

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
September 24, 2024 Minutes

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

Other attendees: Janet Galloway, Louise Johnson, Louise Robbins, Michael Epp, Alan Benenfeld, Sarah Zebrak, Michael Jones, Todd Kerr, Syniyah Walker, Scotty Yates, City Councillor Ben Weber, 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 7:06pm 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 July 2024 minutes: Sarah Freeman had sent in a correction for the July 2024 minutes: The last sentence in **Section 6. Old Business/New Business** should be “There were no nominations forthcoming from those in attendance.” Motion by Willie Mitchell to approve the minutes from the July 23, 2024 meeting, as amended. Seconded by Bernard Doherty. Passed 13-0-1.

3. Community announcements:

- JP Health & Wellness Fair on Thursday, September 26 from 4:00pm to 7:00pm at the Loring Greenough House, 12 South Street, JP.
- Walking Tour of Jamaica Pond on Saturday, September 28 from 11AM to 12:30PM: Courageous Sailing at Jamaica Pond Boathouse, 570 Jamaicaaway, JP.
- Octoberfest Celebration on Saturday, September 28 from 11AM to 6PM at Samuel Adams Boston Brewery, 30 Germania Street, JP.
- Healthy Kids Running Series on Sunday, September 29 from 3PM at Parkman Playground, 58 Wachusett Street, JP.
- Boston Vegan Food Festival on Saturday, September 28 from 10:00am to 5:00pm at the Reggie Lewis Center, 1350 Tremont Street, Roxbury. Also on Sunday, September 29 from from 11:00am to 4:00pm.
- The next coffee hours hosted by Caroline Peters, Jamaica Plain Liaison in the Office of Neighborhood Services, will be from 10:30am to 11:30am on Friday, September 27 at Evergreen Eatery, 154 Green Street, JP, then on Friday, October 4 at Connolly Library, 433 Centre Street, JP, then on Friday, October 11 at Evergreen Eatery, 154 Green Street, JP.
- Watercolor painting workshop on Saturday, September 28 from 10AM to 12noon at the Jamaica Pond Boathouse, 507 Jamaicaaway, JP. <https://www.boston.gov/calendar/watercolor-painting-workshop-5-jamaica-pond-boathouse>
- You can request free daffodil bulbs from the City of Boston Parks and Recreation Department: <https://www.boston.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/boston-blooms-daffodils>
- There will be a free compost giveaway on Thursday, October 3 from 4PM to 6PM at the Public Works Yard at 327 Forest Hills Street, JP. <https://www.boston.gov/calendar/free-compost-giveaway-0>
- School-year jobs for 14-18 year olds are available. For more information on the application and onboarding process, go to <https://www.boston.gov/departments/youth-employment-and-opportunity/youth-jobs>.
- Basketball Tournament on Saturday, October 5 (subsequently moved to October 12) starting at 11AM at South Street Courts, 50 South Street, JP.
- Community Coffee with members of Councillor Weber and Congresswoman Pressley’s Team on Thursday, September 26 from 10am to 12noon at La Parada Dominican Kitchen at 3094 Washington Street, JP.

4. Committee Reports:

4.1. Zoning Committee (ZC): David Baron said that the Zoning Committee met three times since the last meeting - on Wednesday, July 24, Wednesday, August 7, and Wednesday, September 18. Seven matters were considered and need votes tonight. All recommendations of the Zoning Committee were for approval and almost all were unanimous. Dave Baron said that only one matter needs a narrative, 3336-3338 Washington Street. **1) 10 Brewer Street**, a petition by Steven Cohen, to create a curb-cut and one off-street accessory parking space. **2) 960 Centre Street**, a petition by Jonathan Starch, for renovations to existing buildings and legalization of two residential buildings on a single lot. **3) 3336-3338 Washington Street**, a petition by Lee Goodman (acting as agent for ColeMontana LLC), to change the occupancy to include bakery/café and eight (8) residential units (multifamily with three townhouses). Existing façade and foundation of existing one-story building to remain, with new foundation for additions and upgrades to life safety systems. This parcel was the location of two bakeries, Exodus Bagels and Canto 6. It is a sloping lot going up from Washington Street along Glen Road. The developer would like to have a bakery in the commercial space at Washington Street but has not secured a tenant yet. They had appeared earlier at the Zoning Committee but went back to meet again with neighbors and widen their outreach to include the Egleston Square Neighborhood Association and Union Avenue. When they returned, the design had improved. Instead of a series of **a few open garages** along Glen Road, there is now only one curb cut and one entrance to a shared garage. Also the building has been pulled back a bit from the lot line allowing for a planting area and a better residential feel along Glen Road. **4) 31 Gay Head Street**, a petition by Juana Paniagua, to change occupancy

