



Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee Meeting  
Monday, November 5, 2018  
6:00 PM to 8:15 PM  
Boston Water & Sewer Commission, 980 Harrison Ave, Roxbury

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## Attendees

**RSMPOC Members:** Valeda Britton, Frederick Fairfield, Dorothea Jones, Charlotte Nelson, Frank Williams, Norman Stenbridge, Susan Sullivan, and City Councilor Kim Janey (Ex-Officio)

**Not in Attendance:** True-See Allah, Beverly Adams, Jorge Martinez, Tony Hernandez, Felicia Jacques, Rep. Evandro C. Carvalho (Ex-Officio), State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz (Ex-Officio), Rep. Byron Rushing (Ex-Officio), Rep. Chynah Tyler (Ex-officio), Curtis Rollins (RNC Representative)

**BPDA Staff:** Dana Whiteside, Viktorija Abolina, Muge Udemir, Lillian Mensah, Victoria Phillips  
**City Staff:** John Barros, Donald Wright

**Link to PowerPoint:** <http://www.bostonplans.org/documents/planning/community-planning/rsm poc-2016/presentations/november-2018-rsm poc-meeting-presentation>

## Opening

On November 5, 2018 Co-Chair Norman Stenbridge of the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee called the meeting to order. The committee responsibilities as well as the Master Plan's original goals were reviewed.

## Planning Update

- Muge Udemir, BPDA Senior Planner, introduced the PLAN: Dudley Square process and stated the deadline for submitting proposals for the four DND parcels has been extended to November 13<sup>th</sup>. Donald Wright, Deputy Director Real Estate Management and Sales for DND, added that if any further clarification or information is needed, people should reach out to his office.
- Muge announced the deadline to submit a nomination for the RSMPOC has been extended to November 16. Forms are available online at [bit.ly/RSMPOC\\_nom](http://bit.ly/RSMPOC_nom) and a version to print at [bit.ly/theRSMPOC](http://bit.ly/theRSMPOC). Muge should be contacted with any questions.

- The next PLAN: Dudley Square workshop will be sometime in winter 2019 and focus on the RFP language for the BPDA parcels.
- Nominations for PRCs for BPDA and Master Plan parcels are still being accepted on a rolling basis. Forms are available online [bit.ly/PRCDUD1](http://bit.ly/PRCDUD1) and print version [bit.ly/PlanDudley](http://bit.ly/PlanDudley)
- In response to a request from Councilor Janey for an update to be given Muge stated so far 22 names have been submitted for the RSMPOC. Dana Whiteside, Deputy Director Community Economic Development, stated at this point there is not an exact timeline but there is a commitment and desire to add new members and part of this will include providing onboarding. Ideally, with the extension, placement will be early next year.
- Dana then addressed some of the follow up topics from the September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting regarding membership, voting, and conflict of interest. Staff will look to elected officials to provide nominations. Member terms could have been better in the past and the hope is with this new opportunity they will be managed accordingly and so that there are no gaps in members. Regarding criteria, the hope is to have as broad a spectrum of representatives as possible. Therefor there are no academic or professional qualifications required. If people have experience or interests that pertain to the type of work the RSMPOC does i.e policy, development etc. that would be helpful. If you are interested in serving, staff would seek ones permission to publically list name. Regarding conflict of interest it is important that committee members do not have beneficiary interest in project. Will do everything to ensure that individuals do not have conflict of interest particularly on projects committee will be providing advice and insights on.
- The PRCs (Project Review Committees) evaluate the developer submissions based on the criteria in the RFPs and continue to monitor project progress from tentative designation until the buildings are ready to open. Here the information is very similar to above for RSMPOC.
- For more information please visit: [bit.ly/PlanDudley](http://bit.ly/PlanDudley)

## Development Project Update

Following Planning Update Dana Whiteside, BPDA Deputy Director for Community Economic Development, gave a high level description of the following development projects. Each development team was present to answer RSMPOC member questions and then audience questions.

**Bartlett Place:** <http://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/bartlett-station-lot-d>

- Bartlett is a multi-phased project proposed/managed by Nuestra CDC and Windale Development Company. Lot D is proposed 52 units of senior housing and currently going through article 80 small project review after the team submitted their filing on October 9, 2018.

