

**Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council**  
**February 27, 2024 Minutes**

**JPNC Attendance:** Renée Stacey Welch, Bernard Doherty, Michael Reiskind, David Baron, Lorenzo Bartoloni, Esther Belliard, Nicholas Chaves, Peter DeCotis, Sarah Freeman, Willie Mitchell, Katherine O'Shea, Peg Preble, Purple Reign, Leah Simmons Dzintars, and Gert Thorn.

**Other attendees:** Carolyn Royce, Susan Cibulsky, Janet Galloway, Doug Rand, Lissah Johnson, Carla-Lisa Caliga, Haley Fritz, Katy Janvier, Alexandra Rollins, Kane Dimasso-Scott, Jordan Frias (Office of City Councillor Ben Weber), 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. Aides to elected officials introduced themselves and the reporter from The Boston Bulletin introduced himself.

**2. Approval of January 2024 minutes:** Motion by Bernard Doherty to approve the minutes from the January 23, 2024 meeting. Seconded by Willie Mitchell. Passed 12-0-1 (2 came late).

**3. Community announcements:**

- The second meeting on the Southwest Corridor Park Action Plan will be tomorrow, February 28 at 6:00pm. You can register at [www.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJJoceusqzliGdB5hmCE7bUQiJZQgKPs-FY5#/registration](http://www.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJJoceusqzliGdB5hmCE7bUQiJZQgKPs-FY5#/registration).

**4. Committee Reports/Recommendations:**

**4.1. Public Service Committee:** Michael Reiskind said that the Public Service Committee met on Tuesday, February 6 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda was a discussion of the new Police Patrolman's contract which allows for the possibility of civilian flaggers. There was also discussion on getting sharps containers in more Jamaica Plain locations. There were complaints of syringes on the ground at Old Prince Street near Hellenic College and also at Rossmore Road near the Shattuck Shelter. It was agreed that more sharps containers were needed, perhaps outdoors where syringes are found. There was consensus that containers should be placed in every police station.

A volunteer stepped up to become Vice-Chair of the Committee. Motion by Michael Reiskind to support Peter DeCotis as Vice-Chair of the Public Service Committee. Seconded by Bernie Doherty. Passed 14-0-0 (1 came late).

The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, March 5 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda will be a presentation by the City on the Bus Route 39 Transit Priority Corridor, and a discussion on the process of adding bicycle lanes in the neighborhood.

**4.2. Zoning Committee (ZC):** David Baron said that the Zoning Committee met twice - on February 7 and 21. Five issues were considered and four need votes at tonight's meeting. 1) **1-3 Regent Circle**, a petition by IATIC Trust (Michele and Robert McTiernan), to remove proviso imposed by BZC-5906, dated Nov 23, 1982, requiring both subdivided properties to remain owner-occupied. This is an odd request from more than forty years ago and is probably unlawful. The Zoning Committee recommended approval. The issue came to the ZBA this morning and so was sent to the Executive Committee. 2) **27 Hopkins Road**, a petition by Mondakini Walsh, to construct a single-family house with attached two-car tandem-parking garage on a vacant parcel. The developer lives next door at 31 Hopkins Road. The local Jamaica Hills Association (JHA) looked at the design and recommended changes. The JHA approved the proposal. The Zoning Committee recommended approval. 3) **3510 Washington Street**, a petition by Washington 3510 Realty Trust (Bill Gao/Aifang Pan), to construct a two-story addition for two residential dwelling units above existing commercial space, with two off-street parking spaces in the rear of building. This is in a block with a row of one-story commercial buildings. Last year, the owner of one storefront, Omer Hecht, submitted a proposal to add a two-story residential addition above the commercial space. It was approved and this proposal is also adding two stories of residential units above the JP Kitchen restaurant. It uses the same architect and has a similar design. It went through the local Stonybrook Neighborhood Association (SNA) process, but the SNA has not voted yet. Issues that were taken into account were integrating the upstairs with the downstairs and having good water management. An abutter wanted better buffering and the ZC recommended approval. 4) **104 Child Street**, a petition by Teresa Spillane and Martin Nemzow, to construct an addition including a two-car garage and home office; the garage will connect to a second-floor workshop and storage area; add roof garden and solar panels to roof. This proposal is returning to the Zoning Committee and has been significantly redesigned. It is for a home-office space. The neighbors really appreciated the changes, but one rear abutter recommended a transparent buffer. The Zoning Committee recommended approval with a proviso to include a transparent fence/barrier around small rear patio. 5) **18 Pond Circle**, a petition by Richard Iannella, to add a rear shed dormer 27.3'x11' and two front gable dormers 8.8'x11', for additional bedroom and bathroom in the attic of existing single-family dwelling. The local JHA voted not to oppose. The Zoning Committee recommended approval. Motion by Bernard Doherty to approve the recommendations of the Zoning Committee on 27 Hopkins Road, 3510 Washington Street, 104 Child Street, and 18 Pond Circle. Seconded by Purple Reign. Passed 15-0-0.

