

March 15, 2021

Dear 104 Walter Street neighbors,

Thank you for all your thoughtful comments following the February 23rd community meeting. We've written an RFP draft that incorporates what we've heard from the community to the greatest extent possible, and we're happy to share that with you today for your review along with the comments we have received. We also want to provide some context here on how your recommendations were incorporated. **Please respond with any feedback by Friday, March 26th by email to morgan.e.mcdaniel@boston.gov.**

Here are the next steps and our working timeline:

- **March 26:** Comments on the draft RFP are due
- **Mid April:** Release RFP
- **End of May:** Proposals are due
- **End of June:** Proposals are presented to the community
- **June-July:** Evaluation of proposals (committee to include two community representatives)
- **August:** Designation of developer by BPDA board

We have every intention of meeting the community goal of designating a developer by Labor Day, keeping in mind that this is an aggressive schedule and sometimes unanticipated delays occur. We will continue to communicate with you and keep you updated every step of the way.

Key items in RFP Draft

Community Process

- The Evaluation Committee will include two neighborhood representatives, including a representative from the Roslindale Wetlands Task Force (Page 28).
- Proponents that meet the minimum threshold requirements for submission will be required to present their proposals to the community at an Evaluation Committee sponsored public meeting. Comments from the public will be taken into account in the evaluation process (Page 29).
- The selected proponent will be required to present to the community after designation at key stages (Page 37).

We received a request from some community members to include the neighborhood preferred site plan into the RFP as an appendix. We have determined that it wouldn't be advantageous to do so because 1) the site boundaries have shifted from the ones depicted in the neighborhood preferred site plan, and 2) the site plan is more specific and prescriptive than the RFP itself, and we don't want to cause confusion about the development and design guidelines that proposals will be evaluated against.

Housing

- Responding to community feedback, we outline the requirement of 4 affordable units and indicate that sales prices cannot exceed an amount affordable to households earning 100% of Area Median Income with a preference for a mix of incomes (Page 8).
- The draft expresses the community's preference for family-sized units (Page 10)
- We have revised the language regarding the existing house on the site to allow either rehabilitation or demolition and new construction (Page 10).

We have received comments in support of both homeownership units and rental units. After considering the totality of comments you will see the requirement for homeownership only.

Landscaping Edge Treatment

We heard feedback asking for us to consider a stone wall, rather than a fence. After consulting with staff at the Boston Parks and Recreation Department and the Boston Conservation Commission, we have decided to ask for a fence rather than a wall, for the following reasons:

- Stone walls, even low ones, are expensive, both capital and maintenance, for affordable housing developers and public agencies with low budgets, like the Conservation Commission and the Parks Department.
- The low seating walls encourage "hanging out" which may not be favored by the new owners of the 104 Walter Street housing, and is not favored by the current abutters, the Roslindale Wetlands Task Force and the Walter Street Wetlands Working Group. Hanging out encourages littering, which conveys a negative message for this new, major access point for the Roslindale Wetlands urban wild.
- Fencing is needed to define the property edge for 104 Walter Street so as to prevent parking on the adjacent public property (108 Walter Street), to prevent overall encroachment and dumping by the 104 Walter Street owners, and to prevent trespass onto 104 Walter Street by the public.

That being said, we have revised the landscaping guidelines to be more flexible, in the spirit of encouraging creativity by the developer so that visitors to the Roslindale Wetlands and walkers on its perimeter trail will experience a sense of escape from the built environment. The current guidelines state that there must be fencing and a landscaped buffer area along the border between 104 Walter and 108 Walter, but the RFP is not prescriptive about the type of fencing, the type of landscaping, and the width of the buffer area (Page 13).

Thank you and we look forward to hearing your feedback!

Morgan McDaniel