

## East Berkeley Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Tuesday, October 3, 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
- Paul Lewis
- Sarah Hutt
- Steve Berns

#### Government Representatives:

- Sargent Matthew Hogardt, BPD
- John FitzGerald, Candidate for City Council District 3
- Joel Richards, Candidate for City Council District 3

### Agenda

- **Welcome, announcements**
  - Leslie opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and introducing the executive board.
  - ANNOUNCEMENTS:
    - Proposed Cannabis Dispensary at 1220 Washington Street.
      - The proposed cannabis dispensary at 1220 Washington St. has been approved by the Massachusetts Cannabis Commission.
        - It is now scheduled to go before the Boston Zoning Board of Appeal on October 31 after several postponements. Further information about the ZBA meeting including the Zoom link will be provided as the meeting date gets closer.
        - Note: On Friday, Oct. 6, Cathedral Station announced via Facebook that the dispensary proposal has been withdrawn and Cathedral Station is not closing. No independent confirmation has been received yet.
    - Peters Park Halloween Dog Costume Parade

- Peters Park will have their Halloween Dog Costume Parade on Saturday, October 21. Rain date Oct. 22. Registration begins at 9:00 AM.
  - EBNA Membership Renewals
    - It is time to renew your EBNA membership. Membership gives you a voice and a vote.
      - You can join or renew your membership on our website, EBNABoston.org.
      - \$20 per person, \$30 for business
  - Peters Park Donations
    - Peters Park is requesting donations to support annual \$15,000 maintenance of the dog run and seasonal plantings. These expenses are not covered by the City. Donations and contact information can be found on their website.
  - EBNA Executive Board Nominations
    - EBNA is looking for neighbors or businesses who would like to serve on the EBNA executive board beginning in January next year.
    - If anyone is interested or would like additional information, please speak to any of the board members or send an email to us at Info@ebnaboston.org and we'll reach out to you.
  - Next Meeting Date
    - Our next meeting will be Tuesday, November 7 at 6.30 PM. Agenda and Zoom link will be sent out in advance.
  - Holiday Get Together
    - We plan to have a Holiday Get Together in December in lieu of a meeting. We will send an email next month with more information.
- **Safety and Security Update - BPD, D4**
  - Sargent Hogardt presented the Safety and Security Report.
    - Part 1 crime for all of D4, 9 months year-to-date:
      - 16% increase in part 1 crime across the district YTD mainly due to increases in robberies and larcenies.
        - Robberies include aggressive shopliftings - for example, if Loss Prevention confronts a shop lifter, and the shop lifter threatens the use of force, that changes a larceny to a robbery
          - These are occurring mainly in the Back Bay shopping districts.
        - Larcenies have seen a 22% increase, mostly shopliftings.
    - EBNA had 11 Part 1 crimes in September. Two of these events occurred at Pine Street.

- 1 robbery - one of the guests at Pine Street by someone they knew.
    - 1 assault - also involved a guest at Pine Street.
    - 1 auto theft (a moped)
      - BPD is seeing a lot of moped thefts.
    - 8 larcenies
      - 2 shoplifting
      - 2 bikes or scooters
      - 2 package thefts
      - 1 larceny from a motor vehicle
      - 1 phone theft - victim put their phone down to play soccer and it was gone when they came back.
  - Questions:
    - What are the rules for e-bikes, mopeds, motorized scooters, motorized skateboards, etc. with regards to riding in the road and stopping at crosswalks?
      - Bikes (including e-bikes), mopeds, and scooters are supposed to follow the rules of the road - stop at stop signs and traffic lights and yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.
      - D4 is putting together an information campaign and enforcement plan for mopeds.
  - Ted Tye from Ink Block alerted us to some of the challenges they are facing at the Underground at Ink Block. A guard shack was vandalized. The State Police responded after the fact. They have removed the chairs and seating along the channel to combat drug activity. They are posting telephone numbers for security around the area. If anyone sees any illegal activity, please call 911 and notify Ink Block security.
  - BPD is ramping up resources to address any issues that might come up with the removal of the homeless encampment on Atkinson Street if the city ordinance is passed. More overtime has been allocated to address any issues. Will have more officers on the streets to respond if situations come up.
- **Meet the Candidates: John Fitzgerald and Joel Richards, Candidates for Boston City Council District 3**
    - John Fitzgerald introduced himself.
      - He is a native Bostonian and has worked at City Hall for 17 years. John, his wife, and his children live in Dorchester.
      - He is running because he loves his family and he loves Boston. He is worried about the future and wants to build infrastructure around families so they can stay in Boston instead of leaving.
    - Questions:
      - What would you do to expedite the Harrison Ave. redesign?

- John would leverage relationships he's developed at City Hall to get things done.
  - How would you address safety concerns in the neighborhood?
    - Decentralize (services) - provide trauma informed care and get people the services they need in small groups in small locations throughout New England. Approx. 70% of the people at Mass and Cass are not from Boston. This needs to be a state and federal government issue.
    - Support the police to do the work that they do.
  - You would be representing several different neighborhoods. How will you ensure that you will be informed about and engaged with issues facing our neighborhood?
    - John loves the city and loves all of District 3. He will be there at the meetings, and he will have a South End dedicated person on his staff to take care of South End issues specifically.
- Joel Richards introduced himself.
  - John lives in Fields Corner with his wife and children. He is a teacher at the Blackstone School (on Washington Street near Blackstone Park).
  - His goals are
    - to unite parent groups to get together and build new schools.
    - housing - use municipal funds to purchase run down and abandoned buildings, bring back the "develop it or lose it" policy
    - hire more social workers to support the police

Questions:

- What would you do to expedite the Harrison Ave. redesign?
  - He would unite the district to increase our political capital and not be forgotten.
- How would you address safety concerns in the neighborhood?
  - Set up the social structure to prevent homelessness and drug addiction, decentralize services, hire social workers to support the police and EMTs.
- You would be representing several different neighborhoods. How will you ensure that you will be informed about and engaged with issues facing our neighborhood?
  - Joel has grown to love the South End over the past several years. He will count on us to provide him political capital.
- **Blackstone Franklin Square Park Neighborhood Association's Scholarship Committee**
  - Sara Frank from the Blackstone Franklin Square Park Neighborhood Association's Scholarship Committee introduced the committee and what it does.
    - The committee provides scholarships to students from the South End who are going to college. They've donated approximately \$200,000 since it began in the early 2000s.
    - There are three scholarship level:

- \$2,000 for an upcoming freshman, \$1,000 for a returning student, and \$3,000 for outstanding community contribution.
  - If anyone is interested in volunteering or donating to the committee or if you know anyone who would like to apply, information can be found on their website. <http://www.blackstonefranklin.org/scholarship>.
  - If anyone has any follow up questions, they can contact Sara.
- **Business Spotlight: SoWa Health + Wellness**
  - Amanda Kajen is the General Manager at SoWa Health + Wellness, a new gym that is opening at 560 Harrison Ave.
    - They are currently hosting open houses every Friday and Saturday from 12 PM to 4 PM. An opportunity to see the space, meet the staff, and ask questions.
    - They are hoping for a soft opening October 15. They will send announcements prior to that.
    - Amanda reviewed the features of the gym and gave an overview of some of the equipment and amenities.
    - They are offering founding membership discounts until Friday, Oct. 6. Full price after that. Membership is month-to-month.
    - Information and pricing can be found on their website. <https://sowahealthandwellness.com/>