The next Zoning Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, March 6. On the agenda will be 305 Chestnut Avenue for the third time.

**4.3. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC):** Purple Reign reported that the Housing & Development Committee met on February 20 via Zoom. There were two speakers, Jamal Brinson and Betsy Lynn Vedrine, from Lena Park Community Development Corporation who spoke about housing opportunity at Olmsted Green emphasizing the importance of community and discussing the various types of housing available.

Eric Brickley, from M&T Bank, explained affordable lending and deed restrictions with all the various loan programs and assistance available for different income levels. He emphasized the need for support for first-time homebuyers, down payment assistance, and financial literacy courses. Contact Purple Reign for more information.

The next Housing & Development Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, March 19 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

**4.4. Parks+ Committee:** Nick Chaves reported that the Committee is asking folks to join the Parks+ list serv. Join at <https://mailchi.mp/ae158dd6eff0/parks-committee-e-mail-list>. The Committee has not received a response to the letter sent last month asking for playground lighting in the winter season. Gert Thorn said we should make a call following up on the letter. Mr. Chaves listed events coming up that are pertinent to the Parks+ Committee:

He mentioned again the second meeting on the Southwest Corridor Park Action Plan on February 28 at 6pm (register first). There will be a Clean-Up event on Saturday, April 20. There will be a Park Rangers Hike on Thursday, February 29 at 10:00am. There will be a Franklin Park Hike on Wednesday, March 20 at 10:30am.

The Boston Tree Alliance is meeting virtually on Thursday, March 14 at 1:00pm. Should the JPNC become an Alliance member? The Boston Tree Alliance is a long-term tree planting and care City program to support growth of the urban forest on private land. It aims to reduce urban heat island impacts, improve long-term public health outcomes, increase access to trees with a focus on Economic Justice communities, reduce barriers to accessing the benefits of trees for residents, and build awareness and competency of tree planting and care: <https://www.boston.gov/environment-and-energy/boston-tree-alliance-program>

Also on March 14, at 6:00pm, there will be a second community meeting for the Franklin Park Bear Dens to present recommendations for safety improvements. It is a Zoom meeting. Peter DeCotis said the first meeting was confusing; just talking about making the area safe and not presenting very good ideas; spending \$90,000 to do very little. He would like to see more done to make it attractive and used by the community. Gert Thorn said that a small restaurant could act as an attractive destination for the end of a hike or walk. Making it safe may just be the first phase, followed by a public process to integrate it into the Franklin Park Master Plan. Carla-Lisa Caliga thought a pavilion could be attractive. Haley Fritz said that a dog park is definitely needed in the community and could go in Franklin Park. Carla-Lisa Caliga said there is a Friends of JP Dog Parks that is working on getting a dog park in the Southwest Corridor Park and some in Franklin Park. There will be a small one in Flaherty Playground. She said that JP has the most registered dogs of any part of Boston. Sarah Freeman remind folks that it is important to remember that Franklin Park is a resource for multiple neighboring communities - Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan - so it will be a city-wide process.

