Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
May 26, 2026 Minutes

JPNC Attendance: Bernard Doherty, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Lorenzo Bartoloni, Chase Brewster, Adam Burrows, Carla-Lisa Caliga, Alcurtis Clark, Sarah Freeman, Willie Mitchell, Purple Reign, Bianca Terry, and Erich Yaeger.
Other attendees: Renée Stacey Welch, Danielle Sommer Kieta, Louise Johnson, Charlie Eisenmann, Neil Daniel, Linda Camp, Casey Campbell, Lisa Patrick, Scott Yates, Amelia, (617)522-8766, Melissa Beltran (Office of City Councillor Ben Weber), and Richard Heath (Boston Bulletin).

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm by Bernard Doherty. He welcomed all the Council members who had been elected at the recent Election on May 16.

1. Introductions: The members of the JP Neighborhood Council introduced themselves.

2. April 2026 minutes: Motion by Purple Reign to accept the minutes from the April 28, 2026 meeting. Seconded by Willie Mitchell. Passed 11-0-1 (1 came late).

3. Election Results:
Michael Reiskind reported the official results of the 2026 JPNC Election on May 16, 2026:

In Area A:
Willie Mitchell – 58
Bianca Terry – 46
Eryn-Ashlei Bailey – 34

In Area B:
Lorenzo Bartoloni – 68
Chase Brewster – 65
Alcurtis Clark – 62
Carla-Lisa Caliga – 56
Erich Yaeger – 50

In Area C:
Gert Thorn – 64
Adam Burrows – 62
Bernard Doherty – 61
Alessia Shelley – 53

At-Large:
Purple Reign – 184
Michael Reiskind – 147
Sarah Freeman – 138
Dave Baron – 132
Aiko Miller – 124

The Election Committee gave a summary of the 2026 Election. There were 266 ballots submitted and counted. Volunteer election workers were excellent and chief ombudsperson Matt Bruno did an amazing job. The Election Committee should meet again to recommend improvements for the next Election in 2028. Council member gave suggestions: Purple Reign said that there should be JPNC banners to announce the polling locations. Bianca Terry said pictures were needed on the candidate biographies that were available for voters. Caliga said that we need more advance publicity in the papers with the candidate biographies included. Lisa Patrick asked where funding came from for the Election and the JPNC. Dave Baron said that it is all volunteer and donations; no money comes from the City.
Motion by Purple Reign to accept the results of the 2026 Election and have the chief ombudsperson hold all the filled-in ballots and envelopes for 30 days, and to destroy them after 30 days if there are no disputes. Seconded by Willie Mitchell. Passed 13-0-0.

4. Council Transition:
Bernie Doherty said that the Council can vote this month to choose new officers of the full Council. There was a motion by Bernie Doherty to nominate Alcurtis Clark as Chair of the JP Neighborhood Council. Seconded by Purple Reign. There were no other nominations. Passed 13-0-0. Motion by Carla-Lisa Caliga to nominate Bernie Doherty as Vice-Chair of the JP Neighborhood Council. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. There were no other nominations. Passed 13-0-0. Motion by Carla-Lisa Caliga to nominate Michael Reiskind as Secretary/Treasurer of the JP Neighborhood Council. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. There were no other nominations. Passed 13-0-0.
Alcurtis Clark asked Bernie Doherty to continue to chair the May meeting. Alcurtis Clark will assume normal duties and responsibilities on May 27, 2026. The Working Committees will meet in May and June, choose the roster of members and Chairs of the Committees, and report to the full Council at the June 2026 meeting.
- Remaining Vacancies: Since there were only seventeen members elected at the 2026 Election, there are three vacancies on the JPNC - two in Area A, and one in Area C. Purple Reign nominated Renée Stacey Welch to fill a seat in Area A.

Ms. Stacey Welch accepted the nomination and agreed to serve until someone else puts themselves forward to fill an Area A seat. There were no other nominations. Further nominations and voting to fill the announced vacancies may take place at the next meeting in June.

5. Committee reports:

5.1. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, May 5. On the agenda were four license requests: 1) A common victualler license request from Café Selah at 613 Centre Street with the hours of 6:30am to 6:30pm, with take-out, with José Hernandez Lara as manager. This café has been open with a temporary common victualler license since April 4. Discussion was on trash and cleanliness. There was no opposition from the audience at the neighborhood meeting. The Public Service Committee recommended approval. This issue was time-sensitive and so was sent to the JPNC Executive Committee which recommended approval. The license was granted by the Licensing Board on May 21. The take-out request - if needed - goes to the City's Zoning Board of Appeal and is not time-sensitive, so the Public Service Committee is asking for a vote on this issue tonight. Discussion was on third party delivery services and the disruption of double parking at this very busy section of Centre Street near Pond Street. Mr. Hernandez promised to closely monitor third party delivery drivers with an app which minimizes wait time. He also said he is exploring with his landlord the use of off-street parking that the landlord owns only a half-block away. The Public Service Committee recommended approval. This motion is complicated for two reasons: take-out use is a zoning issue which applies to the building owners/landlords - not the tenant business - and to prevent replacement business coming in later without going through a community process, the JPNC adds a proviso tying our approval to this present business tenant only. Motion by Michael Reiskind to support a #36A Take-Out Use for GJS-660 Realty Trust at 615–619 Centre Street, with the proviso that the take-out use remains only with Café Selah, Inc., doing business as "Café Selah" at 613 Centre Street. Seconded by Adam Burrows and Purple Reign. Passed 13-0-0. 2) A request for an upgrade from a beer & wine license to an all-alcohol license for Don Tequeño y Doña Arepa at 403A Centre Street. This Venezuelan restaurant opened in July 2024 with a common victualler license with no alcohol. It has had a beer and wine license since February 2025. Mr. Marte promised the food menu and main operations will not change with the upgrade to all-alcohol. The Public Service Committee recommended approval. Motion by Michael Reiskind to support upgrading Don Tequeño y Doña Arepa from a (zip code restricted) common victualler 7-day wines & malt beverages license to a (zip code restricted) all-alcoholic beverages license with the hours of 8:00am to 11:00pm with Joel Marte as manager. Seconded by Purple Reign. Passed 13-0-0. 3) A request for a common victualler license, with take-out, for the Bethlehem Café at 376 Centre Street. This will be a new Palestinian restaurant at the corner of Sheridan Street. Discussion was about cleanliness and rodents, and third party delivery services at this busy corner which already has three other restaurants. The Public Service Committee recommended approval. Motion by Michael Reiskind to support the potion of Bethlehem Café LLC, doing business as "Bethlehem Café", at 376 Centre Street for a 7-day common victualler license with the hours of 7:00am to 10:00pm, with Ashlee Wiest-Laird as manager AND ALSO to support a #36A take-out use for 374 Centre St LLC at 372-376 Centre Street with the proviso that the use remains only with Bethlehem Café LLC, doing business as "Bethlehem Café" at 376 Centre Street. Seconded by Purple Reign. Passed 13-0-0. 4) Also discussed was a beer & wine license request and occupancy change for a new Japanese restaurant, Hinata Shokudo**,** at 613 Centre Street. Its hours will be 9:30am to 10:00pm, with Moe Kuroki as manager. The applicants were not fully prepared and had no plans available, so the Committee took no vote and invited them back to the next meeting. No vote is needed tonight.

