East Berkeley Neighborhood Association Monthly / Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, January 3, 2023 Location: Zoom <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89885636618</u> Time: 6:30 PM

Attendance:

Executive Board Members:

Leslie Fine, President Stuart Rose, Treasurer Chris Johnson, Secretary Frann Bilus John Connelly Kate Chang, Pine Street Inn Paul Lewis Sarah Hutt Steve Berns David Fine Li H.

Government Representatives:

Captain Sweeney, BPD Sargent Matthew Hogardt, BPD Kim Crucioli, Neighborhood Liaison Sofia Wang, Policy Director for Councilor Ed Flynn

Agenda

Welcome, announcements

- Leslie welcomed everyone to the meeting.
 - She thanked last year's executive board members and welcome our new board members.
 - Leslie read EBNA's mission statement.

Safety and Security Update - Boston Police Dept. D-4

- Captain Sweeney and Sargent Hogardt gave the Safety and Security update and answered questions.
 - District D-4 saw an 8% drop in part one crime from 2022
- In lieu of the Captain Sweeney and Sargent Hogardt's comments, I have included an article from *The Boston Sun* that reviews detailed crime statistics in D-4. <u>http://thebostonsun.com/2023/01/05/bpd-district-d-4-sees-8-percent-drop-in-part-one-crime-in-22-from-previous-year/</u>
 - The text of the article is included at the end of these minutes.

Business Spotlight: Eye Level Optical and Optometric Practice at 53 Waltham Street.

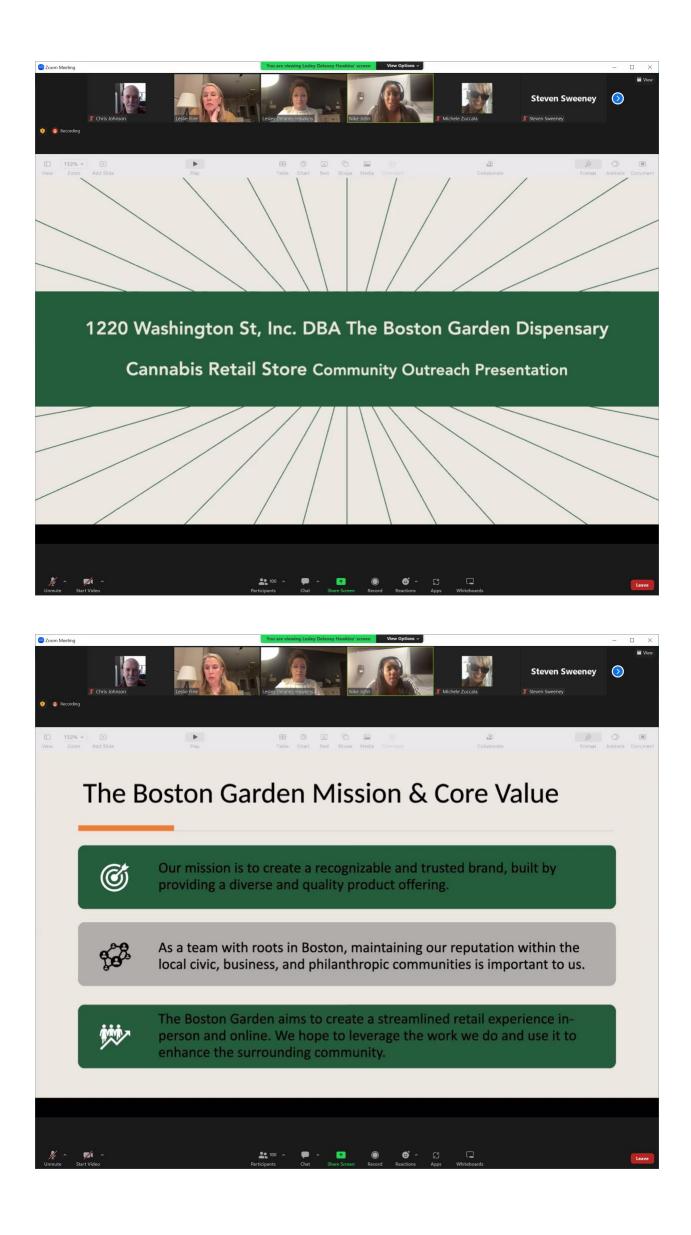
• Michele Zuccala from Eye Level Optical introduced herself and her background.