from a three-family to a four-family residence; build a new kitchen on the ground floor; install sprinkler and fire alarm system. **5) 51 Wyman Street**, a petition by Miriam and Joshua Ozer, to build a new bathroom and partition walls in the basement for a new home office; extending living space into the basement. **6) 80 Spring Park Avenue**, a petition by Nicole & Stephen Richer, for new construction of a four-story three-family dwelling on a vacant lot. New building to have two garage parking spaces, sprinklers, and an elevator exclusively for the triplex unit on floors two through four. **7) 10 Glenside Avenue**, a petition by Croan McCormack, to construct a two-family dwelling with two off-street parking spaces. Motion by David Baron to accept the recommendations of the ZC on 10 Brewer Street, 960 Centre Street, 3336-3338 Washington Street, 31 Gay Head Street, 51 Wyman Street, 80 Spring Park Avenue, and 10 Glenside Avenue. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. Passed 14-0-0.

The next Zoning Committee meetings will be on Wednesday, October 9 and Wednesday, October 23. On the October 9 agenda will be requests by 2-14 Kenton Road for new gas pumps and a new office building, 7-11 Ackley Place for four new 3-family townhouses, 81 Woodlawn Street returning for a 3-family dwelling on a vacant lot, and 3 Arborview Road to extend living space into the basement. On the October 23 agenda will be 561-579 Centre Street for a 12-unit residential building and 44 Creighton Street to build additions and change occupancy from a single-family to three residential units.

4.2. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind reported that the Committee met twice, on Tuesday, August 6 and on Tuesday, September 10. On the September 10 agenda was a proposal from Bluefin at 660B Centre Street for a common victualler license. Jason Tucker, founder and owner of Bluefin, presented the proposal for a new restaurant license at this location in the heart of the business district between Starr Lane and Seaverns Avenue. The establishment opened in May of this year and serves fresh and smoked fish and seafood, tinned fish and prepared fish dishes. There is no seating now and no alcohol is being proposed for the location. They are asking for 18 seats. There had been a small Bluefin in Somerville at Bow Market, but they just closed it in July. Bluefin had originally asked for operating hours of 12noon to 9:00pm, but the Committee felt that longer hours seem more appropriate in this area and is recommending 8:00am to 10:00pm. Bluefin has appeared at the two local business groups, JP Centre/South Main Streets and the Jamaica Plain Business and Professional Association and received support from both. Motion by Michael Reiskind to support the request of JT Fresh Local LLC, doing business as "Bluefin" at 660B Centre Street, for a 7-Day Common Victualler License with the hours of 8:00am to 10:00pm, with Jason Tucker as manager. Seconded by Willie Mitchell. Passed 13-0-1.

At the August 6 meeting, the Public Service Committee heard and supported a request from Pimentel Market at 340 Centre Street for a change from beer & wine package store to an all-alcoholic beverages package store. Because the Licensing Board voting session was before this JPNC September meeting, the issue went to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee affirmed the Public Service Committee recommendation. Pimentel Market is a bodega which has operated at 340 Centre Street for twenty-four years and has had a beer and wine package store license since 2019 with no complaints. Pimentel Market promised to continue to not sell any mini bottles or "single beers". The owner, Mr. Guerrero, emphasized that the alcoholic products are not easily reachable, being behind the refrigerators. He also promised to self-police the "No Stopping" corner restriction at his front entrance of Centre and Wyman Streets. All residents who attended were in favor of the proposal.

The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, October 1 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda will be a proposal from Don Tequeño y Doña Arepa at 403A Centre Street for a Beer & Wine License.

4.3. Outreach Committee: Katherine O'Shea reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, September 17 via Zoom. The Committee mostly discussed a new map that the Committee would like to post on the JPNC website and needs a vote. It has different colors for the three JPNC areas and is zoomable down to the individual streets. You can see the map here:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=10DSgctI1knK2LrdlWypPyqoqdGvJQ-8&usp=sharing>

Since the base map is a Google map, Dave Baron asked how much are we linked to Google? Can we lock our map from any changes that Google might make in the future? There was lots of discussion about adding the area letters, A, B, and C to the map. Should they be on the colored areas themselves or as a map legend? Motion by Purple Reign to post the submitted map to the JPNC website. Seconded by Willie Mitchell. Passed 14-0-0.

The next Outreach Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, October 8. On the agenda will be discussion on improving outreach and start planning for the next JPNC election in 2025.

4.4. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Danielle Sommer Kieta reported that the Housing & Development Committee met on September 17 via Zoom. The Committee updated current development projects - 3484 Washington Street (old Doyle's), 920 Centre Street (Poor Clare Nuns Monastery), and Rogerson-Beaufort and plans to schedule future meetings with the developers.

