



Meeting Notes
May 22, 2006
6:00pm-7:45 PM
Dudley Boston Public Library
65 Warren Street

RSMPOC Members Present: Darnell Williams, Norman Stembridge, Daniel Richardson, Barbara Barrow-Murray, Reginald Jackson, Michael Miles, Charlotte Nelson, Donovan Walker, Senator Dianne Wilkerson, Excused: Joe Cefalo, Marilyn Lynch, Public-15

Welcome: Norman Stembridge (OC Vice-Chair) called the meeting to order and introduced the agenda.

Review of Minutes: The minutes for the 5/8/06 RSMPOC meeting were approved. Senator Wilkerson and Charlotte Nelson abstained. There was some debate regarding the content of the minutes. Donovan Walker (OC) asked that it be clarified that he requested a meeting with the Roxbury Neighborhood Council and each of its 12 sub-neighborhood representatives. Charlotte Nelson (OC) asked where in the notes it listed the purpose of this meeting (5/22).

Discussion: Sen. Wilkerson (OC) asked that two things happen. She would like to see the OC meet with both the RNC and Dudley Square Main Streets (DSMS) without the BRA before the next OC meeting. She felt that BRA had done what they promised to do and now the OC should reach out to those two groups to further this process.

Dan Richardson (OC) stated that the purpose of this meeting is to begin to address the RFP utilizing the provided information targeting development of Bartlett Yard.

Norman Stembridge (OC) asked Darnell Williams (OC Chair) regarding what progress had been made on the Senator's earlier point (RNC and DSMS meeting with the OC).

Darnell (OC) stated that he reached out to those organizations following the 5/8 OC meeting but had not wanted to schedule anything without discussing availability with his fellow OC members. He was also very aware of the number of meetings that OC members are asked to attend and wanted to be respectful of this. He went on to say that tonight's meeting was to review background data on Roxbury development and to begin to work on the Bartlett Yard RFP. He felt simultaneously the OC could schedule a meeting with the RNC and DSMS to discuss Roxbury development, current businesses in Roxbury and the overall future of the neighborhood.

Dan (OC) agreed with this point.

Sen. Wilkerson felt that the OC was not much further along than last meeting in terms of neighborhood knowledge as well as Dudley Square development. How do we get the necessary information as well as disseminate that information to the public? This is necessary “homework” for the OC.

Charlotte Nelson (OC) stated that we should examine the project list for Roxbury (which is similar to the SB waterfront list presented by the OC Chair on 5/8/06).

Darnell (OC) stated that the deliverables should be examined.

Hugues Monestime (BRA) stated that the notes were created through several audience members. The normal note taker was not present. The BRA produced deliverables specifically based on requests by the OC.

Dan (OC) stated that the deliverables were delivered ahead of time to be examined.

Darnell (OC) stated that the OC needs to figure out where we are, what is missing and what we have left to do.

Dan (OC) felt we need to make sure that the BRA provides a note taker going forward. Barbara Barrow-Murray (OC) added that notes are very important to the success of the committee.

Charlotte (OC) stated that the list is quite specific (what was asked for) and we have the materials here. The other piece was the RNC and DSMS meeting. What are we missing?

Darnell (OC) stated that we need the interim report on development as well as the down the road view.

Michael Miles (OC) felt that the OC has the necessary information in hand and continues to backtrack. This is slowing the process down. We can bring in the RNC and DSMS but we are just adding to the “process”.

Darnell (OC) stated that he appreciated this point, but we do need to meet with those two groups.

Julio (RNC and AUD) stated that the RNC would like to meet with the OC and feels it can contribute to this process. Darnell (OC) responded that we should set up a date and calendar with the OC members right now. A *Tuesday May 30th* meeting at 6PM at the Urban League was tentatively scheduled. Norman (OC) reminded the group that an invite should go out to the DSMS as well.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) felt that sometimes the deliverable tasks that come out of OC meetings are not BRA tasks. Who does these tasks? A lack of resources is not an excuse. The OC is supposed to implement the RSMP and this requires a significant commitment. The OC needs to make sure that the things this committee wants actually happen. The OC

is unique to Boston in its role as well as the number of parcels it has to deal with. There is a gap here for tasks.

Darnell (OC) feels that there are four items to accomplish here: schedule a meeting with the RNC and DSMS; go through the project list; complete the report card; and then begin to review the RFP. This is the challenge of the process, let's not get frustrated.

Michael (OC) stated that Roxbury is a very diverse community and the big picture is needed. But, the OC needs to focus on the abutting neighborhood of Bartlett and their needs.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) stated that all of this info should still be there to help if something is needed, then slowing down is necessary. The info from DSMS and RNC is critical. The OC needs to be armed with all necessary info.

Donovan Walker (OC) asked that at the May 30th RNC meeting, he could be provided with a list of the RNC's sub-neighborhood reps.

Darnell (OC) suggested further discussion of that issue occur offline after the meeting with the RNC representative. He also acknowledged the work of the BRA and the deliverables they provided to the OC.

Betty (Tommy's Rock) asked if this project list contained all projects within Roxbury.

