

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
July 25, 2023 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Renée Stacey Welch, Bernard Doherty, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Nicholas Chaves, Peter DeCotis, Sarah Freeman, Luke Mathew, Willie Mitchell, Katherine O’Shea, Purple Reign, Paige Sparks, and Gert Thorn.

Other attendees: Carolyn Royce, Esther Belliard, Dorothy Farrell, Marie Turley, Dana Gonsalves, Louise Johnson, Michael Epp, Nancy Shapiro, Birgit Sandoval, Susan Zebrook, Kate & Andy Ellingson, Kim Friedman Landau, Paul Sullivan, Maureen Boyes, Nolan Ward, Luke Tarbie, Marcy Ostberg, Susan Cibulsky, Buzz Bussewitz, Deborah Shang, Anne McHugh, Beverly Simon, Tom Lynch, Juwan Skeens, 70 Percent, Mary, Nancie K. iPad, (413)537-8556, (617)699-1681, (646)584-8543, Kane Dimasso-Scott, Melissa Beltran (Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services), My’Kel McMillen (Office of City Councillor Kendra Lara), and Richard Heath (Boston Bulletin).

1. Introductions: The members of the JP Neighborhood Council introduced themselves. The reporter from The Bulletin introduced himself and Melissa Beltran, Jamaica Plain liaison from the Office of Neighborhood Services introduced herself.

2. **Approval of June 2023 minutes:** Motion by Michael Reiskind to approve the minutes from the June 27, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Gert Thorn. Passed 11-0-2.

3. Announcements:

3.1. Community announcements: None

3.2 Council Vacancies: There is only one vacancy on the Council - a vacancy in Area A.

4. Committee Reports/Recommendations:

4.1. Zoning Committee (ZC): David Baron said that the Zoning Committee met on July 5 and July 19 and heard three proposals, two of which need votes tonight: 1) 31 Rodman Street, a petition by Hoban Homes LLC and Brian Doherty to renovate an existing two-family dwelling and construct a new three-story addition in rear, creating two condominium units. Add additional bedrooms and two single-car garages. There is no change of use. This two-family dwelling would remain a two-family. This proposal had two well-attended meetings and progress was being made. The July 5 meeting had a lot of letters submitted and folks were strongly opposed. The ZC considered a motion to approve - it failed. There was then a motion to oppose - it also failed. Therefore the Committee is recommending no action and no vote is needed tonight. 2) 361 Centre Street (Blessed Sacrament Church, a petition by Pennrose LLC and the Hyde Square Task Force for an adaptive reuse of a church building and site to create 55 affordable rental units, community space, and 22 off-street parking spaces; additions to east and west facades of an existing building. There will be space for the Hyde Square Task Force which had tried to develop this property previously. The affordable units will be deeply affordable. There are really 19 parking spaces. There were questions about the parking. The recommendation of the ZC is to approve. 3) 250 and 250R Pond Street, a petition by David and Gay Gillies to demolish an existing two-car garage behind an existing residence and construct a new two-story single-family residence in its place. This is an additional dwelling unit (ADU) sort of like the City’s ADU 2.0 program. It is well off the street and access is good for the Fire Department. The Jamaica Hills Association voted not to oppose. The recommendation of the ZC is to approve. Motion by David Baron to approve the recommendations of the Zoning Committee on 361 Centre Street, and 250 and 250R Pond Street. Seconded by Paige Sparks. Passed 11-0-2.

The Committee also nominated David Baron as Chair and Peg Preble as Vice-Chair of the Zoning Committee. There are presently two vacancies available for Neighborhood Council members, and one vacancy for a community member. No votes are needed today.

The next Zoning Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, August 9 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda will be a request from 9 Dellmore Road to build a six-family residence (meeting subsequently cancelled).

4.2. Outreach Committee: Paige Sparks said that the Committee met on Wednesday, July 12 at 7:00pm via Zoom. The Outreach Committee reviewed the recent JPNC Election. The Committee is working on developing goals for the next two years, concentrating on the perception of the JPNC and its awareness amongst folks in the community. Youth outreach is a major initiative for the Committee.

The Outreach Committee’s roster now has three Council members (Paige Sparks, 96 Brookley Road; Katherine O’Shea, 27 Robinwood Avenue, Apt. 1; Peg Preble, 79 Eastland Road) and one community member (Doug Rand, 67 Orchardhill Road) in addition to ex-officio members. There are two vacancies available for Council members.

Paige Sparks reminded Council members to regularly attend community meetings and raise awareness in the neighborhood.

The next Outreach Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, August 8 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

4.3. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind reported that the Public Service Committee met on Tuesday, July 11 at 7:00pm via Zoom. There was a licensing request from Chauncey Liquors at 3100 Washington Street in Egleston Square for a transfer of its retail package store all-alcoholic beverages license to a new owner, Chauncy Liquor, Inc., at the same location. There was 8-0-0 support for this proposal at the Public Service Committee meeting (and two pending members of the Public Service Committee also voted to support). Son Hong “Brad” Nguyen, owner of Chauncy Liquor, Inc., presented the proposal for the transfer. Mr. Nguyen also owns and operates Cambridge Wine & Spirits in the Fresh Pond

Shopping Center. He will be removing the solid security grates and changing them to interior see-through grates. He plans on adding security cameras inside and outside, adding trash barrels outside the store, and keeping the front sidewalk clear of litter. All attendees at the meeting spoke in favor of the transfer. The request had to be voted on by the Licensing Board earlier this month and so was sent to the JPNC Executive Committee, so no vote is needed tonight.

