



**MassDOT Turnpike Air Rights Parcels #12-15
CAC Working Meeting #8
Thursday, April 5, 2012, 6:00 p.m.
Location: Boston Public Library, Boston Room**

CAC Attendees:

Kathleen Brill, Fenway Civic Association (FCA)
Fritz Casselman, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB)
David Gamble, Boston Society of Architects (BSA)
Valerie Hunt, Fenway Neighborhood Resident
Meg Mainzer-Cohen, Back Bay Association
Barbara Simons, Berklee Task Force
Gil Strickler, St. Cecilia's Parish

Ex-Officio Attendees:

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

City of Boston Attendees:

Shaina Aubourg, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services
Jonathan Greeley, BRA
Emily Mytkowicz, BRA
Lauren Shurtleff, BRA
Rachel Szakmary, BTB

State of Massachusetts Attendees:

Robin Blatt, MassDOT
Michael Glover, MassDOT
Walter Heller, MassDOT
Stephanie LeBlanc, MassDOT
Dana Levenson, MassDOT
Martin Polera, MassDOT
William Tuttle, MassDOT

Members of the Public:

Alexandra Brax, The Chiofaro Company
Frank Edwards, Trinity Financial
Lilly Jacobson, Fenway Community Development Corporation (FCDC)
Howard Kassler, NABB
Nancy Ludwig, ICON architecture
Joanne McKenna, Fenway Neighborhood Resident
Steve Mitchell, The Chiofaro Company
Ted Oatis, The Chiofaro Company
Sue Prindle, NABB
Tina Schaefer, Resident of 360 Newbury
Peter Sougarides, Samuels & Associates

Xinyne Wang, FCDC
Adam Weiner, Weiner Ventures

Members of the Press:

Cate Lecuyer, Back Bay Patch

Meeting Summary

On Thursday, April 5, 2012, the eighth working session of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Turnpike Air Rights Parcels 12 – 15 Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was called to order at approximately 6:10 p.m. in the Boston Room of the Boston Public Library's Copley Square Branch by Jonathan Greeley, BRA Planner. Jonathan reviewed the agenda, noting that the CAC would hear from Mike Gehry, one of the co-owners of the Auditorium Garage adjacent to Parcel 15, and Bill Whitney from the Berklee College of Music. Trinity Financial will also present its revised schemes for Parcels 12 and 13, based on their most recent submission to MassDOT on March 16th. Carpenter & Company, The Chiofaro Company, and the Weiner Ventures/Samuels & Associates team will present their respective proposals at a meeting to be held on April 24th, also in the Boston Room of the Boston Public Library's Copley Square Branch. Jonathan noted that there will be at least one meeting after the April 24th meeting in order for the CAC to make a decision about how it will proceed with its recommendations for tenant designation on each parcel.

Meg Mainzer-Cohen, CAC Co-Chair and Back Bay Association, then introduced Mike Gery, one of six general partner owners of the Auditorium Garage adjacent to Parcel 15. The Cambria-Scotia Company, LP was formed in 1964 when the structure was built. In general, the partnership is seeking to protect its rights if development were to occur.

Questions and comments made by the CAC included the following:

- In response to a question from Fritz Casselman, CAC Co-chair and NABB, Mike confirmed that the six general partners make the decisions regarding the garage jointly and that unanimity is not required.
- Meg Mainzer-Cohen asked Mike to clarify an earlier statement in which he stated that his partnership is seeking to defend its rights. He responded that those rights include both views and the right for the partnership to develop the site on its own.
- Massachusetts State Representative Marty Walz asked whether the garage owners have spoken with the proposed developers. Mike indicated that he has spoken with Carpenter & Company regarding its most recent proposal for Parcel 15 and in earlier rounds had met with both the Chiofaro Company and the Weiner Ventures teams.
- In a follow-up question, Representative Walz asked about the long-term plan for the garage. Mike responded that it depends on what the proposed developers plan to do with the site. Although they would like to maintain it has a garage, they also understand that the land is valuable and that it does not necessarily need to continue to be used solely for that purpose.

Next, Jonathan Greeley stated that Bill Whitney from the Berklee College of Music had been invited to tonight's meeting in order to provide an overview of the college's plans for the future. Any developer designated for Parcel 15 will need to coordinate with Berklee on plans for Parcel 14 as well as for access to the Hynes Convention Center. Meg Mainzer-Cohen also reminded that group that she, along with Barbara Simons, Valerie Hunt and Representative Walz, were all

members of the Task Force that reviewed the Berklee College of Music Institutional Master Plan (IMP). Meg then introduced Bill Whitney, Berklee's Vice President for Real Estate, who gave a PowerPoint presentation (available on the BRA's project website: <http://www.tinyurl.com/Parcels12-15CAC>) on the school's plans for the future. Bill noted that currently the college can only house 20% of its students and is therefore looking to expand its housing capacity. Among the projects included within the school's IMP, the Crossroads project is of most relevance to the CAC. Bill indicated that he has met with two of the three proposed developers for Parcel 15 and has looked at all of the proposals and is confident that each of them could coexist with the Crossroads Project. Questions and comments made by the CAC in response to Bill's presentation included the following:

