



**Back Bay / South End Gateway Project**  
**CAC Working Meeting #6**  
**Wednesday, July 13, 2016, 8:00 a.m.**  
**Location: Boston Common Hotel & Conference Center**

**CAC Attendees:**

Brendan Ahern, South End Business Alliance  
Ann Beha, Boston Society of Architects (BSA)  
Kenzie Bok, Bay Village Neighborhood Association  
Damien Chaviano, Urban Land Institute (ULI)  
Jacquelyn Cox-Crite, Tent City Resident  
Jack Fitzgerald, Ellis South End Neighborhood Association  
Susan Gilmore, Resident of Back Bay  
Elliott Laffer, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB)  
Scott Mustard, Saint Botolph Neighborhood Association  
Mayra Negrón-Rivera, Inquilinos Boricuas En Acción  
Ted Pietras, South End Business Alliance  
Russ Preston, Congress for the New Urbanism

**Ex-Officio Attendees:**

Massachusetts State Representative Byron Rushing  
Kate Bell, Office of Boston City Councilor Josh Zakim  
Mohona Siddique, Office of Boston City Councilor Josh Zakim

**City of Boston Attendees:**

Jonathan Greeley, BRA  
Catherine McCandless, BRA  
Lauren Shurtleff, BRA  
Christopher Tracy, BRA

**Project Members:**

Dave Newman, The Strategy Group  
Melissa Schrock, Boston Properties  
Susan Tracy, The Strategy Group

**State of Massachusetts Attendees:**

William Tuttle, MassDOT

**Members of the Public:**

Ned Flaherty, Resident  
Patrick Haswell, Veolia Energy  
Lauren Hoops-Schmieg, Hill House  
Randi Lathrop, Resident

William McCarthy, Resident  
Martyn Roetter, NABB  
Jon Santiago, Resident  
Marvin Wool, Resident

### **Meeting Summary**

On Wednesday, July 13, 2016, the sixth meeting of the Back Bay / South End Gateway Project Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was called to order at approximately 8:05 a.m. by Lauren Shurtleff, BRA Senior Planner, at the Boston Common Hotel & Conference Center.

Lauren began the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. She explained that this meeting would differ from previous meetings. Instead of a content presentation, the meeting will primarily consist of a discussion by the CAC.

Lauren also noted that all of the comments received to date have now been posted on the Project Website (<http://bit.ly/BBSEGP>) and have been distributed to the CAC.

Lauren turned the meeting over to Ted Pietras, CAC Co-Chair and SEBA, who led the discussion. He explained that the purpose of the meeting would be to build consensus among the CAC members, identify outstanding information, connect the MassDOT and CAC process, discuss the aspects of what makes a project successful, discuss the aspects of the proposal that are separate from the project, and gather CAC input and influence on the project. He opened up the CAC to talk about a range of issues, including affordable housing, wind and shadow, traffic, and pedestrian experience.

Chris Tracy, BRA Project Manager, noted that all of the notes from the CAC meetings will be included in the Scoping Determination. The Scoping Determination should be issued this summer and the proponent is anticipated to respond soon thereafter with a Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR), which will be posted online.

CAC questions and comments made in response to the presentation included:

- In response to question from a CAC member, Chris replied that the length of the DPIR comment period is based on the project size. He clarified subsequent to the CAC meeting that there will be a 75 day comment period for the DPIR.
- A CAC member explained that affordable housing is very important to her and stated that she would like to see the affordable housing be located on-site rather than off-site.
- A CAC member questioned the logic of on-site affordable units and explained the importance of determining the type of affordable housing that is most needed in this area of Boston, noting that, given the expense involved in this type of air

rights development, the project might benefit a greater number of people by building more affordable units off-site rather than on-site.