### **RSMPOC Comments**

- A RSMPOC member inquired how many people attended the PRC meeting. Dana responded the meeting had 15-20 people present, maybe 1 from the PRC. Dana will be looking to reconstitute the PRC so that more active members are present.
- A RSMPOC member stated the cumulative construction employment numbers look good but are deceiving. In Building E, they are not meeting the 51% 51 % 15% for Boston residents, people of color and women across all trades. Specifically, for women are only at .3%. It is expected that every contractor is meeting the numbers. Additionally, still asking for representative from Good Foods to come to meeting.
  - A representative from the Windale team stated the jobs numbers have been close. It's almost impossible to meet it in every trade, but if met across the board then they are still meeting it. So numbers 51-51 only in women the project is not meeting and doesn't exceed.
  - A representative from the Nuestra Development team added that early on they said they would try to meet every goal, but were clear they would not be able to meet it in every trade. However, they have fallen short with women workers. From their understanding it would be a new policy if it was required to meet in every trade.
  - A BPDA staff member, expressed can come back with more clarity around that.
  - A RSMPOC member added that for all the trades it won't be met but should be best faith effort.

### **Community Comments**

- A community member added that in other projects such as the Kroc Center the numbers were met. They expressed that they often speak with local people who are interested in working. There is not a lack of interest but lack of training. It's a problem that people are going North or South outside the City.
  - A RSMPOC member stated if subcontractors are not City business owners and are bringing in nonresidents this is a problem. Subcontractors need to be from Boston as well as workers.
  - A representative from the Windale team stated they have been preparing for at least eight years before project will even start. They have a mentorship program through JPNDC. Have as a company been training people for 25 years.
  - A community member and member of the Roxbury Master Plan Monitoring Committee convened by Councilor Janey, stated some contractors should plan much earlier than they do and there are some subcontractors that should never be put on a project and they will be able to provide a list of those subcontractors.

### **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))**

- Tremont Crossing is approximately a \$300-500 million project (a member of the development team stating the \$300 million total development cost outlined on the presentation does not

include one of the residential developments.) The project is a partnership between Feldco Development Corporation and the National Center for African-American Artists. It hosts the NCAAA museum as its cornerstone but also the creation of upwards of 700 residential units and other commercial uses. The project has tentative designation which is still in existence. The project has Article 80 approval but has a couple other zoning permitting requirements to meet.

### **RSMPOC Comments**

- Councilor Janey asked what benchmarks the BPDA is hoping to see.
  - Dana replied they are looking to have project complete permitting, secure financing. The project requires the relocation of a major sewer line, this requires review from Boston Water and Sewer Commission. Before they can go to Zoning Commission for approval of their PDA they must get BWSC approval. Clarity in financing is also required for final designation.
- A RSMPOC member asked what the timeline is exactly as benchmarks have been talked about for a substantial period of time.
  - A representative from Feldco stated relative to financing they are in the enabling phase. Next month they plan to do major site work. They have temporary parking to provide to Whittier and BPS and will complete general grading. They have secured financing for that part of project loan documents are completed only pending executing ground lease with BPDA. For the rest of project in terms of getting construction lease typically look for getting 6 months before, but have a lot of potential lenders they've already spoken with.
  - For an equity development partner they have developed a relationship with Landmarks.
- A RSMPOC member asked where they are at with BJs.
  - The BJs deal is completed. About 70% of all leases are completed which is what is needed for a construction loan. What is left is the smaller retail spaces which would be completed further out.
- In response to a RSMPOC member question about type of housing, a representative from Landmarks stated it is a 23 story tower. There will not be micro units. All will be rental with AMI still being decided. While the minimum is 13%, they understand the City's goal for the project is 20% and have come up with a couple different ways to meet this and will present in the coming weeks.
- A RSMPOC member asked how will assure will not be student housing given the proximity to Northeastern.
  - Year ago they wrote a letter to the PRC outlining commitment of what they understand the community expects. They will have no ties with universities and will not market to students. Are willing to make commitment in writing and will codify in cooperation agreement.
- Councilor Janey stated people going to BJs will be driving as to carry large purchases and asked how traffic will be mitigated.
  - A representative from the development team responded that while 50% of the project will be coming from modes other than cars they have gone through an extensive iterative process with BTM. They will create a dedicated left turn lane at both entrances

and will be coordinating a new traffic light system as well as having ample ride share opportunities.

- Dana clarified in response to a RSMPOC member question that the article 80 process has been completed and what has been articulated by development team has been reviewed by PRC.

