for Zoning Committee reports was tabled to a later meeting.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:56pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next scheduled JPNC meeting: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 7:00PM via Zoom.

The next scheduled JPNC Executive Committee meeting on January 21, 2021 at 7:00PM has been cancelled.