

Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee Meeting

Monday, May 2, 2016

6:00 PM to 7:45 PM

Dudley Branch Library, 65 Warren Street, Roxbury

Attendees

RSMPOC Members: Norman Stembridge, Tony Hernandez, Bing Broderick, Frederick Fairfield, Michael Curry, Beverly Adams-Vandingham, Susan Sullivan, Charlotte Nelson, Marzuq Muhammad

Ex-Officio: Councilor Tito Jackson

Not in Attendance: Frank Williams, Felicia Jacques, Dorothea Jones, Valeda Britton, Rep. Gloria Fox (Ex-officio), Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz (Ex-Officio), Evandro C. Carvalho, Rep. Byron Rushing (Ex-Officio)

BRA Staff: Lara Merida, Hugues Monestime, Dana Whiteside, Ronette Seeney

The meeting started at approximately 6:10pm.

Link to PowerPoint- <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/getattachment/1b2b7ad9-8c37-4d95-aa5a-91baff2e4ca6>

Committee Scope and Responsibilities

- The RSMPOC Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the public. He explained the agenda for the meeting and reiterated the roles and responsibilities of the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee and its tasks related to the scope of the PLAN: Dudley Square Strategic Planning Area. See Roles and Responsibility on PowerPoint).

Planning Update

- BRA staff person gave a summary of the all the workshops that occurred so far for PLAN Dudley Square and went over responses from meetings. See PowerPoint
- BRA staff presented a PowerPoint presentation, which explained the Plan Dudley Square Strategic Planning Area (SPA) that outlined the need to assess existing conditions, update the vision, and assess impacts of existing economic and housing feasibility. This also included a summary of the past workshops and overview of the remaining workshops. The next meeting is May 16th at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building.

Update

BRA staff presented the status of the following development projects:

P-3 Tremont Crossing Project – [http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/tremont-crossing-\(p-3\)](http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/tremont-crossing-(p-3))

Project Review Update

Noted that development team has tentative designation and that its extension until August, was approved on April 14 at the BRA Board meeting. Since this a large project, it is in the midst of the Article 80 process.

- Will be making presentation to the project review committee (PRC) as well as going before the Boston Civic Review Committee.
- Stated that concerns were raised regarding the height and density and that the development has revised these areas. Stated that the development team has been responsive to the concerns raised, but that this does not indicate an approval by the BRA but instead that it is going through a process.

P 9 - Melnea Hotel and Residences – <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/melnea-hotel-and-residences>

- Stated that they achieved final designation status in the BRA approval process.
- They are now working on completion of the final design to pull permits for construction.

Parcel 10 - Madison Tropical – <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/madison-tropical-parcel-10>

- Stated they are in tentative designation and as a part of the review process will need to get Lot B completed before the project can get full approval.
- Explained that 2101 Washington Street building is not included in Parcel 10, and is instead a private parcel. The goal for that building it to renovate to create office and retail.
 - Explains that the 2101 building is being included in the discussion because of purview of RSMPOC.
 - Approvals are in place, financing closing is in process
 - Hope to start construction in summer 2016.

Bartlett Place – <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/bartlett-place>

- Conservatory Lab disassociated self from Bartlett project. Development team will now be working to find another use.
- BRA staff person said it was important to note the zoning – the planned development area (PDA) Stated that in order to start construction of the 16 homeownership units, a PDA amendment change must be approved that consider the 16 homeownership units but will not include educational use.

Whittier Choice Neighborhood

- Boston Housing Authority gave update on project that Includes Whittier Apartments and the corridor with a strong people component and will have affordable, moderate and market rate units.
- Invited folks to next open house at Central Boston Elder Services building, on May 5, at 6:00 pm. Goal of this outreach is to refine planning for the choice Neighborhood Grant application. The application is due on June 28. We want folks to continue to participate. The Crescent Parcel will still be a factor in the application.

RSMPOC Questions and Comments

- Pointed out that the map doesn't make the site lines for the 2101 Washington Street building clear. Although not public land, is a part of the Madison tropical building.
 - BRA staff said will edit map.
- Asked about break down of units in 2101 Washington Street building.
 - 21 units of the 30 units will be affordable with varying rent levels. 9 units will be unrestricted with rents around \$1900 for a two bed.
- Are the retail/commercial leases signed already and who will be the tenants?
 - development Team – discussing two types, 7-8,000 ground space retail/commercial for 2101 Washington Street for 2101. Fielding interest for this space but nothing solid yet. We hopping for mixture of local and regional anchor. Hope to have a mixture of local retail. Expect corner parcel to be fairly large, 50,000 sq. ft. perhaps medical service from one of the local hospitals.
- A member stated they are happy that Madison Tropical is agreeing to meet construction numbers, 51/51/51. (The Roxbury Jobs coalition has recommended a goal for 51% Boston residents, 51% minority, and 51% people of color)

Community input

- A community member asked if PRC meetings were public meetings and asked that notes for RSMPOC meetings be made available in advance.
- A community member asked for clarification about Parcel 9, if it was the same project Councilor Jackson once argued against.
 - BRA staff person discussed how the project came to be approved, partially assisted by the fact the developer added three new components; 8,000 sq. ft., \$400,000 contribution to workforce fund and \$18 minimum wage with benefits for fulltime employees.
- A community member asked for clarification about the cost associated with Madison Tropical. RSMPOC member clarifies that \$52 million is the total development cost for the 147,000 sq. ft. project.
- Another audience member requested that the project update forms be more clear to understand.
 - BRA Staff person said they would make the project update forms more standardized.
- Community person asked for understanding of where Madison Tropical was at in the bidding process for a contractor for the 2101 Washington Street Building.
 - Development Team said they would not be putting it out to bid.
- A community member asked about the benefits presented by the developers and whether there was oversight over the permanent wages and the issue of wage theft. Related, another RSMPOC member stated there is some monitoring, but not enough enforcement. City Hall needs to address that.

- BRA staff person confirms that the City/BRA does not enforce issues around permanent (non-construction) jobs.
- A community person asked for explanation of the approval process and why the PDA for Bartlett Place was split and if the development team was seeking approval from the RSMPOC or from the BRA board?
 - BRA staff person said they were under the same PDA Amendment, now will only include only the 16 units.
 - BRA staff person stated that given what has been articulated, from PRC and RSMPOC, recommendation is then taken to the BRA board for approval.
 - The process for PDA amendment, has to be a public hearing request, take request tonight for approval in June.
 - Then has to go to the zoning board for approval.
 - A community member asked if Roxbury could adopt a cluster strategy, saying it could be helpful. Stated that a cluster strategy is about training, workforce development and where to put new businesses. Include all these planning and studies and to bring all the developers together?
 - BRA staff person said that is an interesting idea. There has been a retail/cluster study in the past the we have been thinking about reviewing and update. We hope to have that conversation during PLAN: Dudley Square workshops.
- A PRC member wanted to know why approval for the 16 units at Bartlett Yard were held up for PDA change approval since December.
 - A City of Boston Staff member replied that the 16 units and the school had to be reviewed at the same time so was somewhat of a cause of delay. PRCs will continue to be an important component. Projects will not come to the RSMPOC meetings for presentation unless there is a significant update or a specific need to report back to the Committee

Leasing Questions for local businesses;

- A community member asked if there would be store leases for low-income businesses.
- Community member asked why there was no job planning session.
 - BRA staff person said he could arrange a meeting with Chief John Barros.
- Community suggested that housing for singles be including, not just for families. Community member also suggested having discussion to talk about wage and contractors.

Meeting adjourned: 7:44 PM