

East Berkeley Neighborhood Association

General Meeting Minutes

MEETING DETAILS

Date: March 3, 2020

Location: Project Place, 1145 Washington Street

Time: 6:30 – 8:00 PM

ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Leslie Fine (Vice President), Bradley St. Amand (Secretary), John Connelly, Aimee Coolidge, Sarah Hutt, Geoff Palmer, Steve Berns

City Representatives: Sophia Wang (Councilor Ed Flynn's Office), Faisa Sharif (Mayor's Office - South End Liaison)

Press: Boston Sun – Seth Daniel

AGENDA ITEMS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Spring social at the Quinn Sales Office – April 29, 6:30pm (tentative)
- Stay tuned for a June social
- Love your Block – May 16 (save the date)
- Street Sweeping began March 1
- BDPA Urban Renewal Meeting – March 18, 6pm at AC Hotel
- BTM Tremont St Design Open Houses
 - March 16, 6pm at Revolution Hotel
 - March 21, 11am at South End Library
- SoWa First Friday – March 6; SoWa Second Sunday – March 8
- Next meeting: Tuesday, April 7

SAFETY AND SECURITY UPDATE

Presenter: Captain Sweeney and Officer Shoulla

Notes:

- Crime is down 4% from last year to date
- 17 robberies – a number in Symphony area from a juvenile group
- Uptick in car breaks - 79 vs 75 last year. Noted Randolph and Fay Street as issues.

- Reminder – don't leave items in your car
- 12 commercial break-ins – down from 20 last year. Noted recent issue at Union Park Pizza where a brick was thrown through the window and register taken.
- Some recent calls regarding aggressive panhandling. One man had an outstanding felony warrant and was arrested.
- BPD continues to check Peter's Park each morning. Finding some needles and some hidden knives. Less than expected number of people sleeping in the park.
- Is aware of traffic issues around Whole Foods. Have been issuing more traffic violations lately.
- Working on plan for warmer weather to combat opioid issue. Mass Cass 2.0 has paid some dividends, but a lot more work to do.
- Q&A from Members:
 - Street lights out on Perry
 - Whole Foods detail requests will likely continue to go unfilled. BPD is short-handed and many officers are working doubles and filling construction details. Will only see more requests with warm weather events.
 - Private details or "flagmen" are not allowed.

Actions Taken:

GTI PROPERTIES – 478 HARRISON AVE PROJECT

Presenters: Mario Nicosia, President of GTI Properties

Notes:

- Project was presented previously. Haven't filed yet with BPDA. This is courtesy meeting to discuss the design changes made since the last presentation.
- Will be Small Project Review. There will be a future public meeting hosted by the BDPA.
- Project is within zoned height (70') and FAR.
- Already received GCOD (groundwater conservation) zoning relief.
- Will focus on attention to detail as with other GTI projects – matching brick, granite, grout, windows, etc.
- Was previously 16 residential units, now 8. Units will be larger – approx. 1250 sf two bedrooms.
- Will have 2 floors of office space and ground level retail.
- Could be 1 or 2 retail spaces, no tenant determined yet. High ceilings 15-16'.
- Added and adjusted balconies.
- Rear of building will have new walkway connection to Thayer and Cinquecento
- Hope to begin construction next spring. Expects to take 18 months.
- Q&A with members:
 - Power Station is being updated with new doors, windows, HVAC, sprinklers, bathrooms. Currently sandblasting. Have made substantial brick and beam repairs.
 - Construction should not impact SoWa Farmer's Market.

Actions Taken:

NEW BUSINESS UPDATE / SPOTLIGHT - ATLANTICO

Presenters: Michael Serpa

Notes:

- Will be located at 600 Harrison Ave – formerly Southern Proper
- Their group currently operates Select Oyster Bar
- Plan to open late March / early April
- Using existing liquor license, same operating hours.
- Will be including a café and full-service lunch
- Will utilize existing patio – approximately 30 seats

Actions Taken: none

OLD BUSINESS – FOLLOW UPS

Presenters: John Connelly

Notes:

- Ming's Market – conditional use of premises application
 - EBNA has written a letter of opposition
 - Hearings have been postponed, currently scheduled for April 17.
- Whole Foods – traffic concerns
 - EBNA has been escalating complaints. Will be inviting relevant City personnel, such as BTM, to April or May meeting to discuss and get updates on the Harrison design project.
- Alex's Pizza – noise complaints
 - Had received extension of hours to 3am, but neighbors have made complaints, namely at Wilkes Passage.
 - Faisa, board members, and Officer Shoulla have all spoken to Alex's.
 - Ken Smith followed up with abutters, and has heard no new complaints. Trash has been better. But will continue to follow up.
 - Two reps from Alex's Pizza in attendance
 - Trying to be good neighbors and open to feedback.
 - Note that biggest issue is Ubers. They are trying to speak to, but difficult since it is new drivers every time.
- Druker Project at 80 E Berkeley – Updates and lack of progress
 - Plans were presented to EBNA 6.5 years ago. Was then approved by BDPA
 - BDPA has no updates to provide.
 - BDPA implied that Druker does not have to come back to the community as the Article 80 approval does not expire. They would only need to return if changes were made.
 - Board will continue to express desire that Druker should reengage the community, and that the approvals given at the time were done in good faith that the project would be started in reasonable time. If it had been known nothing would happen for this long, it may have changed such opinions.

Actions Taken: