

Minutes of the East Berkeley Neighborhood Association Monthly Meeting

Date: November 1, 2022

Location: [Zoom](#)

Time: 6:30 PM

Attendance:

Executive Board Members:

- Stuart Rose, Treasurer
- Chris Johnson, Secretary
- Frann Bilus
- John Connelly
- Ken Smith, Meeting Facilitator
- Paul Lewis
- Sabrina Sanz
- Steve Berns

Members of the Press:

- Lauren Bennett, The Boston Sun

Government Representatives:

- Captain Sweeney, BPD
- Sargent Matthew Hogardt, BPD
- Kim Crucoli, Neighborhood Liaison
- City Councilor Ed Flynn
- Sofia Wang, Policy Director for Councilor Ed Flynn
- Cory Azmon - Chief of Staff for Rep. Santiago

Agenda

- **Welcome, announcements - Ken Smith**
 - The EBNA Holiday Party will be Tuesday, December 6 @ 6:30 PM at JJ Foley's. Appetizers will be served. There will be a cash bar. Please bring an unwrapped gift for the BPD Toys for Kids program.
 - It's time for membership renewal. Please renew your membership or sign up if you're not a member.
 - Executive Board elections will be in January and we are looking for new board members. We have two or three openings. Please talk to an executive board member or contact us by email if anyone is interested.
 - The annual Love Your Block neighborhood cleanup will be held on November 19.

- Tool pickup is 9:00 AM at the BCA.
 - Sign up by Monday Nov. 10 by 3:00 PM
- Ken introduced the executive board members.
- **Safety and Security Update** - Boston Police Dept. neighborhood report and Q&A
 - Captain Sweeney reviewed some district wide crime statistics.
 - Part 1 crime overall is down 6% for the year.
 - Homicides increased from 1 to 3 for this time last year.
 - Aggravated assaults down from last year.
 - A lot of the non-domestic aggravated assaults are driven by incidents in the Mass and Cass area. Unfortunately that group often don't want police involvement or follow up.
 - Commercial burglaries increased from 40 to 56 this year, up 16%.
 - These are mostly after-hours burglaries.
 - Residential burglaries decreased from 94 to 60, a decrease of 36%.
 - Larceny from motor vehicles decreased from 371 to 270.
 - Vehicle thefts are down also.
 - There were 81 fewer Other Larcenies compared to last year.
 - Most of these are shoplifting and package thefts.
 - Robberies increased by 6 from 83 to 89.
 - These are also driven mostly by shoplifting.
 - Sargent Matthew Hogardt - provided information on crimes just our neighborhood.
 - Every part 1 crime except aggravated assaults is down compared to last year.
 - There was a small increase in aggravated assaults, but there have not been any additional aggravated assaults reported since July.
 - Overall, part 1 crime stayed the same, 13 total incidents.
 - Larcenies increased from 6 to 11.
 - Whole Foods has seen an increase in shopliftings due to a few individuals. BPD is working with Whole Foods to address the problem.
 - Bicycles are a very hot commodity right now. Avoid leaving your bicycle outside if at all possible and make sure your bicycle is secure even in bicycle storage rooms within your building.
 - Sargent Hogardt advised people to be vigilant regarding package delivery during the holiday season to avoid package theft.
 - There was 1 burglary (as a result of a domestic issue).
 - There was 1 auto theft. It was actually a moped, not a car.
 - Questions
 - A resident of Laconia Lofts asked if there could be an increased police presence at the back of Laconia Lofts later in the evening. A group of

people who are not Laconia Lofts residents have taken to hanging on the steps around the back entrance and smoking pot. It is intimidating to some of the residents.

- A member questioned the protocol that ambulances use for when to turn on their sirens to get through red lights. They've been observed using their sirens to get through the intersections and then immediately turning their sirens off, and cars are ignoring them.
 - Captain Sweeney said he would follow up with Boston EMS.
- A member asked if Whole Foods employs security guards?
 - Sargent Hogardt said yes, but he does not know the details about how many.
- A member asked about an incident that occurred in the GTI parking lot under I-93 the night before? There were many emergency vehicles.
 - Captain Sweeney thought it was due to a car accident but did not know the details. State Police would have responded to that area.
- **City Councilor Ed Flynn**
 - Councilor Flynn discussed some of the current city council activities and priorities.
 - He has long been an advocate for additional police officers in Boston.
 - Not enough police officers is a major problem in the city. Councilor Flynn advocates hiring an additional three- to four-hundred new officers each year.
 - Councilor Flynn has a walkthrough of Peters Park scheduled for November 16 with the Parks Dept. There are some issues to that they want to address.
 - South End Library - Due to the extensive damage at the South End Library, Councilor Flynn is advocating for a new public library in the South End. Financially, it might make more sense and timing might be right to build a new library. It is currently in the design phase. Councilor Flynn is advocating that this to be done on a fast track.
 - City Council redistricting has been very difficult, and it has not been a smooth process. Voting on redistricting is scheduled for November 2. Councilor Flynn does not yet know how it will affect the South End and does not know what the future is with the redistricting process.
- **State Rep. Jon Santiago**
 - State Rep. Santiago discussed some of the legislative initiatives from the past year.
 - The Votes Act - an effort to increase voter participation including provisions to make mail in voting and early voting permanent.
 - Funds for local projects that benefit the South End
 - Funds for the Southwest Corridor Park
 - Funds to address the opioid crisis - recognizing that it will take State as well as City participation

- The legislature has been active on federal issues of abortion rights and gun violence.
 - They were able to expand reproductive rights.
 - Rep. Santiago said that he is involved with and advocating for issues surrounding the situation at Mass and Cass.
 - He has ideas where he'd like to see it go.
 - He is pushing for decentralization and adding resources in the city and across the state.
 - Rep. Santiago said that his office places an emphasis on constituent services and encouraged people to reach out to his office with any issues. Even if it is not normally a state issue, he has contact he can refer to.
 - There were no questions.
- **Business Spotlight: The SOWA Artist Guild**
 - Debbie Krim, local artist, gave an overview of The SOWA Artists Guild.
 - The guild has about 92 members. There are about 100 artists at 450 Harrison Ave., and most of them are guild members.
 - 450 Harrison Ave is unusual in that it has both artists' studios and galleries in the same building.
 - With addition of design studios at 540 Harrison Ave., SOWA is becoming central shopping for art and design.
 - SOWA artists are open at 450 Harrison Ave. on Sundays during the SOWA Market and throughout the year.
 - Everything will also be open during upcoming Winter Festival.
 - Questions:
 - Is there a way to encourage more studios to be open? Often times it is the same studios that are open and the same studios that are closed.
 - Kim agreed it would be great if everyone were open, and said that GTI encourages studios to be open.