



# Your Town

search

GO

< Back to front page

Text size  

JAMAICA PLAIN, ROXBURY

## Hyde/Jackson Square Main Streets, still under investigation, declines to name newly-hired director

Posted by Matt Rocheleau September 17, 2012 03:28 PM

Print | Comments ()

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Hyde/Jackson Square Main Streets recently hired a new, full-time executive director following a year-long search, but leaders of the organization's board has declined to publicly name the new leader.

Meanwhile, police and prosecutors are continuing a 14-month-old investigation into possible financial irregularities within the city-funded nonprofit.

Jason LaGorga, board president for the Main Streets group, said by phone on Friday afternoon that the new director was hired in "late summer," but the organization is not disclosing his name "so that he can get acclimated" to the new position.

"He's out in the community and meeting with local business owners," LaGorga said. "But, there's a lot of stuff he needs to get brought up to speed on, and then, once he does, we'll make a bigger announcement," which is expected to happen "later this fall."

ADVERTISEMENT

### BostonShops »



Let the shopping begin. Get exclusive promotions and sales from your favorite retailers. And never miss a great deal again.

[SEE A SAMPLE](#)

[SIGN UP NOW](#)

### JAMAICA PLAIN REAL ESTATE »

**142**  
Homes  
for sale

**40**  
Rentals  
available

**27**  
Open  
houses this  
week

**1**  
New listings  
this week

SPECIAL ADVERTISING DIRECTORY

### CAMP GUIDE »

#### A camp for every kid!

Adventure, sports, theater, music, arts or technology—find the perfect camp for your child at [boston.com/campguide](http://boston.com/campguide).



later this fall.

“We’ll roll it out under our own timeline. We don’t want him to get bombarded with phone calls,” he added. “We’re really pleased to have him and are looking forward to moving forward.”

LaGorga declined to comment on the investigation into Hyde/Jackson Square Main Streets other than to say it is ongoing.

He said the organization has and is continuing its work of aiding local businesses in Hyde Square and Jackson Square.

In the spring, the nonprofit [announced](#) the hiring of an interim executive director, Jamaica Plain resident Katie Reed, who had worked previously as director of Allston Village Main Streets.

In July 2011, the organization’s former full-time executive director left. He told the [Jamaica Plain Gazette](#) that he resigned, but the nonprofit’s lawyer later told the [Gazette](#) that the former director had been suspended.

Around that same time, the nonprofit’s board filed a [police report](#) requesting an investigation into allegations of financial irregularities within the organization, which the Boston Police and the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office continue to investigate.

The police report lists the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation as the “victim.”

That nonprofit’s executive director, Richard Thal, said last summer that his organization’s role had been “payroll processor” for the Main Streets group since around 1998.

When the debt Hyde/Jackson Square Main Streets owed to the JPNDC surpassed \$20,000 – a concerning and unprecedented amount, Thal said he contacted the Main Streets’ board.

Officials said no Main Streets entity in Boston has ever been the subject of an investigation before.

The [Gazette reported](#) that the investigation led the city to audit all 20 Main Streets organizations, which represent commercial districts across Boston.

ADVERTISEMENT



Waiting for Twitter to feed in the latest...

[Follow other Boston.com Tweets](#) | [What is Twitter?](#)

Streets organizations, which represent commercial districts across Boston.

Founded in 1995, the Boston Main Streets program uses city funding to support business districts by improving storefronts and public spaces.

Kerry O'Brien, a spokeswoman for the city's neighborhood development department, said last summer that: "The city is confident that the board will rectify this situation. The Mayor has ordered a complete review of their spending practices, independent of the [other two] investigation[s]."

In 2010, the city paid \$30,500 to the Hyde / Jackson Square group for the executive director's salary, officials have said.

Each Main Streets organization in Boston receives "financial and technical assistance and intensive training in the Main Street approach" from the city as well as the National Trust Main Street Center, the city's website says. "Six full time staff" assist the local districts, which "also have access to city architects, design staff, transportation planners and technical assistance specialists."

Otherwise, the district-level organizations operate as nonprofits, each conducting their own fund-raising efforts within that citywide program. The organizations manage the funds they raise via their own independent governing structure, treasurers and financial records. The groups recruit their own volunteers and host events to enhance a commercial district's image and attract consumers.

The city commits a "significant portion of its federal Community Development Block Grant funds" to Main Streets.

Grant funding, however, is issued directly to store owners from the citywide Boston Main Streets program, meaning it would not be included in the district-level financial records review.

*E-mail Matt Rocheleau at [mjrochele@gmail.com](mailto:mjrochele@gmail.com).*

--

*For the latest Jamaica Plain updates:*

*Follow [@YTJamaicaPlain](#) on Twitter, [here](#).*

*And connect via Facebook by clicking the "Like" button on the top left hand corner of the Jamaica Plain homepage, [here](#).*

---

[◀ Previous entry](#)

[Next entry ▶](#)

---

[Home](#) | [Today's Globe](#) | [News](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Lifestyle](#) | [A&E](#) | [Things to Do](#) | [Travel](#) | [Cars](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Local Search](#)

[CONTACT BOSTON.COM](#) | [Help](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Work here](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Your Ad Choices](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [Mobile](#) | [RSS feeds](#) | [Sitemap](#)

[CONTACT THE BOSTON GLOBE](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Manage your subscription](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Boston Globe Insiders](#) | [The Boston Globe Gallery](#) | © NY Times Co.