



**Back Bay / South End Gateway Project  
CAC Working Meeting #12  
Thursday, April 13, 2017, 8:00 a.m.  
Location: Boston Common Hotel & Conference Center**

**CAC Attendees:**

Ann Beha, Boston Society of Architects (BSA)  
Kenzie Bok, Bay Village Neighborhood Association  
Damien Chaviano, Urban Land Institute (ULI)  
Jim Cochener, The Salty Pig Restaurant  
Jacquelyn Cox-Crite, Tent City Resident  
Jack Fitzgerald, Ellis South End Neighborhood Association  
Elliott Laffer, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB)  
Meg Mainzer-Cohen, Back Bay Association  
Scott Mustard, Saint Botolph Neighborhood Association  
Ted Pietras, South End Business Alliance (SEBA)  
Russ Preston, Congress for the New Urbanism  
Jacquelin Yessian, NABB

**Ex-Officio Attendees:**

Massachusetts State Representative Byron Rushing  
Elizabeth Corcoran-Hunt, Office of Representative Byron Rushing

**City of Boston Attendees:**

David Carlson, BPDA  
Jonathan Greeley, BPDA  
Catherine McCandless, BPDA  
Michael Rooney, BPDA  
Lauren Shurtleff, BPDA

**City of Boston Attendees:**

Mark Boyle, MBTA

**Project Team Members:**

Keri Evans, Boston Properties  
Dave Newman, The Strategy Group  
Melissa Schrock, Boston Properties  
Susan Tracy, The Strategy Group

**Members of the Public:**

Mohamed Elmi, Resident of the South End

Caroline Foscatto, Resident of the South End  
Randi Lathrop, RG Lathrop Consulting  
Martyn Roetter, NABB

**Project Website:** <http://bit.ly/BBSEGP>

### **Meeting Summary**

On Thursday, April 13, 2017, the twelfth meeting of the Back Bay / South End Gateway Project Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) commenced at approximately 8:10 a.m. with an introduction by Lauren Shurtleff, BPDA Senior Planner, at the Boston Common Hotel & Conference Center at 40 Trinity Place.

Lauren noted that the meeting would function primarily as a CAC discussion session for Boston Properties' Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR) for the Back Bay / South End Gateway Project, which was filed with the BPDA on January 31, 2017. The filing of the DPIR initiated a 75-day comment period, which ends on April 18, 2017. The DPIR is available on the BPDA's website: <http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/81985ac5-b24c-47cc-90af-da07b744a897>.

Before turning the meeting over to the CAC, Lauren noted that a Home Rule Petition had been filed earlier this week with the Boston City Council to amend the existing State-level shadow legislation that protects the Boston Common and Public Garden, in order to allow the Winthrop Square project to move forward. As part of the amendment, the shadow protection as provided for Copley Square in Article 48 of the Boston Zoning Code (*i.e.*, the Stuart Street Zoning) would also be added to the existing legislation. She added that it is anticipated that the City Council will hold a hearing and vote later this month.

Next, Elliott Laffer, CAC Co-Chair and NABB, began the discussion. He explained that the goal of the meeting is to identify where the group is able to reach consensus and use that to begin drafting the CAC's comment letter to the BPDA. He asked each CAC member to give a brief summary of their feedback.

### **CAC Discussion:**

- A CAC member explained that his organization is concerned about pedestrian flow around the station and the treatment of the A. Philip Randolph statue in Back Bay Station.
- A CAC member explained that his organization is concerned about public benefits, sidewalk widths around the site, and the station's ventilation and exhaust system.
- A CAC member explained that the business community wants to ensure that the project moves forward, as the site is in need of significant improvements and

represents a great opportunity for both the business community and residential community at large.

- An ex-officio member of the CAC explained that he wants to see affordable housing built on-site as part of this project. He expressed concern about the shadow impacts, particularly on the New Old South Church. He is also concerned about the MBTA Route 39 Bus stop location and feels that it should be as close to the Orange Line as possible.
- A CAC member explained that her organization is concerned about safety for pedestrians and commuters, sustainability, commitment to design excellence, and the impact on historic resources.
- A CAC member expressed concerns about affordable housing, business opportunities for people of color, structural issues as they would relate to Tent City Apartments, if any, the location of the MBTA Route 39 Bus stop, and the A. Philip Randolph statue located within the station.
- A CAC member expressed the need for on-site affordable housing, affordable retail, screening of the existing garage on Clarendon Street, more information about the project's phasing and public benefits, the potential garage exit ramp onto Dartmouth Street, pedestrian flow around the station, ventilation, and the MBTA Route 39 Bus stop location.
- A CAC member identified the project as a catalytic project for the area. He expressed some concern about the potential privatization of the main hall within Back Bay Station. He added that there is a strong need for affordable housing within the City, but acknowledged the financial realities of constructing buildings over air rights. He also questioned the amount of parking included as part of the project, given that the project is a transit-oriented development project. He is opposed to the proposed garage exit ramp on Dartmouth Street (in the event that the I-90 on-ramp remains open), and he would like to ensure that the project's architecture is deferent to Back Bay Station and the context in which it sits.
- A CAC member explained that his organization is highly supportive of the project, lauding the public-private partnership aspect. He expressed some concerns about the potential garage exit onto Dartmouth Street and the amount of parking that remains in the project (as perhaps being too much). He stressed that a creative solution be found for the project's affordable housing that will allow the project to move forward financially.
- A CAC member noted that she would like the group to wait to discuss community benefits further at a later date. She also expressed concern about the setback of the Garage West building.
- A CAC member stated that he is very supportive of the project, particularly of the retail and design components, but advocated for the removal of the tree planters along Dartmouth Street.

- A CAC member expressed support for the project but has concerns about the proposed garage exist on Dartmouth Street, traffic, the MBTA Route 39 Bus, and affordable housing.

The CAC then moved into a broader discussion around the drafting of a shared comment letter, noting that while there is broad support for the project, there are still some issues that the CAC would like to see more detail or further study on. Affordable housing, public benefits, and the possible garage exit ramp onto Dartmouth Street were all issues of shared concern. The CAC discussed possible consensus on these topics and others.

Additional questions and comments from the CAC included:

- A CAC member would like to see Chris Osgood, the City of Boston's Chief of Streets, come to a future session to discuss the Boston Transportation Department's thoughts and ideas on the pedestrian and vehicle traffic around the project.
- In response to a comment from a CAC member, David Carlson, BPDA Deputy Director of Urban Design and Executive Director of the Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC), gave a brief overview of the ongoing BCDC process, and invited CAC members to attend future Design Committee meetings.
- In response to queries from several CAC members on the status of the Back Bay Station Ventilation Project, Mark Boyle, MassDOT, noted that there is a meeting scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup> to update the public on the design team's progress.

Public questions and comments included:

- A member of the public asked if the proponent has identified what public subsidies will be used for the project. Lauren explained that no public subsidies have been applied for at this time.

Lauren thanked everyone for a productive meeting and reminded the group that all comments are due by Tuesday, April 18th. The meeting was concluded the meeting at approximately 9:55 am.