



Downtown Waterfront Municipal Harbor Planning Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, July 23, 2014
Atlantic Wharf, 290 Congress Street

Attendees

Advisory Committee:

Sydney Asbury, Janeen Hansen, Phil Griffiths, Vivien Li, Bruce Berman, Lois Siegelman, Jim Klocke, Greg Vasil, Susanne Lavoie, Bob Venuti, Joanne Hayes-Rines, Tom Wooters, Bud Ris, Linda Jonash, Meredith Rosenberg, Joseph Ruggiero, Nigella Hillgarth,

City of Boston:

Richard McGuinness, BRA; Lauren Shurtleff, BRA; Chris Busch, BRA; Michael Sinatra, Councilor LaMattina's Office; Maria Puopolo, Senator Petruccellis' Office; Patrick Lyons, Representative Michlewitz's Office;

Consultant Team:

Tom Skinner, Durand & Anastas; Steve Mague, Durand & Anastas; Matthew Littell, Utile; Meera Deean, Utile

Government Representatives:

Valerie Gingrich, CZM; Ben Lynch, DEP; Andrea Langhauser, DEP

Members of the Public:

Blake Chancerski, Wes Stimpson, Megan O'Donoghue, Valerie Burns, D&A Lightfoot, Pran & Raj Tiku, Jim Duffey, Karen Marcarelli, Dan Jones, Liadmila Chizkova, Linda Cravens, Charles Norris, Victor Brogna, Chris Fincham, M&M Zisk, Marcia Barron, Julie Mairano, Caroline Johns, Martha Southard, Todd Guber, Ronald Doucette, Sharon Doucette, Colleen Moore, Susan Gram, Kathleen Mannion, Phil Franckawiak, Melvin Garcia, Carlos Del Rio, John Benoit, Rob & Jane Stricker, Krista Sullivan, Andrew Dankwerth, Shann Kerner, Steve Hollinger, Andrew Ruriden, Paul Magnin, Linda Gottlieb, Janel Jorgenson, Hugh Shaffer, Rita Advani, Lucy Lynch, Jamie McNeil, Cyrus Pahmabed, Marna Petus, Harry Witt, Julia Jones, Al Raine, Sylvia Bertrand, Thomas Nally, Dorothy Willey, Ann Lagasse, Billy Spitzer, Michael Burkin, Judith Ehrlich, Peter Kiel, Tom Walsh, Mary Holland, Mary Gallagher, Monique Bey, Soisie Brill, Meghan Marchie, Robert Dauer, Eric Krauss, Guy Robrason, Selma Rutenberg, Phil & Jan O'Brien, Neil Aresty, Diane Stone, Talya Moked, Lee Kozol, Faye Ginsburg, Alex Boke, Liz Casey, Richard Rawal, Michael Berkin, Neil Arrestit

Meeting Summary

Chris Busch, BRA, opened the meeting and introduced the new Advisory Committee Chair, Sydney Asbury, as well as new committee members Joseph Ruggiero, representing the East Boston community, and Nigella Hillgarth, the new President of the New England Aquarium. He noted that starting in the fall the Advisory Committee would begin meeting twice monthly and a meeting of the Climate Change Subcommittee would be scheduled for late September. He then indicated the Chiofaro Company Team would be presenting today on the Harbor Garage site and providing more detail on the redevelopment proposal, as well as responding to the questions raised by the Advisory Committee at the June meeting.

