

**LONGFELLOW AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**  
**BOARD MEETING**  
**March 9, 2015**

**Minutes**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Longfellow Area Neighborhood Association was held at the Longfellow House on Monday March 9, 2015 at 7:30PM. Those in attendance were: Linda Burnett, John Covert, Mike Fitzgerald, Mary Flaherty, Christopher Kollett, Kathy McCabe and Rob Orthman. Also in attendance was William “Buddy” Christopher, Commissioner, and Lisa Coveney, Liaison for Constituent Services of the Inspectional Services Department.

The meeting began with a call for additional items for the agenda. The agenda was approved as distributed.

The meeting continued with a discussion with William “Buddy” Christopher, the Commissioner of Inspectional Services. He stated that he is from Dorchester and is a lifelong resident of the City. He is also a registered architect and said that because he used to work the other side of the permitting process, he knows what needs to be fixed. He said he had only been on the job about 8 months but has already made some changes. He is looking to fix everything that seems broken, with a focus of making ISD a friendlier atmosphere. He said the process is too long and scary. To start, all services have been consolidated to the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of their building. They also created a subcommittee to handle 1-2 family and small business applications on Thursday evenings so people don’t have to take off work to appear during normal business hours. The process is more interactional and conversational. 3-family and above is considered commercial and is handled with other commercial issues by the main committee.

They’re also looking to update systems to automate the entire process. A “Where’s my permit” app is in the works as well as a “What’s my address?” app. Electronic submission of drawings is also in the works, hopefully within six months. This will allow for simultaneous, live commenting by all departments/viewers, rather than drawings having to be hand-carried, marked-up and moved along, as is now the case. The automated system will also email the submitter when all reviews are complete. He also said that he wants to do away with the short form and replace it with a “limited scope” permit to try to address people pulling short form permits for projects that really require the long form.

Mr. Christopher continued by noting that ISD is not an interpretive agency but rather an enforcement agency. The Zoning Board of Appeals does the interpretation function. The topic changed to snow removal, after the long harsh winter. He noted that the policing of snow removal is no longer a function of ISD but has been taken over by the code enforcement group of the Department of Public Works. He did speak to what a difficult time the city had removing the large volume of snow that fell in such a short amount of time. Mike pointed out that the city piling the snow up on the street corners is an especially frustrating problem and that the city should consider piling it 20-30 feet from the corners, even if it means losing a parking space or two.

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Mr. Christopher finished up by noting that all records relating to the permitting process are public records. They can be reviewed by any member of the public at the ISD offices during normal business hours and will eventually be available on-line. If you see a project that doesn't seem right, feel free to call ISD and report your concerns and an inspector will follow up as appropriate. The residents are the eyes and ears of the neighborhood, but only if they get involved. The group thanked Commissioner Christopher for taking the time to speak to our group.

The meeting continued with committee reports. Kathy continued with a report from the Transportation Committee. Kathy noted that work was proceeding on the removal of the Casey overpass. Kathy indicated that there was a status update meeting at English High in parallel to our meeting tonight. She also noted that you can go to [arborwaymatters.blogspot.com](http://arborwaymatters.blogspot.com) for easy-to-read content regarding the project.

The meeting continued with a report from the Green Committee. John reported that there will be a meeting on March 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in the auditorium at the Arboretum's Weld Hill building to discuss the Allendale Walking in the Woods project.

The meeting continued with a report from the Zoning Committee. In Wayne's absence, Rob reported there were two projects coming. First, Gary Martel filed paperwork to develop the Weld American site at the corner of Centre and Weld Streets into a mixed-use commercial and residential complex thought to include approximately 15 units. The other project involves the two storefronts to the left of the 888 Chinese Food restaurant across from Longfellow House which could be replaced by housing. Rob will report back with details as they become available. Rob also reported that the permit to allow the sale of two used cars at the US Petro gas station on Centre Street was approved.

Rob reported for the Membership & Outreach committee. Rob noted that the pot luck supper was scheduled for Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 3-7pm for the dinner with one hour before and after to set-up and clean-up. Those willing to volunteer should reach out to Rob.

There was no report from the Wetlands Task Force, as the wetlands are dormant until spring.

Chris reported for the Friends of Fallon Field committee. A copy of the proposed design was circulated and Chris reported the budget had been updated to just over \$600k. Kathy noted the lack of benches. It is thought that placement of benches is awaiting the site survey work, as the final design is dependent on field conditions. Construction was originally scheduled to begin around Labor Day but may have to be pushed back due to the deep snow cover causing delays in the site survey work. Chris noted that the design shown is a win for the neighborhood but they're hoping to get one more climbing structure included in the final design. The web site [roslindaleplaygrounds.org](http://roslindaleplaygrounds.org) has group feedback

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of this plan. Kathy asked how LANA can help but Chris stated that the push has been for individual input rather than input from groups. Rob indicated that he will draft a letter of support and circulate it to the Board.

Chris noted that the East Egg Hunt was scheduled to be at Fallon Field again this year and that he intends to be there to hand out playground information to attendees.

The treasurer indicated the bank balance of \$1378.

The clerk reported 1 renewal and a \$30 contribution since the previous meeting. The minutes of the January meeting were approved with a correction of the gas station name (US Petro not US Petrol as listed). Mike also noted that Tom Donahue asked if LANA would sponsor a table at the Parade Dinner for \$200 as we have done in the past. John motioned to approve and was seconded by Linda. The motion was approved by all.

John also motioned to approve \$200 in support of the pot luck supper. Kathy seconded and the motion was approved by all.

It was noted that a permit issue for a project at 28 Primrose may be coming. Details will be distributed as they become available.

The meeting was drawn to a close with a reminder of our next meeting:

Board Meeting - Monday, May 11, 2015 at 7:30PM at Longfellow House