

## **East Berkeley Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes**

**Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023**

**Location: Zoom**

**Time: 6:30 PM**

### **Attendance:**

#### **Executive Board Members:**

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

### **Agenda**

#### **Welcome, announcements**

- Leslie opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

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

- Captain Sweeney gave an update on crime in District D-4. \*
  - Type 1 crime is up 1 percent compared to the same time last year.
- Sergeant Hogardt gave an update on crime specific to our neighborhood. \*
  - Numbers for Part 1 crime are very low in the neighborhood, but there has been a slight uptick as well.
- Sergeant Detective Chris Carroll introduced himself.
- There were several questions regarding Peters Park.
  - An EBNA member questioned what could be done about people smoking marijuana in Peters Park and whether there was any focus on a police presence in the park.
    - Captain Sweeney said they have discussed the issue and are trying to address it.
  - One member informed the police about people who are hiding blankets and backpacks in the trees along the side of the park closest to Berkeley Street.

- Captain Sweeney indicated that they have not been receiving reports of needles in the park. Jane Brayton concurred. (Jane and her husband, Chris, pick up litter in the park most days.)

\* Detailed crime statistics are available at BPDNews.com.

<https://bpdnews.com/?category=Crime+Stats>

### **Business Spotlight - South End Garden Tour**

- Peter Bowen of the Trustees of Reservations discussed the upcoming South End Garden Tour on June 17 from 10:00AM to 4:00PM.
  - Tickets available online.
  - If anyone has a garden that they would like to include in the Garden Tour, please contact Peter.
  - If anyone is interested in a plot in one of the community gardens, they can apply on the Trustees website <https://thetrustees.org/>.

### **Proposal for permanent outdoor dining space - Bar Mezzana and Yellow Door Tacqueria**

- Jefferson Macklin from Bar Mezzana, Colleen Hagerty from Yellow Door Taqueria, and Ted Tye from National Development presented a proposal to close the driveway between two restaurants and convert it to permanent outdoor dining space. This is the same space that the two restaurants have been using as outdoor dining space for the past two years.
  - The seating pattern would be similar to what they've had in the past - seating on either side of the (former) driveway with a walk way in the middle.
  - They plan to replace the asphalt with pavers and make other improvements to better protect the seating and improve the space for outdoor dining.
  - They plan to install infrared heaters and eliminate the propane heaters currently in use.
- The space would be permanently close to vehicle traffic.
- They will apply to the licensing board to include this patio space permanently to their licenses instead of the temporary outdoor seating permits they have had during COVID.
- New fire hydrants will be installed closer to Harrison Ave.
- The curb cut on Harrison Ave. will remain, but the pavers on either side will be extended across the apron to indicate that it is not an active driveway.
- This change will make the area safer by eliminating vehicles cutting through Ink Block, which they were doing to avoid the traffic lights.
- Note: The driveway has been permanently blocked and closed to vehicle traffic since it was first use for outdoor dining at the beginning of the COVID epidemic.

### **Verizon Building Development Project - 1033-1055 Washington Street**

- Harry Collins and Barbara Boylan from the Druker Company presented the proposed development of 1033-1055 Washington Street, the former Verizon building.
- A public meeting is scheduled for March 8.
- They gave an overview of the project

- The site is 2 acres.
- The building will be 588 thousand square feet.
- The Floor Area Ratio (FAR) will be 6.5.
- It will include 20% open space with public access.
- The proposal is within zoning.
- There will be 2 buildings - a north and a south building connected by a pedestrian bridge.
- All loading will be internal to the building.
  - Trucks will enter from Shawmut Ave. and exit onto Washington Street.
- Tennent parking will be underground.
- The project will enliven Washington Street with street level retail space and restaurants.
- The project will include affordable cultural civic space in both buildings.
- The pedestrian courtyard between the two buildings will reconnect Shawmut Ave. to Washington Street mid-block.
- Economic and public Benefits include:
  - Approx. \$7.5 million in Linkage Payments comprised of
    - Housing contribution grant of approx. \$6.34 million
    - Jobs contribution grant of approx. \$1.17 million
  - Approx. \$4 million per year in new property tax revenue to the city
  - 400 construction jobs and 900 permanent jobs
  - The aforementioned cultural civic space
- Questions:
  - What will the traffic impact be on the buses and Silver Line at that location?
    - Traffic will not negatively impact the frequency of the buses.
    - The major traffic study will be available soon.
  - Has Druker thought about integrating the empty BRA lot next to the Lucas as open space?
    - The Druker Company has offered to integrate and permanently maintain that parcel into their plan.
    - They have submitted RFPs in the past and will continue to advocate for this.
  - The biolabs will be restricted to Biosafety Levels (BSL) 1 and 2. BSL 3 and 4 will be prohibited.
  - Will noise from the HVAC equipment negatively affect residents in other buildings in the neighborhood?
    - Noise levels will meet and be lower than current city requirements.
    - A sound study will be conducted.
    - The sound study on the other Druker project at 80 East Berkeley Street found the sound levels to be lower than the current city the standards. They expect this building to be similar.
  - How will the Housing Contribution grant be used and how will it benefit people in this neighborhood?

- Linkage moneys go to the city and the Department of Housing determines how it is used. The developer does not have any say in where the money is spent.
- People can advocate with the city for where they would like to the money spent.
- This is also addressed in the IAG. They have had one IAG meeting to date. EBNA has two members on the IAG.
  - How will abutting buildings be affected by sunlight?
    - They will share the shadow study when it is completed.
- There is a public meeting tomorrow night, Wednesday, March 8.
- They hope to begin constructions in Q3 2024.
- They expect this to be a three-year process.

### **State Representative Aaron Michlewitz**

State Representative Aaron Michlewitz discussed the upcoming legislative session and priorities.

- Rep. Michlewitz was reappointed as Chairperson of the Ways and Means Committee.
- The budget process is just beginning.
  - The governor file her budget March 1 and the legislature has begun hearings.
  - They hope to have the budget out in mid-April with floor debate. Their goal is to finalize the budget by July 1, which is the beginning of the fiscal year.
- Budget opportunities:
  - With the ending of the federal COVID public health emergency ending, several federal programs ending. The state must decide whether to continue these programs on the state level. These include:
    - MassHealth eligibility
    - SNAP eligibility
    - School meal eligibility
  - The implementation of the Fair Share Amendment is working its way through the budget process.
    - They have budgeted out \$1 billion for transportation and education.
- The legislative cycle has begun, and bills are being reviewed and sent to committees.