Don Chiofaro, The Chiofaro Company, began his presentation by noting that the MHP process has been invaluable in informing the approach to the redevelopment of the Harbor Garage property. He added the project team has adopted the MHP planning goals and the Public Realm Plan vision as guiding principles for the project. He further mentioned that the feedback from the last meeting, and comments received since the meeting, have been constructive and positive, and noted that today's presentation would hopefully respond to many of the questions raised and provoke new questions to advance the process. He noted the first presentation focused on the potential of the public realm around the site, unique attributes, and potential programming, and last month's meeting was a more specific discussion addressing how to translate the ambitions of the MHP and Public Realm Plan into an actual project. He indicated the intent of today's presentation is to address many of the prior questions raised and share concepts of the project's full height and massing, which are significant and well suited for an area with a multitude of transportation options and substantial open space resources. He recognized that transforming the current structure into a new mixed use development with a number of public benefits would have impacts upon the surrounding area and it is up to the team to demonstrate that the concepts being discussed will promote the Chapter 91 objectives with comparable or greater effectiveness. He closed noting that the project will be transformative and forward thinking and represents the potential of creating an exemplary Downtown Waterfront.

Trent Tesch, KPF/Chiofaro Team, then summarized the building program as presented at last month's meeting, noting the office building will be 700,000 SF, the hotel will have 250 to 300 keys, 120 units of residential and three levels of retail, and the parking spaces will be maintained but relocated below grade. He noted that Harbor Square has been expanded to a larger area of 19,810 SF including a wider opening on the waterfront side, with the total public space comprising 50.4% of the site. He added that the porosity into Harbor Square has also been more than doubled, with three zones of glass doors. The residential and hotel entrance will be located on East India Row with the office entry on Milk Street. He then presented several potential service entrance patterns into the project site. In reviewing the proposed building massing schemes he first referenced the existing conditions with the current garage occupying approximately 58,000 SF of the site with no open space, and then provided images of the massing schemes from several vantage points. He noted the intent has been to design two buildings that are unique in their materials and coloration, but work together and relate to the surrounding area. He then referenced the high spine of Boston and how it could potentially terminate at the site. A comparison of the current proposal to the prior development plan was also presented. Climate change resiliency measures were then reviewed and how the project will meet sustainability goals.

Al Raine, Chiofaro Team, stated that the proposed project responds to the MHP objectives, the Public Realm Plan and Greenway Guideline goals. He noted the site is unique in that it proximal to several transportation and transit resources, and emphasized that the future residents, workers and visitors would be getting to and from the property by way of transit, which will alleviate many of the concerns specific to traffic congestion in the area. He referenced the Greenway Guideline objective of orienting new development to follow the existing pier like pattern of massing along the waterfront and how the proposal addresses that goal. Regarding offsets and substitutions related to the proposal he noted that offsets must meet or exceed the Chapter 91 policy objectives, and stated that it is only the building height and lot coverage standards that need to be addressed. He mentioned that offsets may be needed for open space depending on how the public space is defined as opens space, and there are options for offsets. For building height he noted the key metric is net new shadow and those offsets can consist of open space or a broader menu of benefits that are more programmatic in nature. He then

discussed the benefits associated with the project starting with the replacement of the existing structure which provides no open space or public amenities, with a more active and open ground plane. Facilities of Public Accommodation were also reviewed and he noted there would be significant FPA uses on the site which are not required as the vast majority of the property is located on private tidelands. Additionally, the proposal would function to activate the public space on the property to a far greater degree than that required of private tidelands. He also noted the BRA property on the waterfront also provides an opportunity to program and enliven the area. Regarding the Aquarium he recognized the project will significantly affect NEAq and noted that the intent is to work closely with the Aquarium to ensure the project functions to improve access and the visitor experience. He then referenced the BRA parking lot on Long Wharf and potential to transform the lot into a park and absorb the spaces into the new garage. Water transportation was also mentioned as a potential offset and the intent to significantly contribute to advancing water transit. On the topic of climate change resilience he noted that a substantial contribution could be to climate proof the MBTA Aquarium Station Blue Line head-house. Regarding the Greenway and Christopher Columbus Park he stated that the intent is to make significant contributions to operations, maintenance and programming of these assets and create a more seamless connections between the waterfront and these areas.

Don Chiofaro then provided some closing and aspirational remarks specific to the proposal, relating the proposed project to several other iconic projects and developments in Boston.

Sydney Asbury, MHPAC Chair, noted that first there will be clarifying questions and then comments from the Advisory Committee and then the forum will be open to the public for any questions.

