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September, 2020

Hello Members & Friends of Egleston Square Neighborhood Association,

We hope everyone is in good health and is well.

Our October ESNA monthly meeting will be Monday, October 5, 6:30 pm via Zoom.

Here are notes from our September monthly meeting and other news:

- [Call It Out! Sharing Our Voiced on Structural Racism in Egleston Square](#)
- [Police Report](#)
- [Columbus Ave Bus Lane & Egleston Square Redesign](#)
- [COGDesign & Dixwell and Lawson Parks](#)
- [Housing Committee Report](#)
- [Seasonal Lighting in the Square](#)

[Call It Out! Sharing Our Voiced on Structural Racism in Egleston Square](#)

Sunday, 9/27, 12:30 pm in the yard of the Egleston Square Branch Public Library

This is our second discussion in the CALL IT OUT event series. We will continue our conversation from our first discussion and dig deeper into the social injustice we see in our neighborhood. This event will again be facilitated by Professor Paula Austin, neighbor and Assistant Professor of History and African American Studies at Boston University. All are invited to join.

[Police Report](#)

Officer Jones reviewed the crime statistics for the area; he is now able to map incidents using the new data system. There were 4 aggravated assaults, including one on Iffley Rd., one at McDonalds, and one at 3012 Washington St., a construction site, between 2 workers. There were 2 arrests for drug trafficking. Drug trafficking investigations take time, and are ongoing. We were reminded of the value of calling 911 to report issues of concern and to report illegal behavior.

We discussed the open drug and alcohol use at the Peace Garden and at the wall by the parking lot on the corner of Atherton & Washington St. For next month, we will try to learn more about the addiction-services outreach teams in the area.

Magda talked about our ongoing initiatives to make our public spaces more positive, adding lighting in dark corners, limiting seating at the wall, adding gardens, and scheduling engaging activities. We discussed the possibility of adding metered parking to the City parking lot next to the wall. Encouraging more turnover of parking spaces helps with keeping all activity visible, so illegal activity won't occur in the corners and behind parked cars.

Columbus Ave Bus Lane & Egleston Square Redesign

William Moose of the City's Boston Transportation Dept. (BTD) and Andrew McFarland of the MBTA attended our meeting and answered questions. Work on the bus lane has begun with demolition of portions of the median strip. All work will be phased, that is, work will be scheduled for one section at a time. Work will continue until Thanksgiving, then stop until spring.

Residents asked if the 24-hour parking ban could be reduced to allow overnight parking. William said he would look into that. There was a request for construction signage on Seaverns Ave. coming into Egleston from Blue Hill Ave. That signage has now been installed. Construction signage has been posted at all bus stops, and road crew inspectors are instructed to let riders know about any bus stop changes

There will be no new parking regulations during construction, but BTD is willing to look into parking regulations once construction is completed. Most parking will return to what it was prior to construction, except for the parking removed to make space for the new bus stops.

BTD's other initiative, Egleston Square Redesign, is still on schedule to start this fall with public meetings in some form.

COGDesign & Dixwell and Lawson Parks

We have had a good response to our survey asking for input on the redesign of Dixwell & Lawson Parks – over 100 responses! We have extended the survey time to the end of September. COGDesign will compile the results for our review, and help us plan next steps.

Housing Committee Report

Susan provided an overview of all the development in the area, including these items:

3227 Washington – Developers sought variances to create 4 units in this 2-family home; variances are being sought prior to purchasing the building. The proposed design is similar to the design used next door at 3231 Washington. The Housing Committee meeting was held jointly with Brookside Neighborhood Association. Concerns were raised regarding backyard drainage, landscaping, fire safety, construction information. At issue as well was the status of current tenants and what relocation help was planned. The project went before the JPNC Zoning Committee and was deferred, pending resolution of the tenant relocation issue.

41-51 Walnut Park – Urban Edge is reviving plans to remove the existing structures and construct a 5-story apartment building with 40+ affordable units and parking. ESNA submitted a letter of support for funding for the project, with more follow up planned on design review.

176 School St. – We are waiting to hear when there will be a demo delay hearing on this home tucked back from School St., right next to the Mendell School.

3171 Washington, 'The Gate' – Received ZBA approval to construct 9 condo units plus commercial space; the developers are hoping to find a local retail business for the commercial condo.

1785 Columbus – This construction is almost completed, including the portion dedicated to Horizons for the Homeless. Much of the interior work will be finished as agencies and offices rent space. At next month's ESNA meeting, we will hear from one potential tenant – Healthcare for the Homeless would like to open a small clinic to serve the families of Horizons for Homeless Children.

95 W. Walnut – This property is going through renovation, and Susan gave them a shout out for being so proactive in keeping neighbors informed on construction issues.

Also under construction is the new home for the Elizabeth Stone House at the corner of Washington & Westminster.

Susan would like to add tree canopy consideration to what we talk about when viewing development requests.

The Housing Committee meets as needed, usually on the second Monday evening each month. Are you interested in attending? All neighbors are welcome to attend and participate.

Seasonal Lighting in the Square

Magda reported on efforts to bring holiday and year-round lighting to Lawson Park and to the entire Square. She and Denise Delgado of Egleston Square Main Street met with representatives from the City's Department of Public Works (DPW) Lighting Unit and did a tour from Lawson Park to the Peace Garden.

DPW agreed to:

- put in two outlets by Lawson Park that will allow holiday lighting for the Park
- put a spotlight around the Blue Bike rack on the corner of Atherton & Washington St. and another at the Robert Lawson Park near the Egleston Square Sign
- put in plugs on light posts on Washington Street between Atherton and School Street where needed so the Square will have enough electrical infrastructure to support pole mount decorative lighting.

Magda report that DPW is very supportive and that we are on the top of their list, thanks to reaching out early, well before the holiday season. Fundraising for this project will start soon for both projects: seasonal lighting at Lawson Park and seasonal lighting for Egleston Square.

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