

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council
April 23, 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, Purple Reign, Leah Simmons Dzintars, and Danielle Sommer Kieta.

Other attendees: Carolyn Royce, Sue Cibulsky, Eileen McMahon, Louise Johnson, Michael Epp, Janet Galloway, Jen Lesar, Carla-Lisa Caliga, Adam Hasler, Sahrash Chaudhary, Holly Demello, Scotty Yates, (860)987-4039, 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 7:05pm 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 March 2024 minutes: Motion by Willie Mitchell to approve the minutes from the March 26, 2024 meeting. Seconded by Peter DeCotis. Passed 10-0-2 (2 came late).

3. Community announcements:

- The First Church in Jamaica Plain Recital Series final concert of the season will be on Saturday, April 27 at 3pm at 6 Eliot Street. Guitarist John Muratore will perform and Artist Lucy Harackiewicz will have a pop-up exhibit. Tickets available at <https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/8575670>.
- The Crank-Tones will be performing on Saturday, April 27 at 3:00PM at Midway Café, 3496 Washington Street.
- A Reiki Sound Bath will be offered on Sunday, April 28 at 4PM-5PM at Blissful Monkey Yoga Studio, 663 Centre St.
- The Live Music Sundays series will continue on Sunday, April 28 from 2PM to 5PM at Samuel Adams Brewery, 30 Germania Street.
- Jamaica Plain Locals Only are at the Samuel Adams Brewery, 30 Germania Street on Sunday, April 28 from 6PM-8PM.
- Mayor Wu’s Coffee Hour in Jamaica Plain will be on Tuesday, May 7 at 9:30am at Mozart Park. Ahead of the event, folks can fill out a Community Input Survey at: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfhstb-saMe7OR-ZrvkbYhwLzSLzUDtxL6LKkBO6ja5DzWr8g/viewform>
- The third in a series of meetings about Summer Safety will take place on Thursday, May 2 at 6:00pm at Curtis Hall, 20 South Street.
- There will be a meeting on Green Line Accessibility on the E-Branch on Tuesday April 30 at 6:30pm on Zoom. The link to register is: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0vdemvqz0iGtWI24wZfGktFA7d7Po22qU9#/registration>.
- Councillor Weber will be hosting a Budget Town Hall on Monday, April 29 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the Connolly Branch Library, 433 Centre Street.

4. Committee Reports/Recommendations:

4.1. Public Service Committee: Michael Reiskind said that the Public Service Committee met on Tuesday, April 2 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda was a request for a transfer of the common victualler 7-day beer & wine with liqueurs license of the Blue Nile Restaurant at 389 Centre Street to new owners, Beza Mackenzie, LLC, doing business as “Blue Nile Restaurant”, at the same location, with Thewodros Tesfaye as manager. The closing hour will be 12:00midnight, the same as presently, and there is a pledge of the license to Blue Nile, Inc. The proposed owners are an Ethiopian-American family and expressed the strong desire to have this Ethiopian establishment continue and thrive. The menu, layout and operations will not change and they will serve alcohol with food only. All attendees supported the transfer of the license. Neighbors said the Blue Nile is a great little restaurant and it is important to keep this legacy business in the community. The Public Service Committee voted to support this proposal at the April meeting. The hearing at the Licensing Board was scheduled for April 3, so the matter had to go to the JPNC Executive Committee which recommended approval. No vote is needed here tonight.

Also on the April agenda was a request by Evergreen Eatery and Café at 154 Green Street for a beer & wine license with an outdoor patio for 46 patrons. Evergreen Eatery has been in business as a restaurant since 2018 without an alcohol license. They applied for a neighborhood-restricted alcohol license at that time but were denied. They have now found an available beer & wine license owner willing to sell it to them and manager Phil Paik came to the Public Service Committee in April to ask for support for the transfer. There are actually four parts to the Evergreen Eatery request: in addition to the transfer of the beer & wine license, Mr. Paik requested to upgrade the license to a beer and wine with cordials license. He is also asking to continue with the present allowance for take-out and for an entertainment license for one TV. There is no music on the outdoor patio or live entertainment at the establishment. All residents who attended were overwhelmingly in support of these requests, citing the experience of the Paik family and the manner in which they treat all patrons with dignity and respect. Letters of support were also received from neighbors including residents living upstairs in the same mixed-use building. Evergreen Eatery also met with and received support from the Jamaica Plain Business & Professional Association. Motion by Michael Reiskind to support the request of Qdoba Restaurant Corporation, doing business as “Qdoba Mexican Eats”, at 17-23 Forsyth Street, Boston for a transfer of its Common

Victualler 7-Day Wines and Malt Beverages License to Evergreen Eatery Inc., doing business as "Evergreen Eatery and Café" at 154 Green Street, Jamaica Plain with the hours of 7:00am to 10:00pm, with take-out, and with a seasonal outdoor patio for 46 patrons, with Phil Paik as manager, and a request to amend the license to a beer and wine with liqueurs license, and with an Entertainment License for 1 TV only. Seconded by Willie Mitchell. Passed 12-0-0 (2 came late).

On May 9, the City is holding a public hearing on amendments to the Zoning Code regarding cannabis establishments. There have been previous City discussions about not requiring cannabis establishments to obtain zoning relief and only go to the Boston Cannabis Board for permits and agreements. The zoning amendments have not been shared with the public yet, so the Public Service Committee is offering to discuss the proposed amendment at its May meeting and what position the JP Neighborhood Council should adopt on the issue.

The next Public Service Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, May 7 at 7:00pm via Zoom. On the agenda will be discussion of the proposed City of Boston's Cannabis Amendment.

4.2. Zoning Committee (ZC): David Baron said that the Zoning Committee usually meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. The Committee met only once in April - on Wednesday, April 17 (the April 3 meeting was canceled for lack of agenda items). One matter was considered. 1) **21 Holbrook Street, #3**, a petition by Lauren Sena, for an extension of living space into attic, construct roof dormer, adding family room, bathroom, laundry room, and stairs. This will not add a condo unit; it is an expansion of unit #3 into the attic space with new stairs. Other condo owners in the building approved and the neighbor on the side where the dormer will be added is in support. The local Jamaica Pond Association did not oppose and the Zoning Committee recommends approval. Motion by David Baron to accept the recommendation of the ZC on 21 Holbrook Street, #3. Seconded by Leah Simmons Dzintars. Passed 12-0-1 (1 came late). The next Zoning Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, May 15. (The May 1 meeting has no agenda items.) On the agenda will be requests by 23 Gay Head Street to add a second unit, 1 Organ Park Street to add a second story, 12 Marmion Street for a two-story addition in the rear, and 28-30 Carolina Avenue for nine units of housing.

4.3. Outreach Committee: Katherine O'Shea reported that the Committee met on April 15. It was an in-person meeting at the Sam Adams outdoor patio at The Brewery. Some residents attended and are interested in joining the Committee. The Committee's new flyers and business cards are available and will be distributed during Wake Up The Earth on May 4. The JP Neighborhood Council will have a table at the event and Ms. O'Shea emphasized the need for volunteers on May 4 from 12noon to 5pm, as well as before the event from 9am to 12noon.

The next Outreach Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, May 14 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

4.4. Housing & Development Committee (H&DC): Danielle Sommer Kieta reported that the Housing & Development Committee met on April 16 via Zoom. The Committee discussed with the JP Neighborhood Development Corporation (JP NDC) the development proposal at Stonley and Brookley Roads.

The Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard has a new letter draft about the MBTA parking spaces at the Yard asking the MBTA to keep the spaces within their own portion of the project, and also to respond promptly to the JPNC letter.

Some members of the H&DC will be meeting on May 21 with Michael Kane, from the Mass Alliance of HUD Tenants, about the Forbes Building (545 Centre Street).

