**PBNA General Meeting**

**May 18, 2014**

The PBNA held its annual General Membership meeting May 12th, 2014. 20 – 25 neighbors met along with invited guests.

**Guests included:**

* Bill Linehan, District 2 City Councilor and City Council President
* Michelle Wu, At Large City Councilor and West Brookline Street Resident
* Patrick Lyons, Office of Representative Aaron Michlewitz
* Jordan Deasy, Neighborhood Coordinator, Mayor Walsh’s Office
* SGT Lucas Taxter, BPD D-4 Community Service Officer
* Officer Jorge Dias, BPD D-4 Community Service Officer
* Steve Fox, President of Rutland Sq Neighborhood Association and Founding Member, South End Forum

MEETING DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **Boston Police Update – SGT Taxter and Officer Dias**
   1. [lucas.taxter@pd.boston.gov](mailto:lucas.taxter@pd.boston.gov), or 617.343.4457 (non-emergencies only)
   2. BPD recently conducted a sting where 22 arrests were made including Villa Victoria and Lennox housing projects.
   3. Regarding the recent shooting on Tremont St – the participants all knew each other from gang activity. It was not a random event.
   4. Please, please; If you see anything that’s not normal, please call the police.
      1. Officer Dias told this story: A SE neighbor recently saw some guys changing a tire at 3am. The neighbor didn’t call the cops because… it’s just guys fixing a flat, right? By dawn, all of the cars’ wheels were missing. If the police had received a call and drove by, they would have verified if the guys were legitimately fixing a flat, or stealing wheels.
      2. Officer Dias also discussed that a group having a drink on the stoop at 6pm may not receive much police attention. But the same group getting loud at 2am is disturbing children and neighbors and the police will more actively move them along. (This includes area on Tremont St near Yumee Restaurant, as well as the corners of W. Brookline and Tremont). Bottom line; if something isn’t right, call 911.
   5. In the past, some neighbors have called 911 and said they felt the dispatcher was dismissive of their complaint, or was even rude. If that happens, please let [SGT Taxter](mailto:lucas.taxter@pd.boston.gov) know. Don’t let it stop you from reporting something.
   6. POLICE PRIORITIES: Despite the requests above to call the police if something seems wrong or unusual, please understand that the police prioritize calls. If thousands of people are the clubs on Landsdown St at 2am, and the police simultaneously have calls for possible Domestic Disturbances, then a call about open container on a nearby stoop may not get immediate attention. Don’t let lack of an urgent response to a call stop you from calling again.
   7. Calling “911” from your cell phone may ring State Police. To be sure you reach Boston Police Emergency Line immediately from your cell phone, dial 617.343.4911.
2. **South End Forum – Steve Fox**
   1. While Beacon Hill, Back Bay, Fenway, etc., have large Neighborhood Associations such as Neighborhood Association of The Back Bay, the South End (SE) has numerous groups that encompass just a few blocks, such as the PBNA.
   2. PBNA Officers (Pat, Scott, Bobby, Chip) have represented the PBNA at SE Forum meetings. If you are interested in representing the PBNA to the Forum, please [contact us.](mailto:info@pilotblock.org)
   3. The South End Forum was started in 2006, primarily to coordinate SE issues such as trash and street paving with DPW.
   4. The SE Forum includes 15 active Neighborhood Associations and 2 Business Assoc’s. The approach is consensus based, and now has a 14 pt agenda, generally still focused on basic city services. Current highlights include:
      1. 2014 City Trash contract renewal
      2. Working with BWSC to take ownership of all sewer lines, even if alleys are not public
      3. Sidewalk repair. Please submit hot-spots needing repair to info@pilotblock.org
3. **Visits from City & State Government Representatives**
   1. City Councilor At Large [Michelle Wu](mailto:%20%09Michelle.Wu@boston.gov) (Also a resident of W. Brookline St and PBNA Member) Focus areas:
      1. Simplifying small business permitting process
      2. Opening city data for outside analysis to promote civic innovation
      3. Transgender medical care for city employees
      4. SE Capital budget for Titus Sparrow Park, etc
      5. Call Michelle; If you are calling the city for services, please also let her office know so that they can help press the issue within City Hall. One neighbor recently did this regarding rodents in their alley and she was able to help ensure city response.
   2. City Councilor [Bill Linehan](mailto:Bill.Linehan@cityofboston.gov), District 2 and Council President and Legislative aid [James Chan](mailto:james.chan@cityofboston.gov) (also a SE native)
      1. Councilor Linehan has been regularly meeting with Mayor Walsh, and thus is able to draw attention to key issues.
      2. He has recently focused on Parks and Transportation.
      3. One area that impacts the neighborhood is the lack of city control when numerous construction sites overlap, such as on W. Brookline St.
      4. There are few regulations regarding the size of no-parking spaces, Contractors can just ask for what they want.