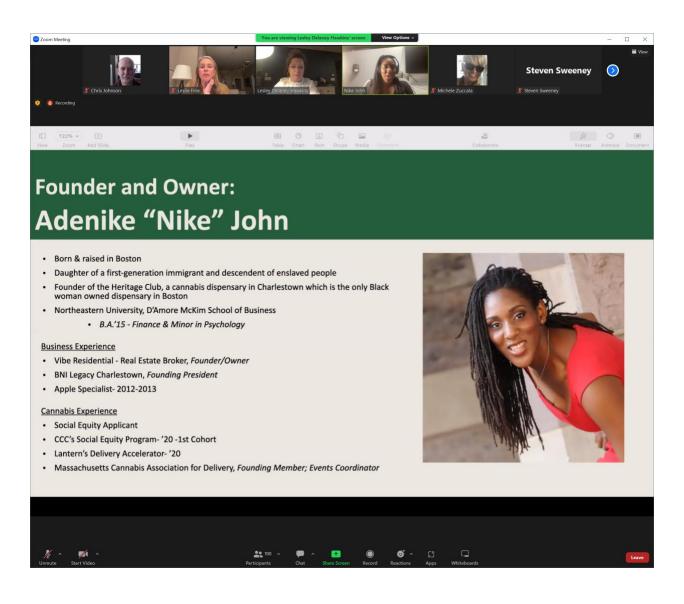
- She recently opened Eye Level Optical located 53 Waltham Street in Wilkes Passage.
- Michele has been in the South End for over 20 years. Prior to opening the new shop, she was with South End Eye.

Proposed Cannabis Dispensary

- Lesley Delaney Hawkins, Adenike "Nike" John, and Frederick "Fred" McCarthy presented their proposal to open a cannabis dispensary at 1220 Washington Street where Cathedral Station is currently located.
 - Lesley is the attorney representing the proponent
 - Nike (pronounces like "Nicki") will be the majority owner at 51%.
 - Nike was born and raised in Boston
 - She is the founder of another cannabis dispensary in Charlestown
 - Fred will the other co-owner.
 - He is originally from the Boston area.
 - His experience includes real estate development and finance.
- This is the first in a series of meetings required for their application process.
- This meeting was not a discussion on the fate of Cathedral Station.
 - Per Arthur Leon, Cathedral Station's landlord, Cathedral Station has been operating without a lease for the past two years, and the owners of Cathedral Station have informed him that they want to retire.
- After giving their presentation, Lesley, Nike, and Fred listened to comments and answered questions.
 - Screen shots from the presentation are included at the end of these minutes.
- <u>Question</u>: What is Boston's approval process?
 - It is a 9 to 14 month process.
 - 1. Community outreach meet with the community and have a community impact meeting.
 - 2. Request a hearing in front of the Boston Cannabis Board (BCB).
 - 3. If approved by the BCB,
 - a. Go before the zoning board of appeals.
 - b. Go before the state Cannabis Control Commission
- <u>Question</u>: Do you meet siting requirements for parks and schools?
 - Yes, they believe they do.
 - The requirement is for a buffer zone of at least 500 feet from a school with students K - 12. The buffer zone no longer includes daycares or "places where children might congregate."
- <u>Question</u>: Are there any provisions to keep customers from using products in the park across the street?
 - The dispensary will require customers to sign and agree to a "good customer" agreement. Customers who use product in vicinity of the store will be banned from the store.
- <u>Comment / Objection</u>: Windows will be blacked out and there will no longer any foot traffic or activity in front of the store.

