



**Back Bay / South End Gateway Project**  
**CAC Working Meeting #1**  
**Thursday, April 28, 2016, 6:00 p.m.**  
**Location: Boston Common Hotel & Conference Center**

**CAC Attendees:**

Brendan Ahern, South End Business Alliance (SEBA)  
Ann Beha, Boston Society of Architects (BSA)  
Kenzie Bok, Bay Village Neighborhood Association  
Damien Chaviano, Urban Land Institute (ULI)  
Jim Cochener, Coda Restaurant Group  
Jackie Cox-Crite, Tent City Resident  
Jack Fitzgerald, Ellis South End Neighborhood Association  
Susan Gilmore, Resident of Back Bay  
Elliott Laffer, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB)  
Meg Mainzer-Cohen, Back Bay Association  
Mayra Negrón-Rivera, Inquilinos Boricuas En Acción  
Ted Pietras, SEBA  
Russ Preston, Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU)  
Patrick Sarkis, Back Bay Association  
Jacquelin Yessian, NABB

**Ex-Officio Attendees:**

Massachusetts State Senator William Brownsberger  
Massachusetts State Representative Byron Rushing  
Elizabeth Corcoran-Hunt, Office of Massachusetts State Representative Byron Rushing  
James Chan, Office of Boston City Councilor Bill Linehan  
Boston City Councilor Josh Zakim

**City of Boston Attendees:**

Jonathan Greeley, BRA  
Catherine McCandless, BRA  
Lauren Shurtleff, BRA  
Christopher Tracy, BRA  
Corey Zehngebot, BRA

**State of Massachusetts Attendees:**

Peter Paravalos, MBTA  
William Tuttle, MassDOT

**Project Team Attendees:**

Jim Batchelor, Arrowstreet  
Michael Cantalupa, Boston Properties

Tobias Hahne, Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects  
Mark Junghans, VHB  
George Needs, Boston Properties  
Dave Newman, The Strategy Group  
Rafael Pelli, Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects  
Melissa Schrock, Boston Properties  
Susan Tracy, The Strategy Group

**Press Attendees:**

Chris Bergeron, Boston Guardian  
David Jacobs, Boston Guardian

**Members of the Public:**

Margaret Anteblian  
Jonathan Arrod  
Deborah Backus, Castle Square Tenants Organization  
Bill Clendaniel  
Marc Denneson  
John Flaherty  
Ned Flaherty  
Ted Grace  
Deborah Greenberg  
Jane Hartmann  
Jim Hartmann  
Storey Hieronymus Hauck  
Ken Kruckemeyer  
Beatrice Nessen, Boston Preservation Alliance  
Andrew Nguyen  
CJ Opperthausen, Back Bay Association  
Sue Prindle, NABB  
Karen Reeves  
Martyn Roetter, NABB  
Craig Speck  
Gretchen Speck  
Ed Tiffany, Cosmopolitan Neighborhood Association  
Marvin Wool, NABB

**Meeting Summary**

On Thursday, April 28, 2016, the first working session of the Back Bay / South End Gateway Project Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was called to order at approximately 6:05 p.m. in the Boston Common Hotel & Conference Center by Lauren Shurtleff, BRA Senior Planner.

Lauren began the meeting by introducing herself and thanking everyone for attending. Lauren indicated she will serve as the contact person from the BRA for the CAC and for press inquiries. All CAC working sessions are open to the public and will be advertised in advance on the BRA's website calendar. Interested members of the public should be sure to sign in so that the BRA may notify them directly of upcoming meetings. The CAC project page (<http://bit.ly/BBSEGP>) will contain all relevant documents associated with the project, including the presentations and notes from each of the working sessions.

After a round of introductions of the CAC members, Lauren then gave a brief overview of the roles and responsibilities of CAC members. CAC members will serve as an advisory group to the BRA and will represent the concerns and opinions of the neighborhood and/or business group they are affiliated with, and are expected to report back to those groups as the process moves on.

The CAC will serve as the Impact Advisory Group (IAG) for the development proposal and will assist the BRA with the review the project's design, density, use, and physical and social impacts, in conjunction with City agencies and the impacted community.

The next CAC meeting will be a site visit to Back Bay Station, scheduled for Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 am. The group will meet on the Clarendon Street side of the station, inside the main entrance hall.