Vivien Li, MHPAC Member, asked if there was any timetable for the BRA and their consultant team to provide more specifics on the potential wind and shadow impacts. Rich McGuinness, BRA, noted that as the details of the project were just presented the BRA would be taking that information and conducting the analysis which will be presented at the next MHPAC meeting.

Bruce Berman, MHPAC Member, expressed support for the multi-use, multi-seasonal approach to the ground floor of the proposal, and asked if the state does not view the proposed public spaces on the site as formal open space whether these amenities could still be considered as part of an offset. Rich McGuinness, noted that that these areas could be considered offsets or mitigation for other impacts and that qualification is something that is open for the committee to review and discuss.

Bud Ris, MHPAC Member, noted that in most prior MHP's height offsets have been provided for a few additional floors above what Chapter 91 requires, however, in this instance there is proposed height far in excess of what is allowed for the property and inquired as to how that would affect the nature and extent of offsets and mitigation. Rich McGuinness, noted that there are formulas for determining offset mitigation for shadow impacts and that follow up analysis would provide the order of magnitude of shadow impact and how and whether that can be mitigated, which will be presented and open for discussion among the committee. Bud also referenced the Greenway Guidelines and the associated height parameters and how those will be addressed. Al Raine responded that the proposal responds to a number of the Greenway Guideline objectives, and stated there is a convergence of height at the site if the proposed towers at North and South Stations are considered along with the existing access of the high-spine.

Nigella Hillgarth, MHPAC Member, inquired as to whether there is any precedent for covered open space. Rich McGuinness noted that open space in harbor planning analysis has always been considered as open to the sky, so areas that are covered could be considered as mitigation or offsets for other project related impact on the public realm.

Bud Ris, inquired about the potential for uncomfortable wind in the areas between the two proposed buildings. Trent Tesch, KPF/Chiofaro Team, responded noting that it is difficult to determine wind impacts until modeling can be done and there are several massing and building material options which can be employed to mitigate wind impact and speeds. He further noted that the proposed enclosure over Harbor Square would limit wind impacts.

Linda Jonash, MHPAC Member, noted that open space should be discussed in the broadest of terms including streets and sidewalks and making the area more of a walking district with shared streets that can accommodate a number of mobility modes.

Vivien Li, asked the extent the project financing should be a factor in reviewing the proposal. Tom Skinner, Duran & Anastas, stated that there is no mention in the MHP Regulations or Chapter 91 regarding consideration of the financial viability of a project as it relates to the development of the MHP or the approvability of the MHP. He noted that it can affect the MHP in indirect ways but there is no cost-benefit analysis done as part of the planning process.

Meredith Rosenberg, MHPAC Member, noted that the proposal will overwhelm the area with 1.3 million square feet of development on a site that is just over an acre in size, and referenced the Prudential Center which has less gross square feet on a much larger property. She also expressed concern with the relaxation of standards on the Harbor Garage property which could set a precedent for the other parcels along the waterfront.

Sydney Asbury, asked if the BRA could provide a model of the proposal to have in the BRA's model room for the Advisory Committee to review. Rich McGuinness noted that the proponent's architect could provide a model and time could be scheduled for the model room.

Tom Wooters, MHPAC Member, noted that the site is at the center of the Downtown Waterfront and what is done will define the waterfront forever, and if something is built that is appropriate and to scale and interesting that enhances quality of life in neighborhood it will be an asset for years to come, but if it is out of scale future generations will ask how we allowed it to be constructed. He noted the proposal will blot out the Custom House Tower and other views from open space areas. He referenced the Greenway planning process which was intended to lead to zoning and covered a number of goals but did not consider Chapter 91, and wants to be sure the review of the project includes not just the Chapter 91 Requirements but also the objectives of the Greenway Guidelines. Don Chiofaro noted that the proposal is trying to make a contribution to the skyline and not make views disappear.

Jim Klocke, MHPAC Member, noted that the full context of the built environment should be considered around the site and not a single rendering or view angle.