      5. If a Construction site has blocked parking, but is just using the spaces for workers’ cars, contact his office 617.635.3203 and include the address and Parking Restriction/Permit Number.
   3. State Rep Aaron Michlewitz (represented by Legislative Aid Patrick Lyons)
      1. Meet the Rep: Upcoming coffee hour at Starbucks, May 31st at 10am
      2. They are also focused on local issues, please feel free to contact them at 617.722.2240 or [Patrick.lyons@mahouse.gov](mailto:Patrick.lyons@mahouse.gov)
4. Treasurer’s Update (Scott Mabel sitting in for Chip Huhta)
   1. We have an overall balance of around $2300, of which $2240 is in our general fund, and around $60 in our alley fund. Full report is [online](http://pilotblock.org/images2/PBNATreasurersReportNextMeeting.xlsx).
   2. Chip, along with his role as treasurer, maintains our alleys to the extent that he can level humps and fill potholes.
   3. As part of this alley maintenance, he conducts fund-raising to pay for gravel (9 tons since 2007!) and maintain a roto-tiller. The average annual expense is $300/alley, and the last fund-raising appeal in 2010 generated $2600 from 45 residents contributing in the range of $25-$250.
   4. If you appreciate and want to support the work chip does, including filling pot-holes with crushed-stone, please consider sending or dropping off a donation to PBNA C/O Chip Huhta, 102 Pembroke St, Boston MA 02118.
5. Alley Update:
   1. As a reminder, our alleys are private. The city does not maintain the surface, nor do they routinely plow.
   2. The Pembroke/WBrookline is listed on some maps as Alley 525, so this may be a point to pursue with city officials.
   3. The sewers in the WCanton/WBrookline and Pembroke/WNewton alleys are private. The sewer between Pembroke/WBrookline is public and should be maintained by BWSC.
   4. Extensive discussions have been held between residents and covered in the media. This includes City Council hearings held in 2011. News stories are linked from pilotblock.org on our [Alley page](http://pilotblock.org/Alleys.html).
   5. To convert an alley from private to public following established policy would require high cost and extensive work, as well as be required to conform with ADA requirements, potentially meaning loss of parking spaces and some private fencing. An extensive discussion regarding the requirements for conversion of the Rutland Sq alley to public status is [here](http://pilotblock.org/Alleys.html).
   6. CURRENT STATUS:
      1. Residents of the Pembroke / WNewton alley have raised $73,000 towards paving their alley, to include proper drainage and groundwater treatment. See [here](http://www.southendalleyrepair.blogspot.com/) for more information or to donate.
      2. There has been some discussion among residents, but no significant action to-date, regarding paving other alleys in our neighborhood.
6. **President’s Message**
   1. PBNA President Pat Plunkett discussed that he’s recently had opportunities to attend meetings with Mayor Walsh, and has seen PBNA and South End Forum discussions on Trash, Construction.
   2. Pat is also encouraged by the energy & engagement of Bobby Canzano and other neighbors working to pave the Pembroke – W. Newton Alley.
   3. According to city figures, there are over 1300 residents of the Pilot Block area, but there are only around 350 on our email list and 20-30 that attend meetings & events. Of this population, Pat specifically recognized some more active volunteers, including;
      1. Chip Huhta, PBNA VP, Treasurer, and One Man Alley Maintenance Crew) and Marie
      2. Nancy Stutzman
      3. Ed LeMay
      4. Julie and Tim Mackie
      5. Anita Polli
      6. Mary Carroll
      7. Charlie & Zarkadas & Maryellen Hassell
      8. Nancy Downer
      9. Nanty Stutzman
      10. Peter Lavelle (Councilor and Public Safety Liaison)
      11. Bobby Canzano, PBNA VP and driver of Pembroke-W. Newton paving initiative
      12. Scott Mabel for Communications
      13. Numerous other members who attend events and pitch in often.
7. **PBNA Board Elections**
   1. All PBNA board members are up for re-election, however Scott Mabel (Secretary and your author), Chip Huhta (Treasurer), and Bobby Canzano (VP) are not running for re-election.
   2. Pat has offered to remain on the board as President, and has received nominations of Nancy Downer (Tremont St) as Secretary and Stephen Croes (Warren Ave) as VP.
   3. Pat proposed we vote on this slate during the current meeting, and hold elections for Treasurer and Council in during early Fall 2014 after continuing to solicit nominees.
   4. Scott Mabel moved to vote. Numerous people seconded.
   5. **By hand-vote, the following slate of candidates was approved by the majority of attendees, with no ‘nay’ votes.**
      1. Pat Plunkett, President
      2. Nancy Downer, Secretary
      3. Stephen Croes, VP
      4. Open, Treasurer
      5. Open in September, 12 Council positions

Informal descriptions of each role, and a link to our By-Laws containing the formal descriptions are on the [PBNA Website](http://pilotblock.org/PBNAOtherIssues.html).

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:50pm.

Submitted,

Scott Mabel

Secretary (outgoing)