
Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee Meeting

December 7th, 2020

1. RSMPOC

Welcome and Orientation

Meeting Recording

At the request of community members, this event will be recorded and posted on the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan webpage at

bit.ly/theRSMPOC for those who are unable to attend the Zoom event live.

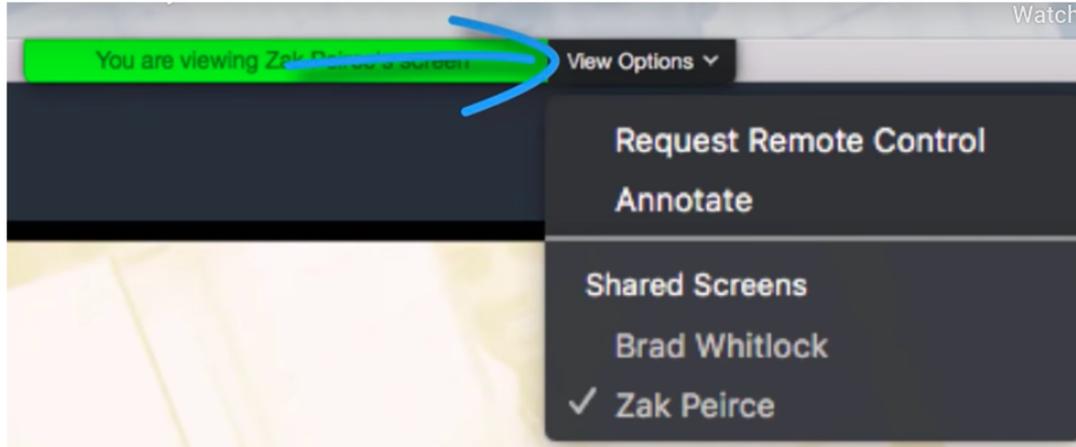
Also, it is possible that participants may be recording the meeting with their phone cameras or other devices. If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.

If your camera and microphone are off, you can still participate through the text chat feature.

Interpretation and Translation



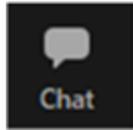
"Spanish" -for Spanish
"German" -for Haitian Creole
"English" -for English



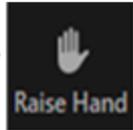
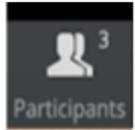
Zoom Tips

Welcome! Here are some tips on using Zoom for first-time users.

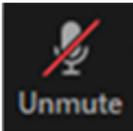
Your controls are at the bottom of the screen



Use the chat to type a comment or ask a question at any time – Members of the RSMPOC/ BPDA will moderate the chat



To raise your hand, click on “Participants” at the bottom of your screen, and then choose the “Raise Hand” option in the participant box, or press *9 on your phone



Mute/unmute – Participants will be muted during the presentation – the host will unmute you during discussion if you raise your hand and it is your turn to talk. To mute/unmute on your phone press *6.



Turns your video on/off

Zoom Etiquette

We want to ensure that this conversation is a pleasant experience for all attendees.

- Please remain muted until called on. If you'd like to speak during this time please use the "Raise Hand" function in Zoom so a BPDA moderator can unmute attendees.
- Please be respectful of each other's time.
- We ask that participants limit their questions so that others may participate in the discussion. If you have more questions, please wait until all others attending have an opportunity to ask questions.
- If we are unable to get to your question at this meeting please put them in the Chat at the end or email Kelly.sherman@boston.gov

Agenda

- 1. RSMPOC Welcome**
- 2. Planning Update**
- 3. PRC Designation Recommendations of Blair Lot and Nawn Factory**
- 4. Questions from RSMPOC and Public**
- 5. RSMPOC Votes**

RSMPOC Overview and Updates

First Monday of the month

December 7, 2020

January 11, 2021

February 3, 2021

March 1, 2021

April 5, 2021

May 3, 2021

June 7, 2021

July 5, 2021

****No Meeting in August****

September 13, 2021

October 4, 2021

November 1, 2021

****No Meeting in December****

RSMPOC Responsibilities

- The Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee (RSMPOC) was created in 2004 as a result of the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan (RSMP).
- The RSMPOC is broadly representative of the Roxbury neighborhood and is made up of Mayoral Appointees, nominated by elected officials, neighborhood associations, and community organizations.
- The RSMPOC oversees the implementation of the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan and PLAN: Nubian Square.

