



Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee Meeting  
Monday, December 4, 2017  
6:00 PM to 7:45 PM  
Boston Water & Sewer Commission, 980 Harrison Ave, Roxbury

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## Attendees

**RSMPOC Members:** Valeda Britton, Frederick Fairfield, Dorothea Jones, Jorge Martinez, Marzuq Muhammad, Frank Charlotte Nelson, Norman Stembridge, Susan Sullivan, Williams

**Not in Attendance:** Beverly Adams, True-See Allah, Bing Broderick, Tony Hernandez, Felicia Jacques, Rep. Evandro C. Carvalho (Ex-Officio), State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz (Ex-Officio), Rep. Councilor Tito Jackson (Ex-Officio), Rep. Byron Rushing (Ex-Officio), Rep. Chynah Tyler (Ex-officio),

**BPDA Staff:** Lara Mérida, Courtney Sharpe, Victoria Phillips

**Link to PowerPoint:** <http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/beca91cc-c1dc-462c-baaa-f98b09693ce3>

## Opening

On December 4, 2017 Co-Chair Norman Stembridge called the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee to order. The agenda was reviewed and RSMPOC roles and responsibilities were reiterated.

## Planning Update

A BPDA Staff member gave an introduction to the meeting's presentation agenda, stating there will be a year-in-review of the PLAN: Dudley Square process and no developer updates presentation.

- The process began nearly two years ago in conjunction with the Oversight Committee. Part of the process was to begin thinking about and help make decisions about the future of public parcels.
- 18 different workshops
- To successfully plan for the future of public parcels, it is critical to understand the baseline market and to determine what is feasible for the market compared to our goals, while ensuring

public benefits are met. In addition, scenario development is important to understand trade-offs and development guidelines to achieve a productive, comprehensive process.

- The original 2004 Master Plan goals were assessed, with most people feeling they still align with 2017 goals.
- Parcel 10, Parcel 9, and Bartlett Place have been designated with Parcel P-3 tentatively designated; others parcels still part of public domain.
- Overview of early 2017 actions:
  - Prioritization Workshop in February, to discuss homeownership and business ownership;
  - Housing Creation Workshop in March, to begin to identify those at risk and strategizing assistance while thinking through a range of housing to prevent the cliff effect;
  - Economic Development Workshop in April, looking at education level v. employment market as well as the greater arts and entertainment;
  - Neighborhood Experience Workshop in June, to discuss desires for neighborhood amenities.
- Photo Campaign launching in July to help communicate the vision for the future of Dudley Square. Please consider submitting pictures that reflect happy times people have had in the neighborhood, as well as, events or places in Dudley Square, past or present, that make you smile. For more information please visit: [bit.ly/PlanDudley](http://bit.ly/PlanDudley)

### Questions and Comments

- No questions or comments

### RSMPOC Questions and Comments

- A RSMPOC member requested an architectural mock-up for Bartlett Yard to see if there are any changes being made.
  - The BPDA responded that it is possible to obtain updated renderings. Additionally, in response to a clarifying question, the BPDA provided update that Madison Tropical is in conversation with several potential tenants but no specific updates.
  - Representation for Madison Tropical added that they are fielding a variety of inquiries for the retail space with no specifics but are in serious talks with two potential tenants including an education and tech center for youth. The corner unit is also being held for an active use like a cafe or modest size restaurant.

- A RSMPOC member asked whether a tenant has been signed for the Nubian Notions space.
  - Representation for the property responded the existing tenant is moving two doors down and the previous tenant secured the new tenant who were approved.
- A RSMPOC member asked what avenues are being made to support small businesses of color who want to stay in the area. Specifically in regards to small-business rents, are there any subsidization for long-term tenants and also if these rent prices are exacerbating gentrification.
  - The BPDA responded that they are speaking regularly with Chief Barros thinking about what polices are or can be in place to support business owners and the opportunity to grow into the community. This objective is more difficult for property the city does not own.
- In response to a clarifying question, the BPDA responded it is within the purview of the committee to ask questions which are outside the scope of the development to make sure that the effects of development are considered holistically.
- A RSMPOC member asked whether there was any consideration between the Nubian Notions property owner and the previous tenant about the implications of the new tenant coming in.
  - Representation for the property responded the decision for Nubian Notions to shut down was their decision because there was not another generation to carry on the business and were allowed to find the new tenant so they could go out on their best possible economic terms.
- A RSMPOC member asked if Building B, in reference to Bartlett Place, is all rental, condo, or mixed.
  - Representation for the property clarified that all 60 units are rental with commercial on the first floor. An opportunity for conversion to lease/ condo units would become viable in 8-10 years after refinancing.
- A RSMPOC member followed-up on a previous inquiry if the property representative reached out to long-term tenant who is in danger of losing their space.
  - Representation of property in question responded an office staff has reached out but they would also personally reach out.
  - In response to a clarifying question, representation for the property responded as the site is developed homeownership is expected to increase.
- A RSMPOC member noted they would appreciate documentation, specifically for Building B, in reference to Bartlett Place, with the numbers associated with the buildings and asked if there was a place that lists these numbers.
  - BPDA responded as these projects move forward with their various developments and milestones, it might be useful to have the phases outlined. Representation of the property followed-up stating they are unable to recount the specifics on the numbers right now. However, in regards to Building E, emphasis on homeownership has been a