The Public Service Committee's roster now has five Council members (Paige Sparks, 96 Brookley Road; Gert Thorn, 72 Robinwood Avenue; Willie Mitchell, 61 Heath Street; Leah Simmons, 18 Porter Street; Peter DeCotis, 29 School Street) and three community members (Robin Cheung, 173 Moss Hill Road; Dorothy Farrell, 345 Pond Street; Louise Johnson, 20 Malcolm Road) in addition to ex-officio members. Motion by Michael Reiskind to approve the roster of the members of the Public Service Committee. Seconded by Gert Thorn. Passed 11-0-2.

The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, August 1 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda will be discussion of Committee initiatives for 2023-2025.

4.4. Parks+ Committee (Environment, Parks & Energy Committee): Nick Chaves gave a summary of the last meeting. The Committee is planning to host its own parks clean up in August along the Southwest Corridor Park near Jackson Square. Tools and trash disposal will be provided by the City.

The Parks+ Committee's roster now has four Council members (Alexis Rickmers, 283 Chestnut Avenue; Paige Sparks, 96 Brookley Road; Sarah Freeman, 22 Arborway; Nick Chaves, 76 Wenham Street) in addition to ex-officio members. Also discussed was improving the signage in Jamaica Park around Jamaica Pond indicating to folks the bicycle path and the pedestrian path. The signs are too small and they're not located at every entrance or exit. Expanding the bike lanes to go all around the Pond would improve the bike network and eliminate the dangerous situation. The Arborway Parkways Improvement Project was also discussed. Bernie Doherty asked about funding to maintain Franklin Park. Peter DeCotis brought up the City's proposal to rebuild White Stadium to hold 11,000 spectators and rent it out 22 weekends a year for soccer games. There was a lot of opposition at a public hearing.

The next Parks+ Committee meeting will be on Monday, August 14 at 7:30pm via Zoom.

4.5. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Renée Stacey Welch said that the Housing & Development Committee met on July 18 via Zoom. The Committee had an extensive discussion on the original Vision Plan for the Shattuck Campus. The principles were to integrate the Franklin Park Campus with transit and reduce barriers to treatment, increase the housing supply and increase green space. The talk then was of 75-100 units of housing. The newest proposal is for more housing. Bernie Doherty heard the figure of 851 units, which is too much. He has heard of other better plans. The campus needs to add better services and not become an enabler. Paige Sparks wanted to clarify that supportive housing includes other services - not all tenants are substance users. She said that currently there are 500 beds at the Shattuck campus. The next Shattuck meeting will be on August 18.

The Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard: There was discussion of a response letter from Jascha Franklin-Hodge, Chief of Streets, Transportation, and Sanitation. Katherine O'Shea wanted to see the Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) that had been agreed to. Chris Osgood attended the July 24 meeting and answered questions on the Salt Yard issue.

The Subcommittee is asking the Council to send a letter to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office. Sarah Freeman said there have been lots of changes and the new proposal does not comply with the old MEPA: There are fewer acres going for community use, the Arborway edge needs better treatment, there has been a major change in traffic with the Casey Overpass change and there is now a two-way curb cut entrance/exit at Arborway. All four sides need better design to be sensitive to the community. Motion by Bernie Doherty to send the letter to the MEPA Office. Seconded by Gert Thorn. Passed 8-0-4 (1 not voting).

The Subcommittee is asking the Council to send a letter to the MBTA Board which asks to not fund the current design and work with the community and the City to revise the design to be more consistent with the MOU. The MBTA had been prepared to vote on the issue at a Board meeting on July 29, but the agenda item was removed. Motion by Bernie Doherty to send the letter to the MBTA Board. Seconded by Purple Reign. Passed 6-3-3 (1 not voting).

5. Old Business/New Business:

- Michael Reiskind said that, in past elections, the Council had asked the Ombuds Board to keep all ballots and envelopes for at least thirty days to allow time for any candidate to ask for a recount. After this recount period if no recount was requested, it had then explicitly allowed the Ombuds Board to destroy the old ballots/envelopes. Since more than month has now passed since the June 2023 Election without a recount request, Michael Reiskind made a motion to allow the Ombuds Board to destroy the ballots and envelopes from the 2023 JPNC Election. Seconded by Purple Reign and Peter DeCotis. Passed 12-0-0 (1 left early).

- Juwan Skeens introduced himself and said that he is running as a write-in candidate for an At Large seat on the Boston City Council. He is most interested in improving public safety, affordable housing, and small business growth. He asked for support from the community.

6. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:03pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next scheduled JPNC meeting: Tuesday, August 22 at 7:00PM via Zoom.

Next scheduled JPNC Executive Committee meeting: August 17 at 7:00PM via Zoom.