

**Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council**  
**July 23, 2024 Minutes**

**JPNC Attendance:** Renée Stacey Welch, Bernard Doherty, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Lorenzo Bartoloni, Esther Belliard, Carla-Lisa Caliga, Peter DeCotis, Sarah Freeman, Willie Mitchell, Katherine O’Shea, Purple Reign, Danielle Sommer Kieta, and Gert Thorn.

**Other attendees:** Sue Cibulsky, Janet Galloway, Louise Johnson, Lissa Johnson, Genevieve DeWalt, Juwan Skeens, Kane Dimasso-Scott, Carlos Rios (Office of State Rep. Sam Montaña), Domenic Valencia (Office of State Rep. Sam Montaña), Laura Nguyen (Office of State Rep. Sam Montaña), Jordan Frias (Office of City Councillor Ben Weber), Caroline Peters (Office of Neighborhood Services), and Richard Heath (Boston Bulletin).

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm by Renée Stacey Welch.

**Introductions:** The members of the JP Neighborhood Council introduced themselves. Elected officials and aides to elected officials introduced themselves and the reporter from The Boston Bulletin introduced himself.

**2. Approval of June 2024 minutes:** Motion by Michael Reiskind to approve the minutes from the June 25, 2024 meeting. Seconded by Bernard Doherty. Passed 10-0-1 (3 came late).

**3. Community announcements:**

- Friday Night at the Movies - “Paris is Burning” on Friday, July 26, from 8:00pm to 10:30pm at the Loring Greenough House, 12 South Street, JP.
- Boston Women’s Market Jamaica Plain Summer Market on Saturday, July 27 from 11:00am to 4:00PM at the Loring Greenough House, 12 South Street, JP.
- Walking Tour of Green Street on Saturday, July 27, from 11AM to 12PM: Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center, 640 Centre Street, JP
- Carlos Rios announced that there will be a community meeting to discuss pickleball, basketball and tennis players sharing South Street Courts. It will be on Tuesday, July 30 from 6:00pm to 7:30pm at Curtis Hall, 20 South Street, JP. Co-sponsored by Councillor Ben Weber, Rep. Sam Montaña, and Sen. Liz Miranda.
- The next coffee hour hosted by Caroline Peters, Jamaica Plain Liaison in the Office of Neighborhood Services, will be from 10:30am to 11:30am on Friday, August 2 at JP Licks, 659 Centre Street, JP.
- Lorenzo Bartoloni said that the Puerto Rican Festival will be this weekend, July 27 and July 28, in Franklin Park. Events start at 2:00pm both days.
- National Night Out in Jamaica Plain will be on Monday, August 5 at Mozart Park from 6:30pm to 9:30pm.
- Katherine O’Shea said that folks can search for neighborhood events on a City website: <https://www.boston.gov/events?> You can even filter the site by neighborhood.
- Hot Dog Nights are happening every Thursday evening from July 25 to August 22 at Mildred Hailey Apartments.
- Back To School events will take place this year on the following dates: Wednesday, July 31 at Academy Homes, Tuesday, August 6 at 61 Heath Street, Wednesday, August 7 at 75 Heath Street, Tuesday, August 13 at 250 Centre Street, and Wednesday, August 14 at 25 Amory Street. All are from 5:00pm to 7:00pm.
- There will be an information session on the Community Preservation Act (CPA) on Wednesday, August 7 from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. It is a virtual meeting hosted by Councillor Ben Weber. Register at [www.boston.gov/cpa](http://www.boston.gov/cpa).

**4. Council Business:**

**4.1. Second term of the officers of the Neighborhood Council:** Renée Stacey Welch brought up the technical point that the by-laws of the JP Neighborhood Council state that while Council members serve a two-year term from election to election, Article 5 states that officers shall serve a term of one year. Since the present officers were elected in June 2023, a new vote on JPNC officers is in order. Nominations for officers for a 2024-2025 term were opened and the only nomination was for reaffirming the present slate. Motion by Purple Reign to elect Renée Stacey Welch as Chair, Bernard Doherty as Vice-Chair, and Michael Reiskind as Secretary-Treasurer of the JP Neighborhood Council for another one-year term. Seconded by Willie Mitchell. Passed 11-0-0 (3 came late).