The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, June 2. On the agenda will be the return of Hinata Shokudo for a beer and wine license at 613 Centre Street, and a request by Gangnam Spice at 225 Centre Street for an all-alcohol license. Also on the agenda will be deciding on the roster of the Committee.

5.2. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Danielle Sommer Kieta reported on the meeting of the Housing & Development Committee on May 19. The Committee reviewed the residential development proposal at 247 Hyde Park Avenue. This is a six-story building with approximately 56 rental units and 23 parking spaces. There were concerns about the building height and not enough affordable units. They asked for more affordable units, deeper affordability, and more family-size units. There was also discussion on displacement, rental versus home-ownership, parking, open space, and zoning. The H&DC voted to revive the Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard.

Questions from the Council and audience were about the community process; which proposals go to the Housing and Development Committee and which go to the Zoning Committee. There were background requests about the history of the Arborway Yard and what is the role of the City's Jamaica Plain liaison. Alcurtis Clark reported that the City has told the developer of 3716-3724 Washington Street (at Tower St. in Forest Hills) that they do not need a full community process. The next Subcommittee and H&DC meetings will be on Monday, June 15 and Tuesday, June 16.

5.3. Zoning Committee (ZC): David Baron started by offering to talk with new members about zoning. He reported that the Committee met only once in May on Wednesday, May 6. There were three matters on the agenda, but only two will need votes tonight. The proposal on 3716-3724 Washington Street has not finished with its community process and has not filed its Article 80 paper work. 1) **439 Walnut Avenue**, a request by 439 Walnut LLC (Shawn Wesley), to change permitted use from a two-family residence to a four-family residence. This is in the Egleston Square area and went in front of the local Egleston Square Neighborhood Association (ESNA). ESNA had concerns about the manner of expansion, specifically on fire safety of the building cladding and fire sprinklers. The developer made changes to fully reclad the building with fire-safe materials and ESNA is satisfied. One immediate abutter was worried about the timing of the construction and Mr. Baron gave the neighbor contact information for the developer. The Zoning Committee voted to

recommend approval. 2) **1–3 Glines Avenue**, a request by Steve Daddario and Sara Velardi, to construct a new three-family residential building on a vacant lot. ESNA was happy with this proposal, saying it would improve the community. There is attractive fencing and the building is all-electric. The Zoning Committee voted to recommend approval. Motion by David Baron to approve the recommendations of the ZC on 439 Walnut Avenue and 1-3 Glines Avenue. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. Passed 12-0-0 (1 left early).
The next Zoning Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, June 3. On the agenda will be deciding on the roster of the Committee and selection of a Committee Chair.
5.4. Parks+ Committee: Sarah Freeman reported; Eryn-Ashlei Bailey was not in attendance. There was no Parks+ Committee meeting in May, but there are several parks-related meetings coming up. There are two in-person meetings in June. On Tuesday, June 9, there will be a meeting at Curtis Hall on the Jamaica Pond Boathouse. This is a follow-up to an April Zoom meeting. The meetings are discussing structural issues at the Boathouse and potential programs for the two buildings. On Thursday, June 11, there will be a meeting at the Franklin Park Golf Clubhouse about the Transportation Access Plan Agreement (TAPA) for White Stadium.
The Friends of Jamaica Pond (FOJP) and the Campaign for Jamaica Pond and Olmsted Park have been very active with meetings and walks of the area with tree experts. The Franklin Park Coalition (FPC) will have their annual meeting on Saturday, May 30 at the Franklin Park Golf Clubhouse. You must be a member of the FPC to attend. Eryn-Ashlei Bailey will be meeting with the Parks and Recreation Department to discuss clean-ups in the parks.

6. Governance & Organizational Business:
The items on committee structure & officer transition and bylaws review were tabled to the June meeting.

7. Old Business/New Business:
Bernie Doherty expressed heartfelt thanks to outgoing JPNC Chair, Renée Stacey Welch, for her exemplary service on behalf of the entire Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:58pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next scheduled JPNC meeting: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 at 7:00PM via Zoom.
Next scheduled JPNC Executive Committee meeting: Thursday, June 18 at 7:00PM via Zoom