Join. Engage. Take Action.

- **Join:** Join the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee, and/or a Project Review Committee (PRC).
- **Engage:** Attend public meetings. Ask questions. Invite neighbors, Roxbury civic groups and organizations, businesses, abutters or other community affiliates to public meetings.
- **Take Action:** Review and comment on projects, developments, and the planning initiative.

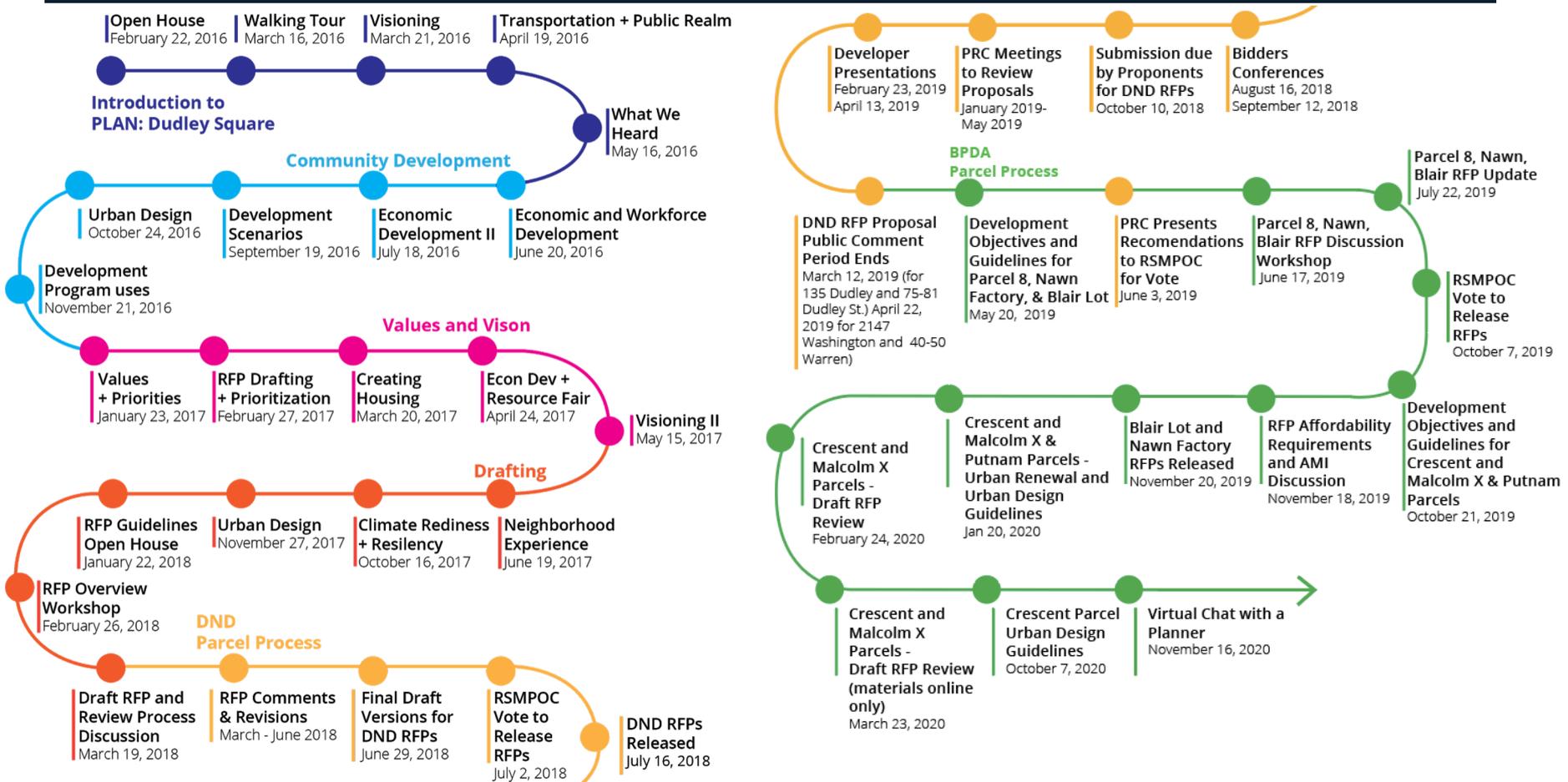
For more information about upcoming meetings, development projects and how to get involved, visit bit.ly/theRSMPOC

