

WVNA Meeting Minutes 9/25/19

Rosllindale West Village Neighborhood Association

Meeting Date : 9/25/19

Location: Roslindale Community Center

Meeting Chair: Frances

Attendees:

Agenda:

- Meet your neighbors
- Public Safety Update with Sergeant O'Mara of BPD
- Poplar St Committee Update
- Current development projects

Frances: I

Introductions/ Sign in w/email contact info

Update Poplar Park

- Park clean up on Sat. 9/28, all welcome
- park is already designated at a play area and owned by the city
- Roslindale residents are making a substantial effort to make it a real park
- have support of abutters
- new park committee has been meeting and invite new membership ... more info & to join contact Frances
- Michelle gave brief update on city perspective
- 3 suggested use
 1. tot lot
 2. green space
 3. off leash dog lot- leaning away from this since no consensus on this and abutters don't favor
- proposal is combination of 1&2 , with park committee suggesting design
- concern raised regarding if there is a possibility that the land might become a development in the future if city sold the land, due to the current demand by developers
- Michelle suggest this is less likely to happen if the land is supported by city officially as a designated park (as opposed to play lot) by city parks and recreation, with official signage and designated use (i.e. tot lot and managed green space.)
- sign, benches, tot lot equipment will help preserve

New Property Developments

- Please let association know about new developments so that community can be aware and participate in discussions

Ada St./Brown Ave - recent abutters meeting reported on by_? Amy/ Amelia/Shirley_

- Developer is Tony Ferrara who also developed the Poplar St./Mary Baker Eddy property
- 4 units/8 parking spots
- Developer got a lot of feedback at meeting, awaiting response from him
- ? about researching as having historic status which could cause 90 day delay as with Mary Baker Eddy property

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Sycamore St./ Poplar St. - Amelia

- Not being cared for, owner wants to develop this 3 family & is seeking variances
- Concern regarding 250 year old sycamore tree that is on property line and sidewalk.
- Concerns brought up about city planning process that city is not projectively dealing with community concerns
- question about land trusts brought up
- question about how to work with owners to not create properties that have price points that are good for profit but which don't allow for design that fits the neighborhood
- Michelle - the city is looking into guidelines for tree preservation which do exist in other communities like Brookline
- Alan - Walk up Boston has an expanded mission to include pedestrian access which will include tree preservation near sidewalks
- Nina - RISE is also involved in advocating for this issue
- Deborah- ? -Does owner have to show a hardship to get a variance?
- Michelle suggested getting group of neighbors to look at the site with an arborist and city developer to look at this concern. Also, current zoning guidelines date from 1965, are outdated and owners only need to demonstrate that they can't make their money back in order to get variance.
- Rob- suggested investigating if need for historic preservation exists as was done for Mary Baker Eddy house on Poplar. (Thank you Michelle.)
- Frances - Does RISE focus on housing justice?
- Amelia- 10 unit rule applies if over 10 units then some # of units must be affordable which would help with maintaining neighborhood and not pricing local Roslindale neighbors out of neighborhood,, discussion about what is affordable and need for owners in condo association to be able to afford shared ownership.
- Nina- suggested inviting RISE to one of our meetings to talk about how to develop smaller more affordable units.
- Jessica- Another concern is development of properties for short term rental as Air BnB
- Michelle- new legislation for Boston effective this month: short term rentals only possible if owner occupants are in the unit/(?building) enforcement to start Sept. '19. Airbnb has agreed to enforce this in their rental agreements.
- Michelle talked about application to demolish a property. If built before 1950 doesn't automatically ensure protective status, need to apply for protective status.
- this property needs variances regarding tree and ? demolition. Will need community feedback regarding variances.

Taft Hill Development behind parking lot - Alan- Meeting about this development on 9/26

Boston Police Department representative did not attend meeting so no update

- Discussion about ongoing safety concerns regarding speed /traffic/parking at Poplar and Florence and in front of elder housing.
- community officer car is now parked on street in opposite direction of traffic with questionable results
- parking big issue
- safety crossing street big issue/ crosswalks still not painted, no response to frequent calls to city.
- Michelle- "safe streets initiative" for Boston exists but other neighborhoods have higher # of safety issues so it appears \$ for Roslindale not available currently.

Nina - ? is there a way to ensure that developers have a timeline to complete their properties

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- this generated short discussion of problem with development of 2 houses on Augustus that have been in progress and not completed for substantial time (over 2 years.)

Closing remarks- Frances

- Frances will help Amy as the point person to get information about this property and investigate historic relevance for possible Landmark Commission review.
- Amelia and Shelia will the lead on getting information about the Sycamore St. property and Michelle will look into preservation of the sycamore tree (for which the street is named?)
- Reminded of invitation to join Poplar St. Park committee
- This group is getting large so better email communication through “google group” so look for email invitations to join our new google group
- Thanks to all
- and thanks to Frances for being fearless leader!