

# Constitution and By-Laws

## Fairmount Hill Neighborhood Association

### Hyde Park, MA 02136

#### **Preamble**

We, the residents of the Fairmount Hill neighborhood of Hyde Park hereby join together to form the Fairmount Hill Neighborhood Association (FHNA) in order to assist each other and actively participate to use whatever means and resources available to make the Fairmount Hill community recognized as a wonderful place to live, work, and play.

*Section 1:* This residential neighborhood Association will be known as the Fairmount Hill Neighborhood Association, hereafter referred to as the FHNA.

*Section 2:* The principal office shall be the residence of the Chair of the Board. The address of the chair will become the principal FHNA business and mailing address.

#### **Article II: Boundaries**

The FHNA, a residential neighborhood organization, shall include in its direct concern and program the residents of the Fairmount Hill area of Hyde Park, roughly bounded by the Truman Parkway, Dana Avenue, and the Milton/Hyde Park boundary. Additionally, the FHNA shall include Logan Square and Cleary Square- their concerns and programs.

#### **Article III: Membership and Dues**

*Section 1: Members:* The FHNA is a residential-based organization; all residents of Fairmount Hill shall be eligible for membership in the FHNA upon paying their annual dues. FHNA membership entitles up to two adult members per household listed on their membership application to participate in all deliberations and voting functions of the FHNA.

*Supporting Member:* Individuals from Hyde Park who are not Fairmount Hill residents, and are interested in the programs and speakers are welcome to attend our meetings and join the FHNA. However, Supporting Members cannot participate in voting or serve as a Board Member as these activities require being a resident of Fairmount Hill.

*Section 2:* The FHNA Board of Directors is comprised of volunteer members that do not receive financial compensation.

*Section 3:* the Board of Directors shall fix Dues for the coming year no later than the January meeting. Members can join at any time throughout the year and renew annually in person or electronically.

#### **Article IV: Meetings, Notices, and Quorums**

*Section 1:* Regular meetings of the FHNA shall be held at a minimum of twice a year, on the fourth Wednesday of the month. The election of FHNA Board members will be at the June meeting.

*Section 2:* Special meetings may be called by the Chair, or upon written request of a minimum of 10 Members. Upon such request, the Chair shall call the special meeting at the time and place specified in such request or petition.

*Section 3:* No less than 7 days' notice of any meeting shall be given to the Membership. Such notice shall specify the purpose, date, time, and place of the meeting, Means of Notification can include but is not limited to: phoning, posting, FHNA website, and via electronic means (i.e. email, FHNA Facebook page, Tweet, Twitter, etc.).

*Section 4:* A quorum for the transaction of business at any FHNA meeting shall consist of not less than 1/3 of the Membership, not including the Board of which at least 3 must be present with 1 presiding officer. In the event a quorum is lacking, the Chair or presiding officer may direct the meeting to be rescheduled. In the event a member is unable to attend under certain conditions, their absence will be deemed acceptable by a majority of the Board members. Email proxy ballots will be made available if requested.

*Section 5:* At any meeting that a quorum is present, a majority of the Members shall ~~except where a larger vote is required by law, by the agreement of the Association, or these by-laws,~~ decide any question or election brought before such meeting.

## **Article V: Procedures**

*Section 1:* All meetings of the FHNA shall be conducted informally in line with Fairmount Hill tradition. However, when necessary, or when determined by the Chair, Robert's Rules of Order shall apply.

*Section 2:* The agenda for all regular business meetings shall be as follows: 1. Call to Order; 2. Summary of Minutes; 3. Treasurer's Report; 4. Committee Reports; 5. Police Report; 6. Old Business; 7. New Business. When a speaker is scheduled, ~~for the meeting,~~ they will be placed on the agenda.

*Section 3:* All elections shall be by written ballot. Nominees must be present to be considered for Nomination. ~~Exceptions, including electronic meeting participation, will be considered and approved by a majority of the Board at least 7 days prior to the election.~~ All other business shall be by hand vote.

