



**Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee**  
**November 2nd, 2020**  
**Meeting Recording: <https://bit.ly/3kNX3zS>**

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# Questions

\*Note: Each of the following organizations (listed in **Bold**) responded directly to the question below. If you have further questions, please reach out to the corresponding contact\*

## **BPDA Questions and Responses:**

- *It's been known for years that Roxbury's soil is contaminated. Why was this issue not addressed prior to the Request For Proposal (RFP)? Why was it not addressed when Cruz responded to the RFP with the intent of creating 270 parking spaces? Why is the city not addressing this issue?*
  - The contaminated soil on this site was addressed years ago when the soil was remediated from its original levels of contamination for the new Police Station. At that time, the remediation brought the soil to levels that are deemed safe by the state for public use. However, this is different from the level that is acceptable for excavation related to the residential development now being proposed on the site. So the additional costs that the development team has outlined are the costs of moving soil off-site to a certified disposal site.
  - After the bidders conference, an addendum was issued referencing the soil conditions and instructing developers to reach out to the Department of Neighborhood Development (DND) with further questions.
  - The Cruz team was provided with a construction report and had discussions regarding the environmental conditions of the site with DND's environmental compliance manager.
- *There is lots of competition for state subsidies for housing to be announced in January- how does the city influence the state selection process, what are the priorities?*
  - The City, led by DND, works in collaboration with the BPDA to review projects that are under consideration for affordable housing subsidies offered by both the City and the State. For those funds that are managed by the State, the City works with development teams to ensure that potential applications meet various criteria for preparedness (for example: zoning readiness, design readiness, per-unit development cost thresholds, etc.). The City does not influence or dictate the State's selection process; but rather works to facilitate the effectiveness of project applications.

## **Northeastern University Questions and Responses:**

- *What methodology is used when reaching out to the community for employment?*
  - Each year Northeastern hosts a Community Vendor Job Fair which includes at least 30 Northeastern vendors in attendance. In addition, Northeastern participates in a number of community-based events and training, including mock interviews and resume workshops. Northeastern's Human Resources Management (HRM) Department advertises for such events in local newspapers including Boston Metro, Sampan, Fenway News, Bay State Banner, Mission Hill Gazette, Back Bay Courant, and Dorchester Reporter, and distributes flyers to all the City of Boston Main Streets organizations. Additional information can be found in the annual community benefits reports.
- *Are there renderings that show St Cyprian's Church ?*
  - Massing diagrams illustrating the context for the proposed building do include St. Cyprian's. Additional renderings will be prepared as the project develops and continues through development review.
- *How many of the people making decisions are from Boston?*
  - Faculty, staff, and students live in every neighborhood in the City of Boston.
- *How do we know that the additional dorms won't just be a way for Northeastern to just increase the student population that it accepts each year?*
  - The project at 840 Columbus Avenue will not drive decisions regarding enrollment.
- *Has Northeastern thought about designating some of these units, at a discounted rate, for students who are residents of Boston that may be facing issues with housing stability?*
  - The project is intended for student occupancy and will not be providing income-restricted units. The delivery of 175 net new beds will meet the 1,000 student bed commitment identified in Northeastern's 2013 community-negotiated Institutional Master Plan, providing more on-campus housing options to Northeastern students of varying incomes.

## **135 Dudley Questions and Responses (Cruz):**

- *Are jobs created by the 135 Dudley development union jobs?*
  - Yes, jobs are created at 135 Dudley Street. We are projecting that approximately 150 construction jobs and some 35 permanent jobs will be created by this complex.

### **2147 Washington Street Questions Responses (New Atlantic/Dream Collaborative):**

- *Will the retail space at 2147 Washington have a preference for artists or creative businesses?*
  - Yes, our intent is to prioritize artistic and creative businesses.
- *What is the parking situation?*
  - There will be 32 garage spaces and Haley House has 11 surface spaces.
- *What will happen to the people Haley House currently houses?*
  - The existing Hailey House building and the existing tenants will remain in place. The only changes we are making to the existing building is to make it handicap accessible. In addition to keeping the existing Hailey House, we will be adding a new café for Hailey House, which will add new jobs. It will also allow Haley House to expand its catering and training programs in the existing space.