- The entry will be open, not blacked out. They do not want the storefront to be uninviting.
- <u>Comment / Objection</u>: A commenter was opposed the dispensary due to its proximity to Peters Park, the tot lot, the dog run, and the baseball field and students who regularly walk by the location.
- <u>Comment / Objection</u>: A commenter felt that the location was too close to Pine Street because many of Pine Street Inn's guests have problems with addiction.
- <u>Question</u>: How will the patio space be used?
 - The patio could be used as potential overflow for customer queueing if required.
- <u>Question</u>: The parking lot will create ripple effects and cause congestion when people leave the lot and have to merge onto Harrison Ave. What's your traffic mitigation plan?
 - They are not seeing traffic problems at other dispensaries.
 - 50% of customers take transit or walk.
 - At the Charlestown location, they typically have four or five cars in the lot at time.
 - They will complete a traffic study with their application.
 - There have been no traffic complaints in Charlestown. They believe the will have a similar experience here, pending the traffic study.
- <u>Question</u>: Smoking in Peters Park. There are already a lot of pot smokers in Peters Park. How would you enforce good neighbor policy?
 - They will have security at all times.
 - Everyone is ID'd on entry.
 - Their products and packaging are labeled with the store name.
 - They have not seen a proliferation of use from other cannabis dispensaries in Boston.
- <u>Question</u>: How do they fit into the Cannabis Equity Program
 - Cannabis is non-bankable because of federal regulations.
 - I.e., A cannabis business cannot get loans from a federally regulated bank.
 - All beneficial business partners are disclosed, nothing hidden.
 - Nike has 51% ownership of the voting shares.
 - One of the main problems equity applicant applicants have is lack of capital. Fred brings capital.
- GTI has offered to make the Power Station available for a larger in-person meeting sometime in the future.





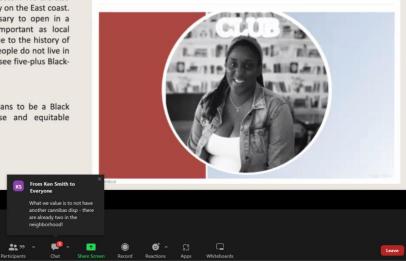


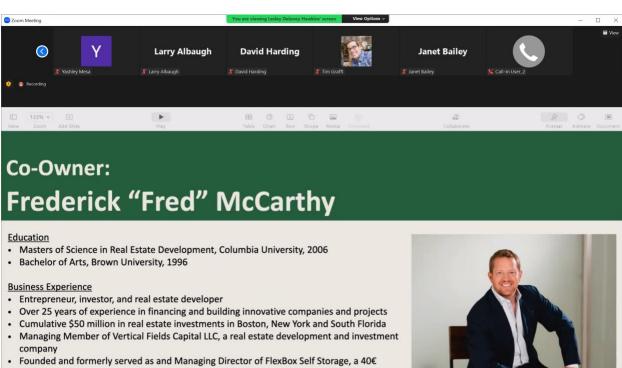
Founder and Owner: Nike John Featured in the Boston Business Journal

"After a long and bureaucratic journey, in September 2022, we officially opened the first Black Woman-owned dispensary in Boston. We are also the first Black Woman-owned dispensary in Boston. We are also This also makes us the first minority-owned dispensary to open in a majority White residential neighborhood. This is important as local politics is a major part of the licensing process and due to the history of race in real estate there is a reason why many Black people do not live in Charlestown, and instead live in Dorchester where we see five-plus Blackowned dispensaries."

"I'm determined to continue to reinvent what it means to be a Black business owner in cannabis and create a diverse and equitable community."