Future topics to be covered in greater detail will include: public benefits, shadow, wind, traffic and parking, the potential closure of the on-ramp to the westbound Massachusetts Turnpike as part of this project, streetscape design, sustainability, and other topics that come up, as needed.

Lauren noted that CAC members are welcome to submit comments on the Project Notification Form (PNF) individually or collectively. Comments are due by May 31, 2016. Lauren added that this is only the first step in the review process, so the CAC should not feel as though this is their only opportunity to formally provide comments.

Lauren then introduced Chris Tracy, BRA Senior Project Manager, who explained the Article 80 process. The CAC will help the BRA understand the impacts of the project, and the BRA will look to the CAC and the public to mitigate impacts of the project across the various stages of design and development. For more information, see **A Citizens Guide to Development Review** (<http://bit.ly/CitizensGuidetoArticle80>).

Chris stated that the BRA received a Letter of Intent (LOI) for the project from Boston Properties on December 29, 2015, followed by the PNF on March 29, 2016. After the close of the PNF comment period, the BRA will issue a Scoping Determination, which will lengthen the process and formally push it on to the next level of review. The proponent will respond with a Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR) for review at some

point thereafter. Chris then explained that the zoning for this project will take the form of a Planned Development Area (PDA), noting that the existing Hancock Garage at 165 Dartmouth Street is currently a PDA. The area that includes Back Bay Station will be added to that PDA as part of this process.

Finally, Chris noted that two public meetings to present the project are currently scheduled, one on May 11, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. at 40 Trinity Place, and a second on May 18, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. at the Blackstone Community Center at 50 West Brookline Street in the South End. Additionally, the project is scheduled to go before the Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC) for its first review, tentatively scheduled for June 7, 2016. All BCDC meetings start at 5:00 p.m. in Room 900 on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of Boston City Hall.

Next, Mike Cantalupa, Boston Properties, introduced the project team, and then gave an overview of the site's history with Bill Tuttle from MassDOT. He explained that Boston Properties purchased the Hancock Tower in 2010, which included the leasehold on the Hancock Garage. Boston Properties approached MassDOT about expanding and extending the lease to allow for the construction of towers over the Garage. MassDOT, with the MBTA, agreed that this could work, with Boston Properties additionally taking on the renovation and management of the Station concourse. This new lease was executed in January of 2015, with a 99-year term, and includes both the garage and station sites.

As part of the improvements to the Station, Boston Properties will provide \$5 million towards a ventilation project for the Station, including the tracks and concourse, and MassDOT will match the amount for a total of \$10 million towards the ventilation project. The MBTA is currently planning to bid out the ventilation project's design sometime this summer or fall. The Station's restrooms will be renovated first in 2016, followed by the ventilation project in 2017, with the remaining concourse renovation elements following soon thereafter. Renovation will include improving the use of the existing space, including new fare gates and a design that will allow for a more open, central space. It is important to note that the Station renovation, ventilation project, and management of the concourse are all separate from the Article 80 project.

Melissa Schrock, Boston Properties, together with Jim Batchelor, Arrowstreet, and Rafael Pelli, Pelli Clark Pelli Architects, presented the project's design renderings and explained the physical constraints of the site and the process that lead to the resulting design. The project is very complex because it is mostly an air rights project and there are very few terra firma spots where foundations can be set. While they are still in the preliminary design stage, the project has been carefully designed with respect to the Stuart Street Guidelines.

CAC questions and comments made in response to the presentation included:

- A CAC member asked a series of questions about: the interim condition when one or two of the tower components are built, so that access is not restricted; why the proponent is proposing to build one million additional square feet and not also build more parking; affordable housing; the zoning strategy; and existing uses, such as the Harvard Vanguard space, as well as the rental car and Zipcar spaces. Lauren noted that all of these topics will be covered in future meetings.
- In response to a question from another CAC member, Rafael replied that they are still in the preliminary design stage, and not even truly into the schematic phase yet, but are working with two different structural engineers in order to fully understand the site.
- In response to a request from a CAC member about seeing a three-dimensional model to better understand the site, the project team indicated that this could be possible in future meetings. Lauren also suggested that the site visit on May 12<sup>th</sup> may help everyone to better understand the site.
- A CAC member stated that she is glad to hear that landscape and streetscape are both topics to be focused on in future meetings. She also asked that all covered connections be described in detail, with particular attention paid to site security, openness, and permeability. She then asked about the cumulative effect of already approved projects on this project. Lauren replied that any projects that have been permitted but have not yet been built have been included in the project's filing documents. The CAC member additionally asked about the projected additional office and housing populations and how the number of people who use the station would increase.
- A CAC member stated that she believes many people will like the redesigned Clarendon entrance but expressed concern about the new entrance's design, emphasizing her desire to see it be less private and more public. She noted that she is excited to see that the air quality will be improved, but is curious about how health impacts relate to existing conditions. She additionally asked that the public nature of each of the access points to the Station be discussed, hoping that ultimately, we will end up with a public realm that is inviting for all. She additionally asked how affordability will be defined so that we do not end up with more luxury apartments only. Lastly, she asked that if we narrow the train tracks, how does that effect clearance for the next generation of high-speed trains?
- A CAC member asked that the Clarendon Street egress point for the Orange Line be made into a more civic space and less like a suburban bus drop-off. He also

asked how the view of the Station from Copley Square down Trinity Place will be affected, noting that it would be good to see some renderings of this view corridor in the future condition, as this is a great opportunity for wayfinding. He also expressed his view that as this is a transit-oriented development site, all of the parking that is being eliminated does not need to be rebuilt. Lastly, he asked that there be a discussion on the lobby-like appearance of the corner of Dartmouth Street at Stuart Street, noting that this space may function better as retail space.

- A CAC member said that she is excited about improving the station and asked how other members of the CAC feel about the proposed expanded retail at the station? She noted that perhaps a little more height makes sense here.
- In response to a question from a CAC member, Bill Tuttle replied that there is no formal review process for the Station improvements currently in place, noting that the MBTA is working directly with Boston Properties.
- A CAC member asked if the ventilation in the Station is broken or just in need of improvement. The project team replied that it is a little bit of both, noting that the ventilation systems have been off for longer than they were turned on. He added that most of the questions he has received have been about ventilation, although he has concerns that the terrible air is not being stopped, it is only being moved.
- An ex-officio member of the CAC asked the State to hold meetings on the ventilation project, echoing the last CAC member's statement about most of the questions coming from constituents about this project being related to that component and not the development project itself.
- A CAC member asked that the project's retail approach be added to the list of topics to be covered by the CAC, and Lauren agreed that this was an appropriate addition.
- A CAC member asked why this project falls under the previous Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP). Chris responded that the project was filed before the new policy came in to effect.
- In a follow-up comment, a CAC member asked that the Station be open 24 hours a day, similar to the Prudential Center.

Public questions and comments made in response to the presentation included:

- A member of the public said that the project sounds exciting but asked how the MBTA can hold the increased capacity of more people being brought to the Station.
- A member of the public talked about retaining families, noting that they often leave the city due to a lack of size-appropriate and affordable housing and feels that the BRA does not have a focus to support family housing and many recent developments are 1-2 bedroom luxury apartments. She also asked to learn more about how traffic will be impacted with the addition of people and with the construction of the project.
- A member of the public representing NABB asked if the leasing agreement has been made available to the CAC. Lauren replied that as it is a public document, it can be made available.
- A member of the public asked why the developer's financial information is not included in the PNF. Lauren replied that the BRA does not require financial information to be included in the PNF.
- A member of the public asked if there would be sufficient benches in the waiting room and near the statue. Melissa replied that there would be more seating than in the previous scheme.
- A member of the public representing NABB asked if there is a study on the effect of the potential ramp closure. The project team replied that while this is a State project, the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) is involved, and this will be explained in greater depth at a future meeting. She also asked about wind impacts further down Clarendon Street. The team replied that the wind study area was expanded beyond just the streets adjacent to the station, and noted this would also be presented at a future meeting.

Lauren closed the meeting by confirming that the next meeting will be a site walk and will be held on Thursday, May 12, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. at Back Bay Station on Clarendon Street. Four CAC members indicated that they cannot attend, so a second tour may be scheduled for them. The third CAC meeting will be held on Thursday, May 26, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at 40 Trinity Place.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.