

Pilot Block Meeting Minutes
Feb 8, 2012

PBNA General meeting
South End Branch Library
6:30-8pm

1. New Street Sweeping Schedule:

- Beginning in 2012, Street Sweeping will run from March 1 through December, instead of starting in April as in the past.
- See Street Signs on each street for specific days/times.
- Expect Towing enforcement starting March 1st.
- Street sweeping will now include the "5th week" of applicable months, instead of just 1st/3rd and 2nd/4th.
- You can sign up for No-Tow email/text alerts at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/sweeping/>

2. We're expecting a new Tenant at 655 Tremont!

- The "Gold Gallery" Art Gallery will be moving into the commercial space at 655 Tremont.
- They are targeting a Spring Opening

3. Alley Update

- Last year's paving of the Rutland/W Newton alley has generated enthusiasm to refinish alleys within the PBNA, Particularly Pembroke/W. Newton.
- Cost for Rutland/W Newton alley was around \$60k, paid largely by abutters.
- To do such work on any (private) alley, a committee will need to be formed, comprised of those abutters. PBNA will facilitate but each committee would need to drive out efforts in their alley.
- Bobbie Canzano of 124 Pembroke (and others) have begun researching what would be required to similarly pave the Pembroke/W. Newton alley.

Note regarding conversion of Alleys from private to public, and City Council Hearings regarding Alleys:

- One meeting was held last year by the City Council.
- Stuart Rosenberg of City Councilor Felix Arroyo's office has

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notes available regarding the process to convert alleys from private to public, which he offered to share with PBNA members.

- David Mooney mentioned that there is little interest in converting alleys from private to public due to the stringent requirements.
- See [Boston.com](#) story from Apr 2011 for more background on private alleys, or see [blog](#) regarding re-paving of Rutland / W. Newton alley.

4. Changes to PBNA Boundaries:

- Two votes were taken to include Tremont St from W. Brookline to Aquidilla St and also include Tremont From Casa Quong (W. Canton) to W. Newton in the PBNA.
- Hand Vote results were taken with approx 75% of those in attendance voting FOR and nobody voting AGAINST.
- Neither of these stretches of Tremont St appears to be part of another existing neighborhood association.

5. Neighborhood Liaisons:

- PruPac:
 - o PBNA has 2 seats on PruPac. Elizabeth Corcoran-Hunt and one other.
 - o Two buildings have been approved to be built.
 - o There are funds available for community development
 - o PBNA sponsored a proposal for Hiscock Park to put cobblestones in the walkways and to add handicapped accessibility to the SE Library. (May have been requested in coordination with FOSEL or RSA)
- "Unite or be Conquered" email from James Fox and Beverly Sky (Union Park)
 - o See published letter in SE News (mysouthend.com link not available, but letter available [below](#))
 - o May have some redundancy with the DPW forum
 - o Pat Plunkett will reach out to James Alan Fox to discuss.

6. Crime:

- D4 has reported a recent spike in robberies in the South End.

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- Several arrests have been made because NEIGHBORS CALLED 911.
 - o Arrest on Columbus Sq ([Patch](#))
 - o Arrest on Pembroke after a W. Newton neighbor alertly calls police ([Patch](#))

- The W. Newton resident who called 911 was at our meeting. She described the suspect as ringing her doorbell and asking for a neighbor who does not exist. **Please don't hesitate** to call 911 if you see something suspicious or out of place. Let the Police sort it out if the person is a legitimate neighbor, contractor, or visitor.
 - o Another resident described someone in the past ringing each bell in her building, but suspiciously asking for someone who does not exist in an apartment that does not exist. This resident sent the 'suspect' away, but expressed that she also wished she'd called police.