John (BRA) stated that the list contains all projects under BRA Article 80 and Zoning Board of Appeal as well as other key known projects. As a result, there are smaller projects that may not appear on here, as well as "as of right" projects.

Darnell (OC) asked for more specifics on the development list. If he is not familiar with a particular project, how could he know more? What projects are commercial and what are housing? This detail is important when talking about the mix of development for the future.

John (BRA) replied that the BRA would add a use column to the sheet.

Darnell (OC) stated this information would affect housing development versus economic development. This will speak to the mix in the neighborhood.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) asked for a clarification on what "proposed" meant on the sheet.

John (BRA) stated that "proposed," means any idea or project the city is aware of but for which there have been no formal submissions.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) asked if Crosstown Phase II was on the list. Darnell (OC) replied that it was #10.

Darnell (OC) added that this is a live document that will continuously be changing.

Julio (AUD and RNC) stressed that this document should be correct. Some of these projects are further along than the list implies.

Darnell (OC) acknowledged this point, but most importantly the OC needs the specifics of the project. If there is a mistake, it is important to let the BRA and OC know.

John (BRA) promised an updated version by COB on 5/26.

Reginald Jackson (OC) asked for geographical groupings of projects. Can the #'s coincide with a location? It would be helpful to find a project on a corresponding map.

Darnell (OC) stated that the OC needs to know what it is looking at and as much description as possible is necessary.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) asked if it was necessary to know that number of 2 family homes being built. How small a project is relevant to this discussion?

John (BRA) stated that the BRA does not track all building permits that are taken out, especially on smaller projects (“as of right projects”).

Darnell (OC) suggested a determination of a threshold of information that is relevant for the list.

Michael (OC) stated that he had been the chair of the PRC for Washington Commons and they did look at overall data before devising a plan. This hinges on an ability to absorb a certain level of detail. How do we make this level of information useful and relevant?

Darnell (OC) suggested erring on the side of too much as opposed to not enough.

Dan (OC) stated that the OC doesn't want to contradict itself. Some “as of right” projects are controversial. He gave examples on Codman Street and Dale Street.

Darnell (OC) asked if this was the role of the OC.

Dan (OC) stated that it is not a question of whose role it is, it needs to be addressed.

Darnell (OC) responded by asking if it was the OC's role to manage it.

Dan (OC) responded that the OC needs to know what is happening.

Darnell (OC) replied that the OC needs to avoid getting stuck in the mud. The focus is the parcels and the information is intended to inform this process. We cannot manage all aspects of Roxbury development.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) added that any information needs to be in context. She wants info to help create jobs and wealth. Also, 2-4 family houses are too much detail. They are not the role of the OC. Also, this list can be used for other parcels.

Darnell (OC) asked if 2-4 families should be taken off the list.

Charlotte (OC) stated that the intent should not be to dwell on those but rather to evaluate what is going on. What types of projects are going on, especially those related to areas of the RSMP.

Darnell (OC) suggested that this goes back to the idea of a threshold. What is appropriate?

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) suggested 10,000 square feet.

John (OC) suggested 6 family and up for housing and a minimum 5,000 square feet for commercial.

Michael (OC) asked for a correct overall housing number to include smaller development, but as an aggregate number, not specifics.

Darnell (OC) replied that the OC should ask for an overall number of 0-6 family units on a separate list, everything should be on the list. Commercial development over 5,000 square feet will be included as well.

Dan (OC) remained concerned about the Codman Street illegal housing.

Barbara (OC) asked if there was agreement on the threshold.

Hugues (OC) asked for OC commentary on the Bartlett RFP draft.

Darnell (OC) stated that he has seen two public comments and asked to set a date for OC members to forward their comments to the BRA.

John (BRA) asked for comments by COB 5/26.

Darnell (OC) stated that if no response by Friday, then it is presumed that an OC member is ok with this version of the draft.

Michael (OC) clarified that the OC would be ok with the document as a draft.

Darnell (OC) wants OC members to read it and get feedback to the BRA.

Michael (OC) stated that we haven't done it, but we are supposed to use the other information to help us in this process.

Charlotte (OC) asked what will happen between 5/26 and 6/5.

Darnell (OC) replied that the BRA will work on draft #2.

John (BRA) stated that this is an ongoing and open conversation.

Dan (OC) asked that the Chair introduce Beverly Adams.

Darnell (OC) asked if Beverly was officially approved. Upon confirmation, he welcomed her and introduced her to the OC and audience. Also, Dorothea Jones and Jorge Martinez have been added.

Darnell (OC) stated that the report card discussion needs to happen with the BRA and should be discussed next meeting. It should look at progress, look at economic development and housing balance as well as transit, all based on the RSMP goals.

Barbara (OC) suggested that a subcommittee tackle this issue.

John (OC) liked the RSMP newsletter idea and the subcommittee.

Darnell (OC) confirmed that Barbara, Michael, Reggie and Darnell would head up this issue.

Michael (OC) stated that resources for the committee are an issue, is there a possible budget available to this committee?

Scott Darling (MBTA) stated that the MBTA was concerned with staying on schedule.