- A CAC member noted that a challenge for building affordable housing downtown is that there are not many active community development corporations (CDCs) in the Downtown neighborhoods. She said the CAC may want to write a letter to make a recommendation for the public benefits they wish to see, and asked about public subsidies. Chris replied that at this time, no subsidies are being sought and if they were, they would be made public. Melissa Schrock, Boston Properties, reiterated that Boston Properties has not sought public subsidies. Given the difficulty of building housing on the site, they included the possibility of a 121A as a precautionary measure, as the project is still being shaped.
- A CAC member asked if the affordable housing will be implemented as each building phase is developed. Chris replied affirmatively, and stated that to the extent that affordable units are provided on-site, the units are distributed throughout a given building rather than in one section, and added that the affordable units have the same finishes as market-rate units.
- A CAC member said that if the affordable housing is to be located off-site, he would prefer to see it in one of the adjacent neighborhoods rather than far from the Downtown area so that there is greater housing diversity in the neighborhood.
- An ex-officio member of the CAC asked about conducting post-occupancy wind studies for other projects that have been approved. Lauren replied the City of Boston does not have the scope to do this. [Note: After the conclusion of the meeting, an informal discussion amongst several CAC members led Melissa to give an overview explaining the methodology behind wind studies. This explanation has been attached to the end of these notes as an Addendum, for the benefit of those who were not present at this point.]
- A CAC member expressed concern about the width of the sidewalks given the presence of street tree boxes. Another CAC member explained that there may be a need to rework some pedestrian pick-up areas so that the sidewalk plantings can remain as a sustainability benefit.
- An ex-officio member of the CAC expressed concern about the increased pedestrian traffic and the ability for sidewalks to accommodate this increase.
- A CAC member stated that the Clarendon Street side of the project should be explored as a shared space, with priority given to pedestrians.

- A CAC member explained that there should be further study about the project's retail frontage on Dartmouth Street, as well as additional study done on the proposed Dartmouth Street Garage exit width and operations.
- In response to a CAC member's question about the MBTA Bus Route 39, Melissa replied that nothing will change for Bus Route 39 until the Station East component of the project is built. Bill Tuttle, MassDOT, added that Station East cannot be built until the MBTA has approved a solution for the bus route. He added that the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) is also involved in the discussion.
- A CAC member asked when the 30% design benchmark will be reached for the Station renovation project. Bill replied that this would likely occur sometime in the fall, at which point the MBTA will host a community meeting on the process, as discussed at prior meetings. This will largely coincide with the DPIR filing.
- A CAC member expressed concern about an apparent lack of synchrony between the Station renovation and the review of the project's design. Jonathan Greeley, BRA Director of Development Review, affirmed that there are multiple agencies collaborating on the review process for this project, as is the case for all other projects Citywide. He added that there are also typically staff members from different City departments present at community meetings. He commended the CAC for having identified a range of issues that still need further review, noting that the CAC process is designed to evoke this sort of conversation. Finally, he reiterated that when the 30% design stage for the Station renovation has been reached, there will be a meeting to further facilitate the discussion, likely in the Fall.
- A CAC member stated that it is important for CAC members to express what pieces of the project they agree with so that they are not removed from the design.
- A CAC member noted that he would rather see the project create safer pedestrian-level spaces, rather than elevated bridges. Other CAC members expressed that a bridge connection between the project and 40 Trinity could make sense, but expressed reservations about other proposed bridge connections.
- In response to a CAC member's question about past CAC comment letters, Lauren explained that CAC's typically are able to issue a consensus letter by the end of the review process, which varies for obvious reasons. In the cases where there are differences in opinions on certain topics, the letter usually expresses where opinions differ and where they align.

Public questions and comments included:

- In response to a member of the public about the plan for the infrastructure impacts of the project, Lauren explained that much of this has been covered in Chapter 6 of the PNF, and will be covered in greater detail in the DPIR. She added that construction impacts are covered in the Construction Management Plan (CMP).
- A member of the public stressed his appreciation for the thoughtfulness of the CAC's discussion to date. In response to a follow-up comment from the member of the public, a CAC member agreed that the CAC also wants to see the Station be first and foremost a station, rather than a retail center.
- A member of the public stated that he would like to see that the affordable units are on-site.

Lauren closed the meeting by stating that the Scoping Determination will be issued later this Summer and the Proponent is anticipated to respond with the DPIR in early Fall. The next meeting will be confirmed by email.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:40 a.m.

## ADDENDUM

### Explanation of Wind Study Methodology

- RWDI uses wind tunnel technology to predict pedestrian level wind analyses. This is the most accurate technology available and is used internationally.
- RWDI's input data is an average taken over 20-30 years; that data is used to develop the predictive pedestrian wind condition model.
- Therefore, simply taking one-off post-construction readings would not be a valid way to confirm the methodology.
- Any post-construction readings would have to be done over a prolonged time frame to truly judge the accuracy of the predictive nature of their model.
- During this time, nothing new could be built in the subject area because that would change the wind conditions. Clearly, this is unrealistic.
- In addition, the same technology is used by RWDI to study both structural wind loads and cladding loads for building design. This technology and these analyses are accepted by building codes internationally. If the predictive technology weren't accurate, we would see systemic building failures across the globe – structures would be failing and building façade elements would be falling off. That is not happening.