Michael Berkin, Harbor Towers Resident, noted that the city and state spent a significant amount on removing the barrier that the elevated artery created, and the current proposal for the Harbor Garage site will create a new barrier to the waterfront. He stated the city and state should take a "do no harm"

perspective to redevelopment of the property and the proposal is a worse option to the current condition. He further noted the renderings presented to not provide a good representation of the true size and scale of the new buildings, and expressed concern over how the proposed buildings will not step back from the waterfront and raised issue with new wind conditions and the representation of the project as transit oriented development with the number of connections that must be made from Aquarium station to access the MBTA system.

Neil Arresti, Harbor Towers Resident, referenced hurricane Gloria and the loss of one-third to one-half of the windows in Harbor Towers from the storm, and expressed concern with more storms and more intense storms since Gloria. He noted that with the project there is a significant opportunity to make improvements and work together to design a property that is climate resilient.

Todd Guber, Broad Street Resident, expressed support for development in general and applauded the vision and imagination presented to date by the Chiofaro Team and inquired as to how the project will be packaged as it is developed.

Shan Kerner, Harbor Towers Resident, expressed concern with the traffic flow and vehicular access options around the proposed project, emphasizing the current residential use of East India Row and need to consider residential uses. Don Chiofaro, noted that a number of options have been presented and a cooperative effort will be engaged to come up with a solution and there is sensitivity to the residential uses, and that there are possible solutions that have not yet been envisioned.

Steve Hollinger, Fort Point Resident, stated that the project should include 33% or more residential to make the area an actual neighborhood and activate the Greenway and waterfront year round, and there should already be guidelines on residential uses and needs for the area as part of the planning process. He noted that Chapter 91 is being presented as a collection of constraints but should be celebrated and discussed in terms of activation of the public realm and interior spaces and discussed in the context of an actual project. He expressed concern with ground floor uses and activation being pushed out to a future date and time when the public has no input on what is implemented. He noted that there should be a civic and cultural use advisory group to engage in these planning processes, and referenced former Secretary Durand's decision on the South Boston Waterfront MHP which specified such an advisory body, and indicated there is a lack of representation from the civic and cultural interests in the city on the Advisory Committee. He noted the project should include a ground floor signature civic/cultural use such as a performing arts center which should be discussed in the context of the public realm. He suggested that there be a single, slim towers with minimal imposition on Harbor Towers, and the project needs to be better thought out in the context of a broader comprehensive plan rather than piecemeal.

Mary Holland, Harbor Towers Resident, referenced the 200-foot height limit in the Greenway Guidelines and the interest in having massing stepping back from the waterfront, and expressed concerns of other details of the project which may be left out. Don Chiofaro, noted that all the objectives of the Guidelines have been addressed within the context of the project aside from the height standard, as the site cannot be redeveloped at that height requirement and provide the proposed public realm enhancements.

Diane Stone, Harbor Towers Resident, stated that it is time for the project to move forward and noted that the proposal is a rendering and a real project cannot be reviewed until the MHP process is completed and the investment and contribution cannot be made until the planning process is complete.

She expressed support for the project and indicated that further delays in time are not helpful to improving the property.

Robert Stolzberg, noted that he has heard the reason Mr. Chiofaro needs such a large project is due to the amount initially paid for the project, and inquired as to why the city and should obviate from the 200-foot guideline height standard to facilitate compensation on a property for which he overpaid. Don Chiofaro stated that he paid \$150 million and could now sell it for \$180 million and noted that the economic feasibility is not what was paid but what it is worth and that there is the expense of placing the garage underground, and expressed interest in hearing economically feasible options from others for the site's redevelopment.

Blake Shenowski, asked if there were any newer residents of Harbor Towers that view the proposal as beneficial.