Original 2004 Master Plan Goals

- Enhance **civic & cultural life** in the neighborhood
- Promote **diverse & sustainable growth** with jobs for local residents
- Ensure **safe & convenient public** and **private transportation**
- Expand & improve **housing for a variety** of socioeconomic and age groups
- Create a **comfortable, lively, and safe public realm** that reflects the diversity of local residents
- Enhance **community participation** and **empowerment** through increased accountability of government, and institutions and businesses

2. Planning Update

PLAN: Nubian Square Process to Date



PLAN: Nubian Square Updates

- **11/16/2020** Virtual Chat with a Planner
- **1/11/2021** RSMPOC Meeting: Crescent Parcel RFP (<https://bit.ly/3gtldbx>)
- **Coming Soon** P3 Booklet release

**3. PLAN: Nubian Square Project
Review Committee
Designation Recommendations:
Blair Lot and Nawn Factory**

RFP Process

- PLAN: Nubian Square process was launched in 2016 to guide the RFP process for 10 publicly owned properties.
- This ongoing three-year community engagement consisted of public workshops, walking tours, community gatherings and meetings in order to share information, establish a vision for the future, and solicit feedback from the community.
- The resulting RFP development objectives were driven by community needs, including affordable housing, economic development, development without displacement, good jobs standards, diversity and inclusion, sustainability, and additional community benefits.

RFP Process

- The Boston Planning & Development Agency, along with the RSMPOC, held three community meetings on May 20, June 17, and July 22, 2019 to develop the RFPs for the Blair Lot and the Nawn Factory.
- For each meeting, draft RFPs were released online, and participants had a chance to discuss the content and express the changes they wished to see. RFPs were then edited to reflect the community's comments and shared at the next meeting.
- RFPs were issued on November 20, 2019 and developer responses were submitted on February 19, 2020.

Project Review Committee Members

RSMPOC Members:

- Dorothea Jones
- Steven Godfrey
- Catherine Hardaway
- Marisa Luse
- Nefertiti Lawrence

Local Residents and Business Owners:

- Armani White, Reclaim Roxbury
- Angela Williams Mitchell, Boston Jobs Coalition
- Lynnette Tyler, nominated by State Representative Chynah Tyler
- Cheryl Straughter, owner of Soleil Restaurant
- Charlotte Rice, The American City Coalition

PRC Process

- The PRC first met in March of 2020. However, the PRC process was put on hold in mid-March in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In July 2020, the PRC resumed deliberations and met bi-weekly through November 2020 for a total of 11 meetings.
- In addition to analyzing the proposals against the evaluation criteria, the PRC interviewed the developer teams multiple times, hosted public presentations of the proposals and reviewed public comments.

Blair Lot Recommendation

The BPDA received two proposals for the Blair Lot RFP:

- Nubian Square Ascends
- ID8 (resigned from the process and was not considered by the PRC)

The PRC unanimously recommends **Nubian Square Ascends.**



Blair Lot Recommendation

The Nubian Square Ascends proposal addressed key development objectives:

- **Development Concept:** A mix of uses that is intended to transform Nubian Square into a day and night time destination, including commercial space, a marketplace for local retailers, a cultural hall and theater, 15 units of artist live-work housing, and a 340-space parking garage.
- **Development Team Experience:** Nubian Ascends Partners LLC is led by a partnership of Richard Taylor, Kai and Chris Grant of Black Market, and Mario San Jacinto of Almiranta Capital LLC. The development team also includes Stantec and DREAM Collaborative, Consigli Construction, UHM Properties for operations, and Newark Grubb Knight Frank as commercial brokers.
- **Good Jobs Standards:** The proposal includes a commitment to the Good Jobs Standards stated in the RFP, as well as the construction hiring standards in the Boston Residents Jobs Policy.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Nubian Ascends LLC proposes a thoughtful and comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion plan, with minority- and women-owned business enterprise partners throughout all aspects of the proposal.