### **Bartlett Questions and Responses (Nuestra Ciudad):**

- *Are these buildings "Green"? Such as solar*
  - Yes, they will be LEED for Neighborhood Development – Gold. New buildings will also be Net Zero Carbon.
  - There are solar panels at the completed Bartlett B building and we are planning for solar panels at other buildings.
  - Bartlett A is going to be LEED gold certified
- *Please explain the reduction in commercial space at Bartlett.*
  - The commercial space was reduced due to market conditions, funding availability, and in order to allow for more middle-income housing and wealth creation. It will ultimately create more buying power to support local businesses. The proposed master plan generates more wealth for MBE businesses and homeowners and additional permanent and construction jobs for local workers than any current project in Roxbury.

The decision to reduce the commercial space in Building A was based on the elimination of the only subsidy source for office space in 2019 (New Markets Tax Credits), which eliminated the viability of providing commercial space on the second floor of Building "A". Therefore, the only alternative, feasible option was the conversion of the 2nd floor space to housing. Despite this setback, a projected 100 new permanent jobs will be created on the 1st floor of Buildings "A" and "B". This will be one of the largest job creation projects in Nubian Square to date, second only to the Bolling Building.

It is also important to highlight that the focus on retail at Bartlett Station directly addresses the most pressing issue in the Nubian Square Business District--The urgent need to replace vacant retail space with solid, active and thriving businesses. Our marketing efforts will continue to prioritize local ownership, healthy retail and other uses that are complementary to existing retail establishments in Nubian Square.

In addition to the above-referenced retail opportunities, our wealth creation and economic opportunities package will ensure the sustainability of an economic engine at Bartlett Station. More specifically, the large amount of planned homeownership creates wealth opportunities for Black and Latinix buyers. In an effort to maximize this opportunity, the total number of homeownership housing units increased from 129 units in the 2013 Master Plan to a total of 166 homeownership units in the new Master Plan. Based on a conservative rate of annual appreciation, we estimate that the Bartlett Station homeowners will gain \$22.8 million in equity over ten years of ownership (\$137,000 per home). Just as importantly, the *Artists Live-Work Condos* will help prevent displacement of these important cultural and artistic assets. We are committed to marketing these homes to local buyers to the maximum extent allowed.

The MBE contracting and workforce component of the wealth creation package will create \$85 million in MBE contracting opportunities and 600 jobs for workers of color. These new totals exceed the previous program by \$29 million in new MBE spending and represents an additional 98 jobs for workers of color. Nuestra and Windale have proven that we can meet these goals based on our track record of over 25 years in the Roxbury community, including the achievements at the first two buildings at Bartlett Station.

It's important to point out that the primary mission of the Construction Training Facility at Building A is to provide training and technical support to existing and newly emerging MBE contractor and subcontractor business owners to support the financial growth and operating capacity of their business enterprises. In other words, the Construction Training Facility will create wealth for MBE contractors and subcontractors by helping them to broaden key business and technical skills that will position them to compete for larger, more well-paying contracts. The trickle-down effect of this

additional wealth generation will have substantial economic development impacts on the Roxbury neighborhood.

It's also important to point out that the Construction Training Facility is not linked to the approval of buildings. Instead, it will be a self-sustaining entity whose key mission is to strengthen the skills of MBE businesses and generate wealth for these business enterprises. The operator has made a five-year lease commitment, with two five-year options to extend, to run the Construction Training Facility, starting in 2021 off-site within Nubian Square, and then relocate to Building A when it is completed. Thus, the facility will have a deeply measurable impact on the Roxbury neighborhood.