In Her Own Words: Nike John upends stereotype of Black business owners in the cannabis industry



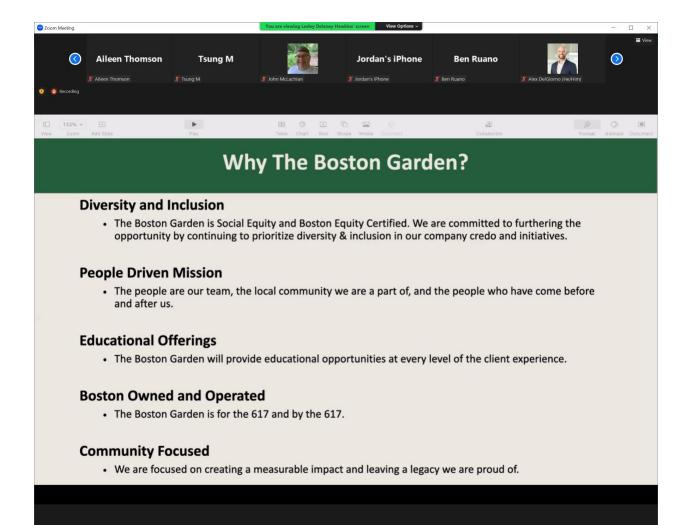


- million developer and operator of self storage facilities in France, Italy and Switzerland Formerly worked as an investment banker raising debt financing and providing mergers &
- acquisitions advisory to financial sponsor clients Experience with managing private equity and structuring debt partnerships

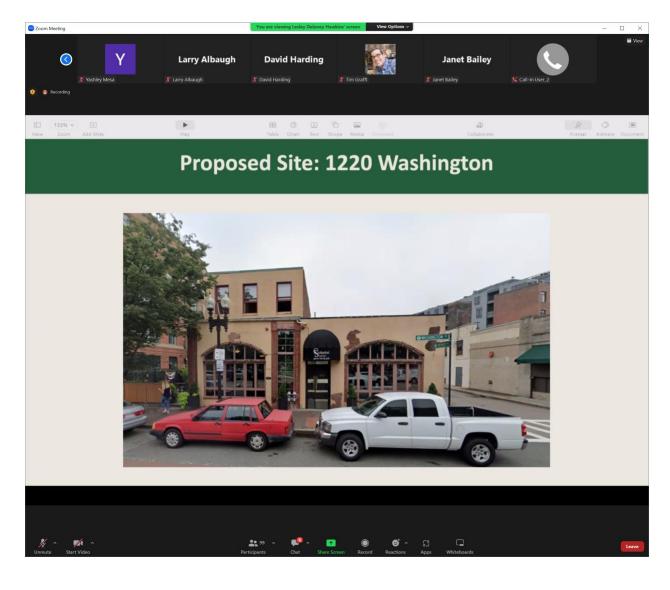
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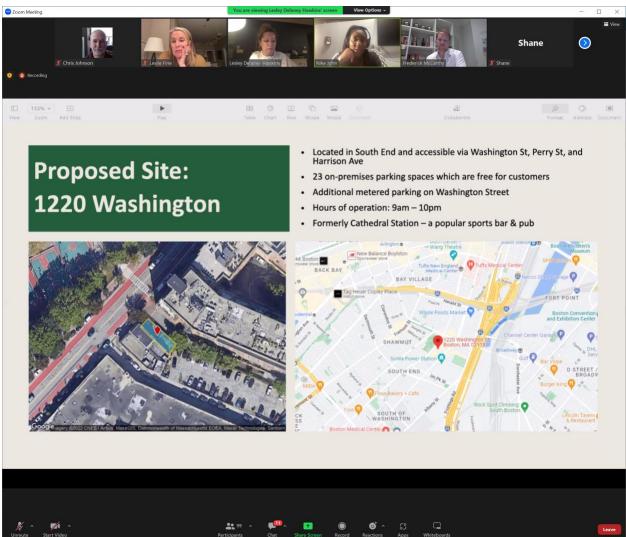
<u>Cannabis Experience</u> • Founder of Vertical Fields Green Co., LLC, an organization to explore cannabis-related opportunities in Massachusetts