**4.2. Council August Break:** It was proposed that the Council take a break and not meet next month in August. Any matters that are time-sensitive can be sent to the Executive Committee during the month. It was agreed that there would be no August meeting.

**5. Committee Reports:**

**5.1. Public Service Committee:** Michael Reiskind reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, July 2. On the agenda was a proposal from Jadu (Espresso Yourself) at 767 Centre Street for a beer and wine with liqueurs license. Maya Mukhopadhaya, manager of Jadu LLC and proposed manager of Jadu, presented the proposal for a new neighborhood-restricted beer & wine with cordials license at the location near the Soldiers Monument where Espresso Yourself has operated. The new proposed Jadu will have a similar concept from 8:00am to 3:00pm as a coffee shop with breakfast pastries, toasts and grain bowls. It will then turn into a wine bar from 5:00pm to 11:00pm with wines, beers and cordial cocktails, offered along with snacks and hearty salads. All residents who attended were in favor. Jadu also met with and received support from the Jamaica Pond Association, the Sumner Hill Association, Jamaica Plain Business & Professional

Association, and JP Centre/South Main Streets. At the Public Service Committee meeting, there was 6-0-0 support for this proposal for a Common Victualler Wines and Malt Beverages with Liqueurs License with a closing hour of 11:00pm, with Maya Mukhopadhyaya as manager. Since the Licensing Board voting session was before this JPNC July meeting, the Executive Committee voted to support the proposal. In addition, the Public Service Committee voted to support a take out permit for this establishment, if one is determined to be needed by the Inspectional Services Department. Since the take-out issue was not time-sensitive, the Committee is asking for a vote of support here tonight. Motion by Michael Reiskind to support the request of Jadu LLC (acting as agent for 769 Centre Street LLC), to grant a #36A take-out use to 769 Centre Street LLC, owner of 767 Centre Street, with the proviso that the take-out use will stay only with the current business tenant at 767 Centre Street, Jadu LLC, doing business as “Jadu”. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. Passed 12-0-0 (2 came late).

The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, August 6 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda will be a proposal from Pimentel Market at 340 Centre Street for an All Alcoholic Beverages Package Store License.

**5.2. Parks+ Committee:** Neither Leah Simmons Dzintars nor Nick Chaves were available to report on the July 11 meeting. They have sent a report that the Committee heard an update from the Hyde Square Task Force on the Mozart Park construction project. It is in the early stage of design and the City plans to have community outreach through the youth in the area. There was also discussion on use of the South Street Courts. There have been community concerns about sharing the space among pickleball, tennis and basketball users. Caroline Peters said that there are four groups involved; in addition to the pickleball, tennis and basketball users, the nearby neighbors are affected by the noise of the different uses. She said that new pickleball courts are being installed at The English High School field. While the City is no longer involved in space management and is not allowing any reservations at the South Street Courts, there are plans for community conversation with stakeholders and an on-line petition is circulating. Carlos Rios reminded folks about the community meeting to discuss sharing South Street Courts on Tuesday, July 30 at Curtis Hall. It was reported that the pickleballers agreed to shift their court usage when they see others coming with tennis racquets or basketballs. Bernie Doherty said that his neighbors are very concerned about the effect that the Shattuck cottages are having on Franklin Park. There have been complaints about the drug usage and needles being found all around the area. This is scaring park users and a danger to pets and children. There are reports that the cottages will be closing in July. Bernie Doherty also brought up the White Stadium issue and how quickly that project is moving ahead. Richard Heath said that the Boston Planning and Development Agency voted to approve the plan in June and the Parks Commission is scheduled to vote on the issue on July 29.

Gert Thorn was very upset about the festival at Jamaica Pond that took place on Sunday, July 21. There was whole scale alcohol consumption - with coolers being carried across Jamaica way into the Park. Traffic was extremely congested. After the event, there was an enormous amount of litter and debris which was not cleaned up and remained overnight. Isn't a bond required for festival organizers and why weren't regulations enforced? It turns out that alcohol can be permitted for festivals. On another note, Sarah Freeman said that the Parks Department has started a pilot project this summer, called “Alianza”, to permit food and a beer garden to be set up in different City parks on a rotating basis. In our area, it will be at Pinebank and the Franklin Park Zoo.