**4.5. Outreach Committee:** Katherine O'Shea reported that the Committee met on February 13 via Zoom. The Committee agreed that the Council should have flyers to put up in store windows, and has designed a sample flyer and a sample business card. These were shared with members before the meeting. There was discussion on the designs, and some minor edits were suggested. It was agreed that Willie Mitchell and Sarah Freeman will make the changes. but in the meantime, Katherine O'Shea made a motion to approve the attached flyer and business cards to circulate. Seconded by Gert Thorn. Gert Thorn thought that the designs were great. Nick Chaves asked if the business cards could be customized for each Committee. Esther Belliard asked for the flyers and business cards in Spanish. It was agreed to have a vote on the Spanish designs at the March meeting. Motion passed 15-0-0.

The Committee will start to talk to other local neighborhood groups next month. Ms. O'Shea asked for a list of groups with contact information. Renée Stacey Welch asked Jordan Frias if Councillor Weber has such a list that he could share. The next Outreach Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, March 12 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

**4.6. The Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard:** Susan Cibulsky reported that the JPNC sent a letter to the MBTA about the Yard opposing the location of the 150 parking spaces for MBTA employees and asking for more community engagement. Renée Stacey Welch said there has been no substantial response to the JPNC letter. Gert Thorn asked the JPNC to followup with calls to the MBTA asking for a response. Ms. Cibulsky also reported on the January 25 meeting with the MBTA and the City of Boston. The MBTA promised community meetings at the 30%, 40%, and 50% design stages. The MBTA wants to keep the 150 spaces on the eight acres of community land, and not use a remote lot for parking. They have an important need for more bus drivers and are attracting them from further away; those bus drivers use cars to get to their worksite. The MBTA is offering to share the parking location throughout the day. The City thinks the capacity for community use will not be restricted by the 150 spaces moving onto the community land. The Subcommittee still thinks it will take up too much space and wants to keep exploring further ideas. There was a question raised about whether the City would have to make a payment to the MBTA for the eight acres of MBTA land upon transfer to the City. Folks felt no payment should be demanded as the eight acres was mitigation for allowing the Yard to be built. Gert Thorn was surprised that the City had no previous documentation on the land transfer or payments. Rep. Holmes said that buses at the new Arborway Yard are important to serve his district (Dorchester, Mattapan, Hyde Park, Roslindale, and Jamaica Plain). Bernie Doherty thought that more neighbors need to be informed about the project's impacts before the Subcommittee makes decisions about use and design. He was also concerned about cold weather affecting the batteries in the electric buses and battery safety and the potential for having a salt yard next to a bus yard.

The next meeting of the Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard will be on Monday, March 18 at 7:00pm via Zoom (subsequently moved to Tuesday, March 19 at 5:30pm).

**5. Old Business/New Business:**

- Katy Janvier introduced herself. She is Assistant Director of the Community Collaboration and Engagement Unit (formerly called the Neighborhood Watch Unit) at the Boston Police Department, She asked folks to contact her (at [Katy.Janvier@pd.boston.gov](mailto:Katy.Janvier@pd.boston.gov) or 617-595-5084) if they have any community engagement events or collaboration interests with the Department. She has been with the Department for ten years and just graduated with a degree in social work. She is hoping to help build a new vision for community policing. She looks forward to getting to know the group better and hearing about our concerns. Gert Thorn had a specific complaint about a police car sitting for many hours on Lochstead Avenue.

- Vacancies on the JP Neighborhood Council: There are three vacancies on the Council, all in Area B. Nominations are being accepted now. You can send a chat or email to Katherine O'Shea ([koshea527@gmail.com](mailto:koshea527@gmail.com)) at the Outreach Committee or Renée Stacey Welch ([info.jpnc@gmail.com](mailto:info.jpnc@gmail.com) or [reneestacey1975@aol.com](mailto:reneestacey1975@aol.com)). Haley Fritz and Carla-Lisa Caliga said they were interested. Purple Reign welcomed them and encouraged them to check out the Working Committees and join the Council. Bernie Doherty and Michael Reiskind said that most of the important work is done in the Working Committees and the candidates should check them out and come back to a later meeting. Caliga asked about whether there is a maximum number of members on Committees. She said she has attended a lot of Arborway Yard meetings. She said that the JPNC takes care of a lot of business and she has learned a lot about issues.

**6. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:47pm.

*Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind*

Next scheduled JPNC meeting: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 7:00PM via Zoom.

Next scheduled JPNC Executive Committee meeting: Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 7:00PM via Zoom.