- Fritz Casselman asked whether the wind studies undertaken by Berklee take into account all of the proposed development in the area. Bill responded that the qualitative studies did take into account all proposed development in the area. The quantitative study completed at this point was specific to the 168 Massachusetts Avenue project and he is unsure if it included any other proposed developments.
- Valerie Hunt, Fenway Neighborhood Resident, asked whether Berklee is under any time constraints to develop the IMP that was approved by the BRA. Bill responded that the IMP lasts for ten years, but that there is no specific deadline for development.
- Barbara Simons, Berklee Task Force, asked when Berklee would be developing the 161 – 171 Massachusetts Avenue site. Bill noted that no substantial construction would be done until the 168 Massachusetts Avenue project is finished.
- Gil Strickler, St. Cecilia's Parish, asked whether the loading and service areas would be located completely off of the street. Bill responded that they have not yet done a detailed design.
- In response to a question from Gil Strickler, Bill noted that there would be some food service included in the Crossroads development. It would not likely be a large dining hall, but would instead be some type of food service that would be available to both students and the public.
- David Gamble, BSA, asked whether Berklee began with a goal of building 800 beds and proposed its massing as a result. Bill responded that the goal is to house half of Berklee's student population of 4,000 students. It was assumed that three new residence halls would house about 400 students each.
- Meg Mainzer-Cohen asked why Berklee did not submit a proposal for Parcel 14. Bill responded that the \$75,000 non-refundable deposit seemed high for the parcel at the time.
- Meg Mainzer-Cohen asked about access to the Hynes Convention Center and whether the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) has signed off on its development plans. Bill responded that they will be working with the MCCA as more detailed designs are developed, although he is aware that they would prefer that Cambria Street remain open in its entirety.
- In response to a comment from Fritz Casselman, Bill stated that they could look at making a dramatic cut to the lower portion of the building in order to keep the alignment as it is now, although this would likely minimize the size of the proposed theater inside of the building.
- In response to a question from Representative Walz, Bill confirmed that Berklee would not be building on Parcel 14.
- In response to a follow-up question from Representative Walz, Bill indicated that Berklee did not feel it was necessary to place a bid on Parcel 14 given that they will not be

building on it. While any other development on Parcel 14 would complicate Berklee's own plans, they would still be able to build the Crossroads development.

- Jonathan Greeley noted that he has met with representatives of the Hynes Convention Center who are concerned about the traffic in the area and would prefer the status quo of truck access on Cambria Street. However, they are supportive both of the development of Parcel 15 and of Berklee's goals and understand that more dialogue is needed as both projects progress.

Frank Edwards from Trinity Financial next introduced that company's updated proposals for Parcels 12 and 13. The Parcel 13 proposal has changed from its original submission given that it now has the Boston Architectural College (BAC) as a tenant. The original Parcel 12 proposal was for 180 residential units. The current plan now has 132 residential units and 97 BAC dormitory rooms for a total of 220 beds. It includes 10,525 square feet of retail on the first floor. Total development costs for the Parcel 13 development are estimated at \$130 million, with approximately \$19 million for the deck itself. The deck is estimated at \$1,760/sf and the building is estimated at \$400/sf. Frank stated that Trinity will not be seeking any public subsidies.

Nancy Ludwig from ICON architecture then gave a PowerPoint presentation (also available on the BRA's project website) that gives an overview of Trinity Financial's proposal for Parcel 13. The ten-story building is 120 feet at its highest point and steps down to 7 stories. The 66 parking spaces are for the residential portion of the building, and not the college dormitories.

Questions and comments made by the CAC in response to Nancy's presentation for Parcel 13 included the following:

- In response to a question from Gil Strickler, Nancy confirmed that all retail will be located on the first floor of the development.
- In response to a question from David Gamble, Nancy confirmed that this would be the Boston Architectural College's first residence hall.
- David Gamble asked what Trinity Financial intended to do with the space between the 360 Newbury building and the Parcel 13 development. Nancy stated that they would like to deepen the sidewalk and make it a comfortable place to wait for the bus. She also indicated that some sort of visual height element that is as tall as the retail level would be included to obscure the view of the Turnpike and block its noise. The span is 55 feet in length. Frank also noted that they would not likely include windows on the back side of the building, given the difficulty of constructing at the site. He emphasized that Trinity Financial intends to do something that is manageable and affordable, so as not to end up in a situation where the development becomes infeasible.
- Representative Walz indicated that the idea for a cantilever at the bus stop site came from an earlier community process surrounding the MBTA #1 bus route. Representative Walz also expressed concern that the proposal did not mention the Back Bay Architectural District guidelines. Frank responded that this was unintentional and that the proposal will be reviewed by the Back Bay Architectural Commission at the appropriate stage in the process.
- Kathleen Brill asked Trinity Financial to confirm the difference between the proposal they presented at the meeting and its original proposal submission. Frank responded that the major change is the inclusion of residential units for the BAC.