The next Parks+ Committee meeting will be on the second Thursday of the month, August 8 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

**5.3. Outreach Committee:** Katherine O'Shea reported that the Committee met on July 9 via Zoom. The Committee discussed the City's Block Party Grant program. While the deadline is July 31, all money has already been allocated. The Committee also reviewed the JP Open Streets event which occurred on July 21. The day was very successful and the JP Neighborhood Council made a good showing. The JPNC's table had an activity where residents could share their positives and negatives about the community; it was called “roses, buds, and thorns”.

**5.4. Zoning Committee (ZC):** David Baron said that the Zoning Committee met only once in July - on Wednesday, July 10. One matter was considered which requires a vote tonight. **1) 34 Olmstead Street**, a petition by Lichuan Ye, to replace some windows and doors, insulate, extend living space into attic. This is a two-family house that will remain a two-family. It is owner-occupied and there will be no change to the envelope of the building. The neighbors supported the proposal and there was no opposition. The Zoning Committee recommends approval. Motion by David Baron to accept the recommendations of the ZC on 34 Olmstead Street. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. Passed 12-0-0 (2 came late).

The next Zoning Committee meetings will be on Wednesday, July 24 and Wednesday, August 7. On the agenda will be requests by 10 Brewer Street for a curb cut and parking, 960 Centre Street for legalization of two residential buildings on the same lot, 31 Gay Head Street to go from a 3-family to a 4-family, 51 Wyman Street to extend into the basement, 3336-3338 Washington Street for eight residential units and a bakery/café, and 80 Spring Park Avenue for a new three-family dwelling on a vacant lot.

**5.5. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC):** Purple Reign reported that the Housing & Development Committee met on July 16 via Zoom. The Committee discussed the 140 Wachusett Street project. This is a 38-unit housing development with 17 parking spaces. It has been increased in size and the number of affordable units were increased. Folks thought that there was a lack of community process and it is too dense for the site.

Allan Ihrer, who lives on Williams Street, spoke about the 69 Williams Street construction (part of the old Doyle's project). He said that the units are advertised for \$1.3 Million each. He remembered that there were two different renderings of the building circulated. Bernie Doherty added that the affordable units for the project have now been moved

off-site. Isn't this breaking the promise the developer made to include the six units on the site? Aidan Foley asked that the Boston Planning Department come to the H&DC to discuss projects in Jamaica Plain.

Bernie Doherty also gave a recap on the Forbes Building (545 Centre Street). There was a lot of discussion on how the amount of parking at the project got reduced from the amount that is there today. The reduction in parking (from 36 to 18 spaces) is now the major concern of tenants. There was a lack of quorum at the July 16 meeting so no votes were taken on the Forbes Building or a proposal to add Purple Reign to the Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard.

Carla-Lisa Caliga said that Jamaica Plain is changing and gentrifying. She thought that the JPNC needs to change direction and fight gentrification.

The next Housing & Development Committee meeting will be on August 20 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

**5.6. The Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard:** Sue Cibulsky reported that the Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard met on July 15. The main discussion was on the 150 parking spaces for MBTA employee parking that the MBTA wants to put on the community land in the Arborway Yard. The City of Boston is agreeing to this change and the Subcommittee strongly objects. The JPNC sent a letter in April of this year stating the objections and asking for an examination of other options. There has been no response. The Subcommittee has passed a motion to send another letter to the MBTA asking for a response, requesting an analysis of alternative sites, and a justification on the number of parking spaces needed by the MBTA. There was discussion about modifications to the Subcommittee's letter. Sarah Freeman proposed that the Subcommittee and its Google Group draft some changes and send it to the Executive Committee for ratification during August. Bernie Doherty was more interested in other problems with the Arborway Yard proposal. He said that the size is too big, and problems with noise and staging of the construction will badly affect the neighboring community.

The August meeting is cancelled. The next Subcommittee meeting will be on Monday, September 16 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

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

- Genevieve DeWalt introduced herself and said that she is from the Recovery Center opened this year at 120 South Street. They support services for people recovering from drug and alcohol addiction.

- Renée Stacey Welch reminded everybody that there are three vacancies on the JP Neighborhood Council, two in Area B and one in Area C. There were no nominations forthcoming from those in attendance.

**7. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:57pm.

*Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind*

Next scheduled JPNC meeting: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 at 7:00PM via Zoom.

Next scheduled JPNC Executive Committee meeting: September 19, 2024 at 7:00PM via Zoom.