- TIPS:
 - o From a cell phone, 911 dials the State Police, not Boston Police. Therefore, it can be faster to call 617-343-4911, instead of 911. Program it in your cell phone.
 - However, 911 will still work from a cell phone, and works best from if calling from a land-line.
 - o Lock your doors and windows at all times.
 - o Light your entryways at night.
 - o Ensure house numbers are visible front **and back of your building** to aid police response.
 - o There are other anecdotes regarding people seeing suspicious characters, but not calling 911 because, 'they may be contractors' or, "they are dressed too nice."
 - Crooks are smart. They may be well dressed and act like they belong.
 - Know your neighbors; and know who really belongs and who may not.

- Possible idea was discussed in lieu of a traditional 'crime watch'; Have a new board member role to coordinate how to best, "know your neighbor" or other ways to modernize the concept of crime-watch (neighborhood notification list, crime-watch stickers).

7. Nominating Committee:

- David Mooney will send out an organizing email along with Pat Plunkett.

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- Discussion regarding need to revise the PBNA Council, and nominate a slate of officers.
 - Council members may take on specific leadership roles, including social events, wreath-hanging, Spring clean-up, membership drive, etc.
 - Nominating Committee includes the following. Prior to elections at our May meeting, we expect they will communicate with PBNA membership further seeking candidates for the open positions noted in recent PBNA emails.
 - o John Erdman
 - o Cicily Stetson
 - o Larry Turka
 - o Mark Rosen
 - o Susan Weaver
 - o Mary Carroll
 - o Anita Polli
 - o Pat Plunkett
 - o Nancy Downer
 - o Bobby Canzano
 - o Elizabeth Corcoran-Hunt
 - o Marie Huhta
 - o Julie Stuecken
 - o Jim and/or Sharon Ermillio (tentative)
8. Elizabeth Corcoran-Hunt introduced Rep Aaron Michlewitz to the PBNA, along with Representative Michlewitz's legislative Aid, Blake Webber.
- Rep Michlewitz is now representing the PBNA area, following recent redistricting. Rep Byron Rushing previously represented the area.
 - Rep Michlewitz discussed his excitement about working in the South End and past and present coffee hours, etc.
 - He also discussed that if you call his office, he will often be able to respond within just a few days.
 - o Phone: 617-722-2400
 - o Email: Aaron.M.Michlewitz@mahouse.gov

Submitted by:
Scott Mabel
PBNA Secretary

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LETTER PUBLISHED IN SOUTH END NEWS

Unite or be conquered
January 27, 2012

Unlike other areas of Boston that are served by large neighborhood associations, the South End is divided into 17 distinct neighborhood organizations-- from Bay Village to Worcester Square, from Old Dover to St. Botolph--comprising over thirty- five thousand people. While smallness has its advantages in terms of promoting a sense of community, it also weakens the political muscle that any one group can have over critical local concerns.

Community response to initiatives like the once proposed 3,000 sq. ft., 24-hr. Dunkin' Donuts on Tremont Street, the still-controversial BU Biolab on Albany Street, and the proposed Copley Place expansion is compromised by how the South End is organized. Without integration of the distinct associations, the concerns and interests of our neighborhoods are too easily steamrolled by politicians, private developers, and large non-profits. These outside interests are significantly altering the fabric of our neighborhoods. Increased traffic, parking, trash, density and crime are jeopardizing the welfare of the many folks who make the South End their home. The South End needs to come together to advance its shared interests and protect the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

We are not suggesting that the South End neighborhood associations be merged into one. That would negate the intimacy and distinctiveness of our respective communities. Rather, we suggest the formation of a South End Alliance, by which the neighborhood association presidents (or their delegates) would convene, communicate, and collaborate regularly to work on our collective behalf.

In the final analysis, Back Bay, Beacon Hill, and other areas of Boston wield greater political clout because they each have a unified voice. As officers of the Union Park Neighborhood Association, we call upon our neighbors across the entire South End to help forge a strong and unified political presence in 2012. Such an alliance would benefit all of us, and insure that our neighborhoods indeed belong to the neighbors.

James Alan Fox
President, Union Park Neighborhood Association

Beverly Sky,
Board of Directors, Union Park Neighborhood Association