

WVNA Quarterly Meeting

February 16, 2023

7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on Zoom

Attendance:

In addition to neighborhood residents, the following officials were present at this meeting.

- WVNA Board President Eileen Brennan
- WVNA Board Members Alan Wright, Frances Donovan,
- Jamie Leveque for Boston City Councilor Ricardo Arroyo
- Enrique Pepen for Boston Office of Neighborhood Services

Introducing new board members

- Robin Cohen: 242 Poplar (under Eileen). Lived here since 2021 and in Boston for the last 16 years. Works at Fenway High School in Mission Hill and coming back from City Championship game
- Kacy Keenahan: In Boston since 2016

Member introductions

- Eileen Brennan on Poplar
- Frances Donovan
- Alan Wright on Birch St
- Amy Galblum on Kittredge St, since 2010, has the Little Free Library. Also involved with Greening Rozzie
- Dennis Kirkpatrick, lived in Roslindale for 69+ years. Communications coordinator for Prospect Hill Association. A wealth of historical information
- Laurie Radwin on Augustus Street, since 2017. Started the Roslindale Coalition. Looking at urban forests and other issues
- Enrique Pepen: Director of Neighborhood Services. In Rozzie since 2010, on Cohasset Street near Fornax
- Cathy Slade – near the golf course, lived in Rozzie all her life. Moderating with another person the Southwest Boston Civic Association meetings.
- Sheila Place: on Augustus Ave across from Laurie. Looking to see what's happening in our neighborhood
- Jeff Sullivan from Bulletin Newspapers
- Shirley Ransom and Amelia Bye at 41 Sycamore Street

Open development projects

- **122 Birch St:** 4000sqft lot on Birch Street. Proposed to put a 3-family and the neighbors protested. Is now proposing a one-family.
- A surveyor was out surveying the empty lot at the corner of Birch and Albano. Possible plans for a building there.

- **4198 Washington St:** Proposed 1.5 yrs ago, resubmitted. Still about 5 stories, mostly affordable units without parking.
 - Because it was already discussed about 2 years ago, it's going directly to ZBA.
- **20 Arboretum Road:** Behind the Puritan Ice Cream factory, there's a low warehouse. The property is being developed. Proposing 260 units, including 17% affordable. Lots of remediation and will include public green space. Deep in the BPDA process.
 - A new entrance to the Arboretum.
 - Increased lighting.
 - Street will be rebuilt first
 - Parking banned on one side of the road
 - Will be preserving the industrial space there
 - Puritan Ice Cream makes the ice cream at Jimmies – Puritan has been making ice cream there since 1908.

Discussion of the term “affordable” – 60-100% of area mean income. That means that most people can't really afford “affordable” housing. Really affordable is 30-50% AMI.

- **1 acre lot on edge of Sherrin Woods** – next to the railroad tracks. Privately owned slot of land. A developer is proposing to put in 24 affordable units. There was some community opposition and Rob Consalvo spoke in support of the community – 60 people came out to a meeting about it. It's a very narrow lot. Cathy Slade: they've already gone in and clear cut the trees but left debris and concrete. Enrique Pepen says the proposal is on hold, will get us more information.

Discussion of the false dichotomy between green space and affordable housing. Laurie Radwin: it's possible to get both, but it requires a lot of dialog and compromise between abutters and developer. An example is the 4011 Washington Street project facilitated by Laurie Radwin and the Roslindale Coalition.

Links to more information about open developments:

- 4198 Washington St - <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/4198-washington-street>
- 18-20 Arboretum ARoad - <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/18-22-arboretum-road>
- 59-63 Belgrade Ave - <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/59-63-belgrade-avenue>
- 361 Belgrade Ave - <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/361-belgrade-avenue>
- 375 Cummins Highway - <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/375-cummins-highway>
- 990 American Legion (Cranes Ledge) - <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/990-american-legion-highway>