priority for community so units are at market rate with 15% affordable qualifying, market rate means market rate, the opposite of affordable.

## Community Questions and Comments

- In response to a RSMPOC member's earlier question about support for local entrepreneurs, it was answered that opportunities for local entrepreneurs was a top priority, so the Tremont Crossing subsidy program has been doubled up to \$80,000 for 15 years. This balance could go to more or fewer entrepreneurs. Up to \$100,000 in conjunction with the Choice Neighborhoods \$20,000.
  - A RSMPOC member followed-up asking what the range of market rent is. Representation for the subsidy program responded it is sensitive but in regards to numbers it is to see more opportunity for multiple local entrepreneurs.
  - A RSMPOC member asked a second follow-up question whether the program money could be used for a variety of business expenses. Representation for the subsidy program responded the program money is specifically for rent.
  - A RSMPOC member asked a third follow-up question regarding how many people the program could realistically support. Representation for the subsidy program responded it is open and flexible with the general objective to make an economic commitment to the program but they are thinking of smaller space tenants.
- A community member expressed concerns about the inability to get a clear response and responsibility for traffic and transportation issues related to the current and upcoming developments, specifically citing Tommy's Rock as a site where road conditions are dangerous for pedestrians.
  - BPDA responded specific to Bartlett Yard, stating now that it is moving into reality, getting the right people at the table is a commitment. District-wide, it is a similar level of convening various agencies to talk these concerns over. When doing strategic planning such as Plan Dudley, there are 30 departments working together and we are not at this point in our discussions. Crosswalks and stoplights come at the occupancy-permitting phase. We can potentially facilitate meeting between BTM and the community.
- A community member expressed concerns about the danger of some streets being used at cut-throughs as well as concerns for parking, increasing commute times, and the lack of a comprehensive traffic study from Dudley to Franklin Park.
  - BPDA responded reiterating how these processes come online and that traffic is studied at a greater scale than only Roxbury and that a meeting with the transportation planner to clarify issues of traffic mitigation may be useful.

- In response to a request for an update on the supermarket in Bartlett Yard, representation for the property responded originally there was conversation with Harvest Coop but now they may not be able to occupy the space. The goal is still to have a grocery store so there are talks with BPDA and other agencies to find a good fit.
- A community member noted climate change has not been brought up in this conversation citing one project looks to remove 60+ trees.
  - BPDA responded while there may not always be a direct mention of climate change, climate change is still part of the process due to Article 80 which requires all projects to be reviewed under Article 37.
- A RSMPOC member asked if the 10-year traffic study is still current and noted the BTM meeting should not be in lieu of the study requests earlier expressed by the community.
- A community member expressed that to make Dudley a destination the most important part is ensuring arts, culture, and entertainment, asking what conversations have taken place to ensure the ability to obtain liquor licenses and similar needed licenses. A RSMPOC member responded the need for arts, culture, and entertainment has been a part of the conversation of the committee since day one.
- A community member noted since Tremont Crossing is profoundly anchored in arts and culture there will be a screening theater, performance space, and other linking space with artwork which provides opportunities for exhibits and acquisitions. Tremont Crossing is also committed to night spots and evening spots. They concluded that the vision is as the North End is a destination is for Italian food, Dudley can be for African foods, arts, and culture by having enough things to make people feel it is destination and there are lots of opportunities.
- A community member expressed concerns about how old and new nightlife is going to mesh.
  - BPDA responded concerns about nightlife are heard and there is a need to hear and think through the possible mechanisms which need to be in place to help facilitate these changes. It is an ongoing process to be mindful of and the community assisting to make it an organic creation is important.
- A community member stated Roxbury is already mega multicultural and that conversation surrounding new development sounds like there is a need to make something better though Roxbury already seems to be great and beautiful.
  - BPDA responded the language of complementing is likely more appropriate than enhancing or bettering as the objective is to support those existing business by activating underused spaces around it.

Meeting Adjourned approximately 7:40pm

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