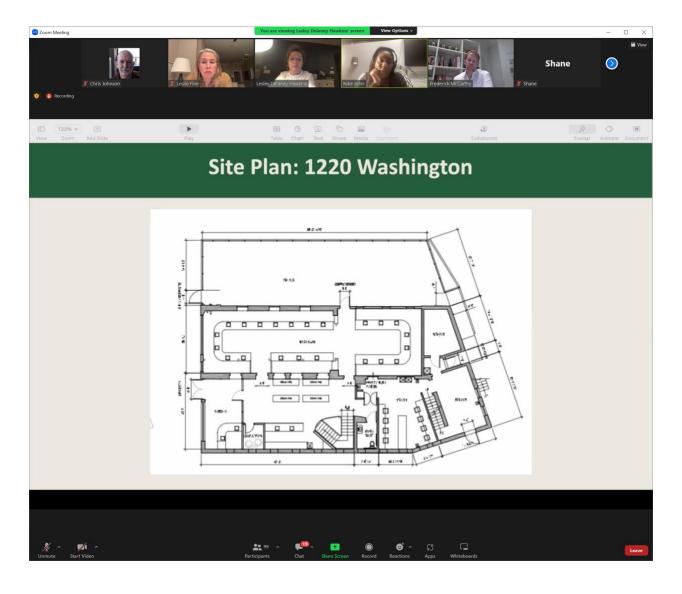


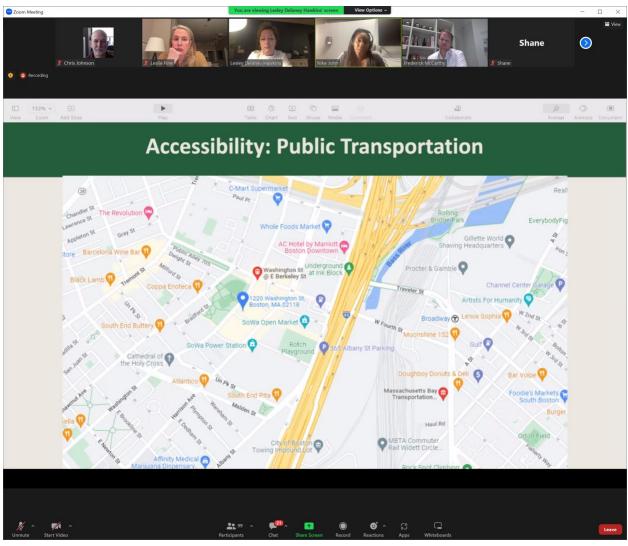


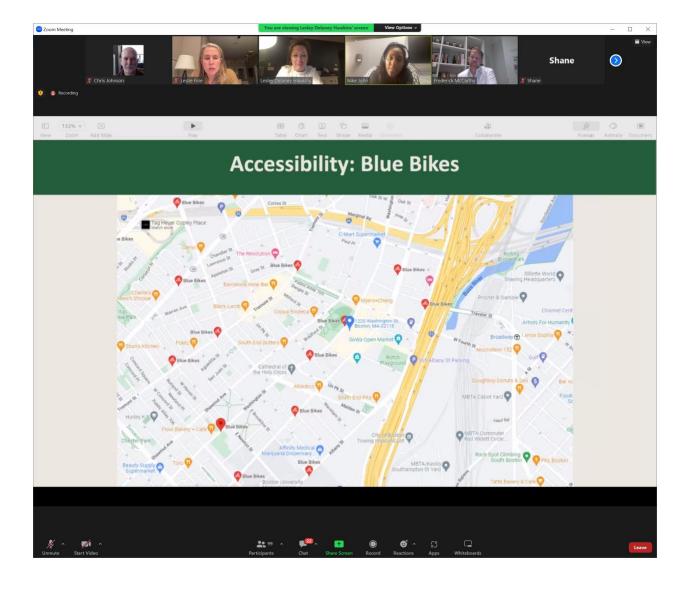
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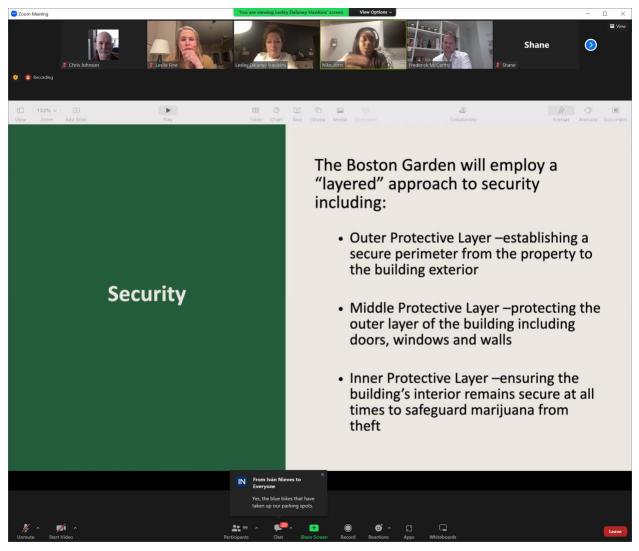