Arboretum corridor project update

- Planned to run from Forest Hills to the Southeast corner of the Arboretum (Peters Hill). A boardwalk to be built between South Street and the railroad tracks to the Blackwell Foot Path to Forest Hills Station.
- 5 phases: beginning sometime this year, a new, more welcoming entrance will be created at the end of Arboretum Road. The path will go under the small railroad bridge and then connect to the Blackwell Foot Path
- The aim is to increase access to the Arboretum for more Roslindale residents
- Also a safer alternative for bicyclists
- More information about the project here:
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/0f3a837adeec47abb477866fb475a2fd>

Bourne Neighborhood has been agitating with the city of the dangerous traffic conditions on Hyde Park Ave. Trying to get the city to put in some traffic calming measures. Arroyo co-sponsored a walk audit with the BTD. BTD has been going through some turnover – brought in some new traffic engineers and designers. New Chief of Streets Jascha Franklin-Hodges.

Discussion of our concerns about the Poplar Street corridor between the Rozzie Public Library and the right turn at Sacred Heart. We had a walk-through Enrique is going to get us an update on the changes on Poplar.

The stretch of Poplar Street from Rozzie Square to Canterbury Street is proposed to have a narrow bicycle 'contra-lane' that permits cycling against car traffic and is demarcated by a solid yellow line. There is a contra-lane on Mt Hope st. The Poplar St lane has been a top request for cycling improvements in Roslindale. The contra-lane will not, however, prevent cars from speeding on Poplar Street.

Fornax Parklet: Last year a group of men took over the parklet at nights: fighting, drinking, harassing folks. The parklet will not be put out this year. Alan is asking the city to put in a large bike rack there.

Massport Community Advisory Committee: Roslindale gets jet traffic from runway 27. It was under construction last year. We'll get a lot more traffic this year since other runways will be

Southwest Boston Community Garden on Cummins Highway: Some plots are open.

Rozzie Bikes will have its first in-person meeting on March 15th, 6:30-8:30 at the Rozzie Community Center.

Boston ONS announcements:

- Mayor Wu announced a project to create and preserve affordable housing across Boston. Enrique will bring the concerns about the % of AMI that actually defines affordability when he meets with the BPDA. He thanks members for bringing that to his attention.
- Launching 20 all-electric BPS school buses.

- **Welcome to Roslindale sign** in Rozzie Square – announced a call for local artists to propose a redesign. Link: <https://www.boston.gov/news/mayor-wu-announces-call-artists-redesign-bostons-neighborhood-signs>
- Boston Tax Help: Free tax prep across the city. It's for residents who make \$60K/year or less. Link: <https://www.bostontaxhelp.org/do-you-qualify/>
- Next week is school vacation week.
- Office of Police Accountability and Transparency is holding information sessions. One scheduled in Nubian Square Wed Feb 22, 1-3pm at the OPAT office. More information: <https://www.boston.gov/public-notices/15960111>
- Uju is leaving ONS in March. We're looking for a new Roslindale neighborhood liaison. Referrals welcome: contact Enrique.
- We have a new director of communications named Nakia Hill.

Crime information from Roslindale Business Group: There's been a series of armed robberies going up and down Washington Street. Started November, about every 2-4 weeks. Family Dollar and Dunkin Donuts were both hit. Alpha Gas Station was hit. Be careful. Dennis will be getting an update from the Boston Police

Other community announcements

- Update on the car crash in Roslindale Square?
- Roslindale Community Center is open again!
- Roslindale Business Group: gets together once a month to share information, etc. Next month they'll be using the Community Center. All small businesses, including the self-employed, are welcome. Last month there was a guest speaker from inspectional services. Next is Tues. Feb 28, 6pm at Rozzie Community Center. Guest speaker is Lt. Henry Perkins, Boston Fire Department Education Bureau, speaking about fire safety.
- People are looking to get a Senior Center in West Roxbury. There were 400 seniors at the meeting. Dennis noted that the Roslindale Community inherited the old RMV space. Will be planned to be a senior center.

Upcoming meetings for 2023:

- Thursday, May 25, 7pm.
- Thursday, September 28, 7pm
- Thursday, December 14, 7pm

Submitted by Frances Donovan