*Section 4:* Every standing and special committee, prior to the Annual June Meeting, may file a written report of its activities during the preceding year with the Secretary.

*Section 5:* In May, a committee of three members will be appointed by the Board to audit the treasurer's books. The auditing committee will issue a written report before the June Board Meeting. Prior to the Annual June Meeting, the treasurer shall provide either a written or an electronic summary report of all fiscal activities for the year with the Secretary.

*Section 6:* No Board Member or Member shall have the authority to make any contract or commit the Association to any course of action without the expressed prior authorization of the Board. In emergency situations, the Chair may act with the advice of the Board, and must submit a report of the transaction at the next Membership meeting.

*Section 7:* These By-laws of the Fairmount Hill Neighborhood Association may be added to, amended, repealed, or rewritten by the Members at any meeting at which a quorum is present, a 2/3 secret ballot vote being necessary, provided notice of the proposed change is given to the entire membership at least 30 days in advance thereof.

## **Article VI: Officers**

*Section 1:* An elected Board of Directors, of no less than 9 and no more than 11 members, shall govern the FHNA. The Board shall elect from its membership the following officers; Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

- The officers of the Board shall be elected to 1-year terms and not more than 3 consecutive terms for a specific office.
- Additional Board members will be elected to serve as Communications, Webmaster, additionally, the Committee Chairs.
- A quorum of the Board shall be no less than 1/3 of the members of the Board of which one must be a presiding officer.
- The board may choose to assign the duties and responsibilities listed below to other Board Members than those outlined if necessary.
- The Board Members have the option of voting out a Board Member who misses 3 scheduled Board Meetings.

*Section 2:* The **Chair** shall set the agenda and be the presiding officer of the Association and the Board of Directors is an ex-officio member of all committees; and shall be responsible for carrying out the programs and policies of the Association as determined by the Membership.

- The Chair shall deliver all records and papers to his/her successor.

*Section 3:* The **Vice Chair** shall act in the absence of the Chair and shall assist the Chair and Communications in carrying out the duties of that office.

*Section 4:* The **Secretary** shall be responsible for the accurate record of all proceedings of the regular business meetings of the Association and of the Board.

- Minutes shall be recorded in the official log of the Association and of the Board and distributed within one week of said meeting.
- The Secretary shall maintain an up-to-date list of all members of the Association.
- He /She will coordinate with Communications Chair regarding notifications of all business meetings of the association; as well as retrieving incoming mail /emails to the Association making sure, they are delivered to the appropriate parties.
- The Secretary shall deliver all records to his/her successor.

*Section 5:* The **Treasurer** shall be responsible for receiving and disbursing the funds of the Association as directed by the Membership, and shall keep accurate record of the Association's financial transactions.

- The Treasurer shall deposit the Associations” funds in such bank as the Membership shall direct; and shall make a timely report at each regular membership meeting of monies paid out and on deposit.
- All expenditures of the Association made by the Treasurer up to \$100 must be approved by a majority of the Board and if over \$100 a majority of the Board as well as a majority of the membership.
- The Chair will advise the bank of the name and title of an officer of the FHNA who will be authorized to sign checks in the absence of the Treasurer.
- The Treasurer shall deliver all records to his/her successor.

## **Article VII: Neighborhood Communications**

*Section 1. Additional Board positions that support website development and communications to the neighborhood residents include Communications and Webmaster.*

*Section 2: **Communications*** is responsible for producing the notification for the monthly FHNA meetings in a timely manner that can be delivered (i.e. via email, flyer drop, postings on the website and snail mail) at least 7-10 days before the meeting; as well as emailing approved communications that need to be distributed to the FHNA Board and the general membership lists.

- Responsibilities include generation of press releases to the local neighborhood media outlets and to local elected officials when appropriate as well as sandwich board updates.
- He/She is responsible to notify the local police department and secure the monthly meeting location.
- If necessary, this person is also responsible for supporting the Secretary, in directing incoming FHNA communications to the appropriate Board Members.
- If this position is not filled, the responsibilities will be shared amongst the Board Members.