http://thebostonsun.com/2023/01/05/bpd-district-d-4-sees-8-percent-drop-in-part-one-crime-in-22-from-previous-year/

BPD: District D-4 Sees 8-Percent Drop in Part One Crime in '22 From Previous Year

by The Boston Sun Staff • January 5, 2023 • <u>0</u> Comments

District D-4 saw an 8-percent drop in Part One crime in 2022 from the previous year, according to Boston Police.

Between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31 of last year, 2,505 incidents of Part One crime were reported in in the district, which includes the Back Bay, South End, Lower Roxbury, and the Fenway, compared with 2,714 incidents during the same timeframe in 2021.

2022 also saw a nearly 17-percent drop in Part One crime in the district from the five-year average of 3,016 incidents.

Part One crime includes violent crimes (homicide; rape and attempted rape; robbery and attempted robbery; and aggravated assault), as well as property crimes (burglary and attempted burglary; larceny and attempted larceny; and vehicle theft and attempted vehicle theft).

Five homicides were reported in the district last year as opposed to only one in '21, while two was the five-year average in this category.

Rapes and attempted rapes were down almost 47 percent, with 16 in '22, compared to 30 the previous year; the five-year average in this category was 28 incidents.

In contrast, robberies and attempted robberies were up nearly 16 percent as the number climbed to 104 last year from 90 in '21; the five-year average in this category was 129 incidents.

Incidents of domestic aggravated assault saw a more than 4 percent increase, with 47 incidents in '22, compared to 45 the previous year; the five-year average in this category was 50 incidents.

Likewise, incidents of non-domestic aggravated assault were up more than 7 percent as the number climbed to 174 last year from 162 in '21; the five-year average in this category was 219 incidents.

Commercial burglaries were up nearly 22 percent as the number climbed to 62 in '22 from 51 the previous year, while the five-year average was 84 incidents.

In contrast, residential burglaries were down around 33 percent, with 70 incidents in '22, compared to 105 the previous year; the five-year average for this category was 148 incidents.

Incidents of larceny from a motor vehicle saw a nearly 23 percent decline as the number dropped to 323 last year from 419 in '21; the five-year average in this category was 457 incidents.

Other larcenies were down nearly 7 percent, with 1,532 incidents in '22, compared to 1,645 the previous year; the five-year average in this category was 1,879 incidents.

Auto theft was up almost 4 percent as the number climbed to 172 last year from 166 in '21, while 150 was the five-year average in this category.

Citywide, Part One crime was down 2 percent in '22 as the number of incidents dropped to 14,863 from 15,087 the previous year.

2022 also saw a more than 10-percent decrease in Part One crime citywide from the five-year average of 16,533 incidents.