4.5. The Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard: Sue Cibulsky reported that the Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard met on April 15. The most recent MBTA design for the Arborway Yard bus facility was from the fall of 2023. It was a revised design with a smaller garage building and a reduced Pole Yard/Salt Yard, allowing for 8 acres for community land but that required 150 spaces of MBTA employee parking on the 8 acres. The community objected. The MBTA stayed firm and the City agreed with the MBTA saying they could accommodate the parking uses - "It is the most efficient and cost-effective way of having the parking" The Subcommittee has drafted a new letter about the parking to be sent to the MBTA and Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA). It passed at the Subcommittee but not unanimously. There was extensive discussion on the letter draft. Carla-Lisa Caliga said that the community should protect every inch of the 8 acres for true community use. Dave Baron hoped that the Subcommittee can work more effectively and come with clear recommendations without having to re-debate the issues at these full Council meetings. Bernie Doherty said he fully supports the letter. The JPNC needs to bring all information about this project to the neighboring residents. Carolyn Royce said the Subcommittee will continue to struggle with how to update the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) from 1999 and 2001. Motion by Bernie Doherty to send the Subcommittee's draft letter to the MBTA and City of Boston regarding the MBTA employee parking issue. Seconded by Willie Mitchell. Nick Chaves wanted to clarify the language in the first bullet point of the letter so that it is clearer that the 150 employee parking spaces be placed on land within the MBTA maintenance facility, not just any MBTA/State land. Purple Reign offered a friendly amendment that the language in the letter be so clarified. Accepted. Amended motion passed 11-0-3.

4.6. Parks+ Committee: Nick Chaves reported that the Committee met on April 11. There was a reminder to JPNC members to sign up for the Parks+ listserv and an update on community events - April 22 was Earth Day and April 26 will be Arbor Day. Committee members were encouraged to volunteer for the Muddy River Clean-up on April 20 (4,000 pounds of debris was collected that day and 12-15 folks came from the Park+ Committee and the JPNC). There was also discussion on the proposed Boston Tree Ordinance.

There will be meetings on April 25, May 8 and May 22 about White Stadium. All three are on the design issues. The next Parks+ Committee meeting on May 9 will be an information meeting with White Stadium Committee members about the

updated design plans. Michael Epp informed folks that the Boston Landmarks Commission sent a letter to the Mayor expressing concerns about the White Stadium process. The Mayor fired the Commission's executive director that week. Leah Simmons Dzintars then continued the report. There was a discussion about the Shattuck Campus and a discussion on the Bussey Street Renaming Initiative. The Initiative is calling for community input. You can vote for a new name at: <https://forms.gle/SEmXpXfWDYvWJ1j17>. Background information about the Initiative is at: <https://walkuprosindale.org/pdf/Bussey%20Street%20Renaming%20Initiative.pdf>
The next Parks+ Committee meeting will be on the second Thursday of the month, May 9 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

5. Old Business/New Business:

- The Subcommittee on the Arborway Yard will be having a table at Wake Up The Earth on May 4. They will have a fact sheet and maps of the Arborway Yard showing the encroachment of the MBTA into the promised community land. Pam Bender will develop a paper petition and there will be a letter box/suggestion box for community questions and suggestions. Eileen McMahon urged volunteers to sign up for the table.
- Holly Demello introduced herself and said that there is a new Recovery Center open in Jamaica Plain at 120 South Street. They are offering many types of support services for people recovering from drug and alcohol addiction, such as coaching and yoga classes. Bernie Doherty wanted confirmation that no drugs are being distributed or on site, which was confirmed.
- Sarah Freeman said that Gerry Wright, long-time supporter of parks, is reminding folks that April 26, Arbor Day this year, is Frederick Law Olmsted's birthday. Mr. Wright invites everyone to come celebrate at Jamaica Pond.
- Adam Hasler introduced himself. He lives at 2 Greenough Avenue and went to the Outreach Committee this month and is interested in community outreach to the Latinx community. He is a certified Spanish translator. He also is interested in joining the JP Neighborhood Council and may nominate himself.
- Renée Stacey Welch reminded everybody that there are three vacancies on the JP Neighborhood Council, all in Area B.

6. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

Minutes submitted by Michael Reiskind

Next scheduled JPNC meeting: Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at 7:00PM via Zoom.

Next scheduled JPNC Executive Committee meeting: Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 7:00PM via Zoom.