*Section 3: The **Webmaster*** is responsible for the design, upkeep, and updating of the FHNA Website and Events Calendar in a timely manner. He/She is responsible for the posting of approved materials from the FHNA Chair and committee members to the FHNA website and collaborates with Communications.

## **Article VIII: Committees**

*Section 1:* Committee members shall include at least 1 Board member to serve as Chair and as many Members that would like to participate. Committees shall meet as often as needed as determined by the Board, committee members, or the FHNA Association. *A FHNA member may serve as a committee chair without being an elected board member.*

~~*Section 2: Committee on Public Safety*~~  
~~Focus will be on concerns and issues of Public Safety that affect the Membership. Any Member may bring something to the attention of this committee and they will work on contacting the proper authorities to solve the issue.~~

## *Section 2: Committee for Membership*

The Focus will be on maintaining and promoting Membership in the FHNA and at meetings.

## *Section 3: **Committee for Social and Events***

Focus will be on planning, organizing, and conducting neighborhood social events, special programs, and organizing neighborhood gatherings to promote networking and community fellowship. Additional ad hoc committees may be formed for special events.

## *Section 4: **Committee for Quality of Life***

Focus will be on issues that Members feel impact the Quality of Life of the Fairmount Hill area and the Hyde Park Business District. The committee will be responsive to the concerns and suggestions of the membership encompassing but not limited to; safety, environmental, the Neponset River, gardening, and green space awareness.

The Fairmount Hill Garden Group will collaborate with the city of Boston Parks Dept. & DCR regarding the upkeep and planting of the FH islands and “Flowers at Fairmount” sites. Activities include; the annual Garden Contest (July), educational gardening programs, Holiday Lighting Awards (Dec.), Shoveling out Seniors, and the Annual Yard Sale (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in September) whose resulting profits are guaranteed to support Garden Group activities.

## *Section 5: **Committee on Zoning***

The Zoning Committee provides a review process in all matters pertaining to the City of Boston zoning code. It is the policy of FHNA to support the requests of our residents in zoning matters by providing them information on the Boston Zoning Code as it applies to our neighborhood. This Committee consists of Fairmount Hill residents interested in zoning issues.

The Zoning Committee evaluates all requests for variances to ensure timely notification to residents to seek guidance and if necessary, further explanation of the zoning laws. This Committee works with the City's zoning-related agencies that include; the Mayor's Office, all Elected City Officials, the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) and the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA).

The City of Boston requires all residents requesting variances to contact and meet with their neighborhood group so that the variance requests are presented to the residents.

The FHNA does not support or oppose requests for variances at the time of application. However, once a hearing has been scheduled by the Boston Board of Zoning Appeals, the FHNA Zoning Committee takes an active role in order to inform the abutters and residents of our Fairmount Hill neighborhood.

Fairmount Hill is a less dense, more open space neighborhood than the other sections of Boston. The FHNA opposes; 1) the building of new construction dwelling(s) on substandard

sized lots or creating pork chop lots and; 2) a variance(s) that would trigger any increase in the number of units in a Multi-family dwelling.

These decisions are in place to eliminate any appearance of "favoritism" and in the process preserve, protect, and maintain the open spaces and tapestry of our Fairmount Hill neighborhood.

If required, the Zoning Committee will organize separate meetings to inform abutters and residents regarding pertinent zoning requests, solicit feedback, and present the findings to the Board and FHNA membership.

- Members who work for City Zoning-related agencies are exempt from participation.

### ***Good Faith Notification***

The most important step regarding variance requests is to contact the neighbors who will be most affected by the variance request(s). The city requires the petitioners to present the variance request to their neighborhood group (FHNA) prior to their scheduled appearance at the zoning board of appeals. The Zoning Committee will then organize a meeting date for the neighborhood after receiving notification of the variance request from the city of Boston as well as notifying immediate abutters and FHNA members.

If any resident of the Fairmount Hill Neighborhood notices a residential zoning code violation or is unsure of the zoning code they should contact the Inspectional Services Department directly or the zoning chair.