Blair Lot Recommendation

The PRC also identified some concerns with the proposal:

- **Financial Capacity:** The proposal hinges on the ability of the developer to identify an anchor tenant to lease the class A commercial space. 60% pre-leasing will be required to receive construction financing. The development team is confident that tenants in the medical or lab space will be excited by the opportunity to make an investment in Nubian Square. At this point, it remains an unknown.
- **Community Benefits:** The community benefits included in the proposal do not clearly identify the monetary value of the benefits proposed or the number of people who will be served. Proposed benefits include funds for youth savings accounts, investment in Gourdin Park, support for the Roxbury Cultural District, and subsidized commercial space for local businesses.

After evaluating the financial feasibility of the proposal, the PRC has confidence in the lead developer and has determined that the risk associated with the project is worth taking in order to pursue the transformative potential of the project.

Nawn Factory Recommendation

DND received two proposals for the Nawn Factory RFP:

- Art @ the Nawn Factory
- Historic Boston Incorporated, in partnership with The Wellness Collaborative

A majority of the PRC recommends **Art @ the Nawn Factory**.

- Five members voted in favor of Art @ the Nawn Factory
- Three members voted in favor of Historic Boston Inc.-The Wellness Collaborative.
- Two members were not present and did not vote.



Strengths of Nawn Factory Proposals

Art @ the Nawn Factory

- **Development Concept:** Proposed program of dance studio and cultural space to meet the need for local arts and cultural programming. The proposal includes seven studio spaces.
- **Design Concept:** Dynamic and culturally relevant design and landscaping, including a mural for an exterior wall, and an upper gallery viewing area reminiscent of the old elevated railway.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** The development will be Black-owned and operated.

Historic Boston Inc./The Wellness Collaborative

- **Development Concept:** The proposed health and wellness programming would provide much needed services. The required museum/cultural resource is well integrated into the program.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** The eventual owners and operators of the development would be an MWBE, and several other MWBEs are on the development team.
- **Development Team Experience:** Historic Boston Inc. has extensive experience with the business model of renovating historic properties and then transferring ownership to local entities.

Weaknesses of Nawn Factory Proposals

Art @ the Nawn Factory

- **Development Team Experience:** Several development team members have experience developing historic properties, but the lead developer did not demonstrate such experience.
- **Development Concept:** The proposed gallery space does not adequately address the requirement to include a museum/cultural resource.
- **Development and Operating Cost Feasibility:** There is a concern that the development budget is unrealistically low. The developer intends to take out a \$5 million SBA loan and has a letter of interest from Blue Hub Capital.

Historic Boston Inc./The Wellness Collaborative

- **Development Team Experience:** Some PRC members expressed concern about the conditions of the partnership between Historic Boston Inc. and The Wellness Collaborative.
- **Development Concept:** Some PRC members expressed concern that the proposal did not address the development guidelines concerning the Roxbury Cultural District.

After evaluating both proposals, the PRC voted to recommend Art @ the Nawn Factory.

Next Steps

The PRC has concluded the first phase of its work, but the community process continues from here.

- The Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee votes tonight
- The BPDA and Public Facilities Commission award Tentative Designation
- The developments apply for approval and permits, such as Article 80, Mass Historic, and public subsidy.
- The Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee will continue to monitor each project in the broader neighborhood context.
- The PRC will transition into a new role as Impact Advisory Group and work closely with City staff and continue working as a community in ensuring a collaborative agreement on public benefits, budgets, and schedules.

4. Questions and Comments

5. RSMPOC Vote

RSMPOC Voting

- **Only RSMPOC members should virtually raise their hand**
- Kelly will verbally confirm each RSMPOC members vote and then tally votes