- In response to a question from Barbara Simons, Nancy indicated that the development will not include a dining hall for students, owing to the urban nature of the site and also the fact that the majority of BAC students are mature students who would likely not use a dining hall. The dormitory suites will have kitchens and common gathering spaces will be available on each level.
- In response to a question from Barbara Simons, Nancy confirmed that the Massachusetts Avenue entrance to the Hynes Convention Center stop will remain open, and that an additional one would be provided on Boylston Street.
- In response to a question from Fritz Casselman, Frank indicated that Trinity Financial will not need to seek any variances for the Parcel 13 development. Nancy added that they had stayed within the zoning envelope.
- In a follow-up comment, Fritz Casselman asked if they had prepared any renderings of what the building would look like from 360 Newbury. Nancy replied that they have not but that they will look to offer an artful addition to the neighborhood.
- In response to another question from Fritz Casselman, Frank replied that it is their intention to mitigate any sound coming from the Turnpike below.
- Gil Strickler asked whether the MBTA is on board with Trinity's plan. Nancy responded that the MBTA requested the Boylston Street entrance as a result of their mandate to increase redundancy for accessibility purposes.
- In response to a follow-up question from Gil Strickler, Nancy replied that all parking will be accessed from Boylston Street at grade.

Nancy then continued with a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of Trinity Financial's proposal for Parcel 12. Parcel 12 includes 286 housing units, down 80 from the original proposal submission, and includes three times the amount of retail originally proposed. Three stories have been removed from the original proposed height for a current total of 11 stories. The project would include 184 parking spaces, 46 less than originally proposed. Total development costs are \$226 million, with \$46 million for the deck at \$1,366/sf of deck and \$507/sf for the building.

Questions and comments made by the CAC in response to Nancy's presentation for Parcel 12 included the following:

- Kathleen Brill asked whether any discussions had taken place with the owner of the adjacent parking lot. Frank responded that they had not. Jonathan Greeley noted that that owner is planning on developing an apartment building on the site that will be of similar size and scale to the one that is currently adjacent to it.
- In response to a question from Valerie Hunt, Nancy indicated that the service entrance and parking entrance would be located on Boylston Street.
- In response to a question from David Gamble, Frank confirmed that the Parcel 12 and Parcel 13 developments are completely separate and are not dependent on each other.
- In response to a question from Meg Mainzer-Cohen, Frank noted that the architecture would not necessarily be the same for both developments.

Questions and comments made by the public in response to all of tonight's presentations included the following:

- Tina Schaefer, Resident of 360 Newbury, asked whether the BAC would be completing an IMP. Jonathan Greeley responded that an IMP is required of any institutional development of 150,000 square feet or more. He added that the BRA might encourage

the BAC to complete an IMP even if its development falls short of the 150,000 square feet threshold.

- Tina Schaefer expressed concern over the noise and ventilation that might affect the residents of 360 Newbury. Jonathan Greeley assured her that air quality and other safety issues will be analyzed in detail at later stages of the review process.
- In response to a question from Representative Walz, Jonathan Greeley noted that the BRA would not want to hold up potential development with the requirement that the BAC complete an IMP. Jonathan also indicated that he will confirm for the next meeting whether an IMP will in fact be required.
- Tina Shafer asked whether there would be any open space planned with these developments. Jonathan Greeley responded that while each of these proposals is being evaluated separately, they do each fit into a larger urban context. After tenant designation, the details of each will be discussed in more depth.
- Representative Walz noted that Berklee isn't planning on expanding its enrollment with this development.
 - As a follow up, Jonathan Greeley noted that the BAC similarly will not have a higher enrollment with this development. It intends to house some of its older, non-traditional students and respond to the Mayoral goal of including housing on campus property.
- Barbara Simons noted that the Berklee Crossroads project includes community space in its theater and other publicly-accessible features, such as a terrace and patio that will be available above the proposed café.
- A member of the public expressed concern that the MBTA would need to bore a hole down to the station to allow access for development and renovation purposes. Jonathan Greeley noted that the MBTA has funding at this point for 15% of the design and is investigating a number of options to ensure redundancy and access. Emergency access will be an important part of the conversations as they progress.

In closing, Jonathan Greeley indicated that the next CAC meeting will be held on April 24th in the Boston Room of the Boston Public Library's Copley Square Branch.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.