Valerie Burns, Fort Point Resident, noted that the majority of referenced open space as part of the project is the area between the two buildings which appears to be enclosed in glass, which is neither open space nor parkland. She expressed concern with the precedent that qualifying such area as open space could set for other developments along the waterfront. She questioned the practicality of the Harbor Square renderings with grass, skating rinks and full grown trees. She also referenced the rendering of the BRA property on the waterside of the property and questioned the feasibility of steps and wetlands, and noted that there needs to be more specifics on practical open space and parkland enhancements as part of the project. Al Raine, noted that the renderings are illustrative and the intent has been to draw people to these areas and the waterfront and the development team's interest in making an investment in the public realm.

Jill Medvedow, President of ICA, raised concern over public use and access to open space on public property and referenced the prior image of the carousel at Brooklyn Park and its enclosure, and mentioned recent studies which represent that pocket parks and tot lots developed as part of private projects are not utilized regularly by the public. Trent Tesch, clarified the slide of the carousel was to represent the technology of the doors, and that Harbor Square is a much larger space than a tot lot or pocket park.

Andrew Devito, Harbor Towers Resident, questioned whether all of the transit modes discussed would be used by future residents and workers at the site and if there would be adequate capacity, along with vehicular and pedestrian grid lock. Al Raine, responded that there will be MEPA and Article 80 transportation analysis which provide more details on transit use and mode share, and noted that the city is very transit oriented by choice and necessity and much of that would translate to the redevelopment of Harbor Garage. He also stated that there will be no new parking spaces provided with a new development.

Sy Mintz, Broad Street Resident, spoke to the history of urban renewal and development along the waterfront and noted that he first opposed the original development proposal for Harbor Garage, but supports the current proposal as it relates to the "high spine", and spoke to the benefits of additional height and density on the property.

Harbor Towers Resident, asked how long it would take to build a new garage and where residents would park during construction. Don Chiofaro, stated that there are three different options for construction

phasing to develop the garage and stated that the residents and the Aquarium will never be without parking.

Harbor Towers Resident, noted that the site is calling for a new design and building. She also stated that the residential make up of Harbor Towers has changed significantly and there are a number of new younger residents with families and expressed the need for vision for the redevelopment.

Dorothy Kello, Harbor Towers Resident, stated that she was representing friends and neighbors in favor of the project that are unable to attend the meeting. She noted that she wanted to make two clarifications, stating that although the Harbor Towers Trustees have voiced their opposition to the project there are over 1,000 residents in Harbor Towers, many of which support the project, and the real estate development consultant hired by the trustees does not represent all of the resident's opinions, and she offered her support of the proposal.

Steven Comen, Harbor Towers Resident, noted that now that the model has been presented it is important that representations of the proposal do not distort the size and scope of the project and that it is accurately represented in the context of the surrounding built environment in both pictorial and model form. Tom Wooters, MHPAC Member, inquired as to whether what has been represented is to scale. Don Chiofaro, responded that the proposal is to scale with the surrounding buildings and vantage points.

Meredith Rosenberg, MHPAC Member, noted it would be helpful to have more vantage renderings from the waterside. She also stated the discussion is not fear of change it is about a development proposal which is appropriate for the site.

Bruce Berman, MHPAC Member, commented that it would be great to have additional times for the committee to meet to be responsive to individuals who cannot attend the daytime meetings to ensure that we hear from a broader cross section of individuals who enjoy, visit and reside along the waterfront.

Susanne Lavoie, MHPAC Member, asked if there is a vision or objective from the BRA to change the Greenway Guidelines and the height standards. Rich McGuinness, BRA, noted that for areas within the Greenway Study subject to Chapter 91 jurisdiction there is discussion of greater heights and the only other parcel open for review of greater heights is the Hook Lobster property.

Sydney Ashbury, Chair, expressed thanks to the committee and all those who attended today's meeting.

Chris Busch, BRA, stated that the BRA would be reviewing the height and massing details for the Harbor Garage location and conduct an analysis of the shadow and massing impacts to be presented at the next Advisory Committee meeting in September, and that any comments or questions on the proposal should be forwarded to BRA staff

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.