The Committee is asking for approval to send a letter to the Boston Planning Department (formerly the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA)) about the community process regarding reductions to the Forbes Building parking (545 Centre Street). The plan had been approved by the former BPDA in June 2024, but there was a distinct lack of communication with the tenants about the severe reduction in parking spaces. The draft letter is not meant to alter the project approval, only the lack of community process on this issue. The parking is being taken away to reduce the paving and increase the amount of green space. Councillor Weber has spoken about the Forbes Building to Sheila Dillon, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Housing. It is difficult talking to the developer and the City is reluctant to push back on this issue. The proposal does add spaces for electric car sharing. There is already a wait list for the available Handicapped Parking (HP) spaces and the number of HP spaces are proposed to be reduced. Michael Epp asked whether the reduction

of HP spaces can be brought to a compliance staff member at the City's Disabilities Commission. Ms. Sommer Kieta made it clear that the letter is to go to the Boston Planning Department, not the developer and only talks about the concerns about process. Motion by Danielle Sommer Kieta to send the drafted letter to the Boston Planning Department. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. Passed 13-0-0 (1 left early).

The next Housing & Development Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, October 15 (subsequently cancelled).

4.5. The Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard: Since there were no Chairs from the Subcommittee present, Danielle Sommer Kieta reported. The Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard met on September 16. There has finally been a response to the JPNC letter protesting the MBTA's plan to locate MBTA employee parking on community land. Scott Hamwey defended the MBTA's position and outlined his reasoning. Committee members decided to take some time to review his letter, which was just received on September 16, and the parking issue. Mr. Hamwey also said that the Arborway Bus Facility was not funded in the most recent Capital Investment Plan; Committee members will follow up on how this will affect the timing of designing the new facility. The Committee discussed advocating for capital funding. Committee member Eileen McMahon reported on the outreach table she hosted at the recent Thursdays on the Lawn - there was good community interest and interactions.

There was discussion about using Google documents to keep people informed and about information to go on the Subcommittee website.

The next Subcommittee meeting will be on Monday, October 21 at 7:00pm via Zoom (subsequently cancelled).

4.6. Parks+ Committee: Nick Chaves reported that there was no September Parks+ Committee meeting. The Committee will be issuing a newsletter in October. On October 8, there will be a film premiere of "Boston's Franklin Park: Olmsted, Recreation and the Modern City" at Hibernian Hall, 184 Dudley Street in Nubian Square starting at 6:00pm. After the film, there will be a panel discussion moderated by Keith Morgan, President of the Library of American Landscape History. Free with a donation requested.

The next Parks+ Committee meeting will be on Thursday, October 10 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

5. Old Business/New Business:

- City Councillor Ben Weber spoke about several concerns and initiatives he is pursuing.
 - There was a shooting last night (September 23) at the Mildred Hailey Apartments and a resident was killed. The Neighborhood Trauma Team is involved and meeting with residents. Councillor Weber is trying to host a meeting at the development.
 - The Councillor hosts a coffee hour every Friday in the district. Last week it was at JP Licks. On October 4, it will be from 10am to 4pm at Brassica Kitchen + Café, 3710 Washington Street.
 - Two Town Halls were held recently on legislative issues affecting the district.
 - You can sign up for a weekly newsletter which comes out every Friday. Sign up at: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSddhuc44fUNSUSHSgdvp002jbUbr-svGOCnzocWIXNRqvkrnw/viewform>
 - The Boston Public Library has approved naming the Children's Room at the Jamaica Plain Branch Library as the Barbara Rhodes Reading Room, after the librarian who recently passed away.
 - There will be an Open House to discuss the Rogerson-Beaufort development proposal on Tuesday, October 1 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at Rogerson House, 434 Jamaicaaway. The developers have been very open to community outreach, both in open meetings and one-on-one meetings.
 - The Councillor attended Council hearings on the Heat Ordinance and Wage Law Ordinance. Danielle Sommer Kieta gave good testimony. Renée Stacey Welch asked about absentee landlords and their upkeep of commercial properties. The issue of commercial vacancies has come up at the City Council.
 - Some remaining ARPA (American Recovery Plan Act) funds are still available to help businesses in the neighborhoods, especially the City's SPACE Grant program.

Carla-Lisa Caliga complained about the torturous procedure necessary for a small business to open. The process needs to be streamlined. Michael Epp reported that the City of Somerville has a wonderful process that really encourages small business to open in that city.

- Michael Jones, introduced himself and introduced Todd Kerr and Syniyah Walker. He said that they are from Sister Virginia Mulhern House, 35 Creighton Street, a facility run by the Pine Street Inn. He is the residential supervisor and Syniyah Walker is the night manager. Carla-Lisa Caliga asked about the availability of a community room at 3368 Washington Street, a new development now being built by the Pine Street Inn.

- Renée Stacey Welch reminded everybody that there are three vacancies on the JP Neighborhood Council, two in Area B and one in Area C.

6. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:42pm.s

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next scheduled JPNC meeting: Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 7:00PM via Zoom.

Next scheduled JPNC Executive Committee meeting: October 17, 2024 at 7:00PM via Zoom.