### Community Comments

- In response to a community question about timeline a representative from the development team stated they will be making progress in the next couple of months but will probably take 9 to 11 months. Are working with Janey and Consigli construction. Robert Lewis has been hired as consultant to help solicit and recruit minority contractors. Will have to get back on question on if a specific site contractor has been selected.
- A community member mentioned another high rise building on Columbus that is targeting Northeastern students. The building has full amenities, are furnished, and a one bedroom is \$1700. Students will naturally live in the area.
  - A representative from the development team responded this is perfect example of purpose built student housing project that is being marketed towards students. They have agreed not to do those specific things will not be designed like student building will be. Will see distinct difference in how it is marketed.
- A community member asked when will find out the business commitments that have been made and how much they will be paying workers.
  - At last PRC meeting some were shared. There is BJ's, close to a signed lease with Regal cinema, commitment from CVS, Brooklyn Boulders, and Planet Fitness - about 70 % of sq footage. Additionally the team has not forgotten this request and have asked and pushed companies to share this information. They have not been akin to sharing. These are national policies. Getting the information from BJ's was a special case.
  - Additionally, retail only represents part of jobs for 100,000 sq ft of office over 40% of jobs will come from office. Don't have office tenant currently selected. All have been from LMA area will mostly be type of tenant for job. Wouldn't be on campus type jobs such as be doctors and nurses would be back office and would be accessible to range of people from the community.
- A community member asked what would happen to the Boston Police employees who currently park there.
  - Dana responded that those individuals are aware of project and for now using Crescent Parcel as temporary parking. There is knowledge that the parcel will be developed. Police are aware they will have to make accommodations and the BPDA is trying to be a good sister agency.
- A community member mentioned that the new RFPs of public land say that developers have to explain how actions will contribute to gentrification and implications of public land, will this team have to complete that now?
  - Dana answered that the Development with Displacement RFP language that was developed was made for parcels going forward and was stated in RFPs that requirement was not for existing projects. However, it would be relevant for team to still address it.

- Pointed out the project has changed a great deal and asked if there is a point where they have to Article 80 approval again.
  - Approval is in place. If a significant change is made with major changes a Notice of Project Changes would need to be submitted and then would need be reapproved. Point is well taken has gone through iterations but scope has stayed the same.

**Parcel 10 - Madison Tropical:**

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

- Phase 2, the former 2101 Washington St is complete. The development team is currently working on Phase 3, which is a large commercial component with some residential. This is an approximant \$52 million project. The project is currently under designation with the development team working to complete various finance aspects for Phase 3.

**RSMPOC Comments**

- Councilor Janey asked what is being done to attract businesses for part that is not leased.
  - Space remaining is set up to attract a restaurant - the floors and utilities are sized for commercial kitchen. Are looking for operator have gone and back with one particular individual but proposal from restaurant is too large. In this space limited to 65 seats about the size of Suya joint, they were proposing 120 seats.
- A RSMPOC member asked what kind of lease agreement is being offered.
  - Often offer 5 year with multiple extensions have had different offers with different people depending what they were interested in. Will keep at it. A number of folks have come through including office users mostly nonprofits agencies and have had retail users look at it clothing, barber, hair. Challenge has been to build out.
- A RSMPOC member stated there are so many companies looking for class B office space. Handful of parties low 30s for rent. Which is pushing it for Dudley area. The only problem is what is being built is going to be class A office space and not affordable to businesses that are growing in community. Will hope retail floor will be cheaper than that. Will take major credit tenant.
- Are interested in a restaurant because it will be a great addition to the neighborhood and the building as a historic rehab has a lot of character great glass windows and available parking.
- A RSMPOC member suggested the development team reach out to the many caterers in the area.
- Adding on another RSMPOC member suggested reaching out to the Silver Slipper.
  - They have been in contact with them, and do not believe they are interested.

**No Community Comments**

## P 9 – Melnea Hotel and Residences:

<http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/melnea-hotel-and-residences>

- 137 million square feet project, approximately \$50 million dollar development cost. This team has reached final designation meaning they have met all the criteria including securing all financing and pulling of permits for the project. Now the focus is starting construction on the residential component with construction on the hotel underway.

### RSMPOC Comments

- Councilor Janey shared that last Friday and Saturday she had the opportunity to attend the 50th celebration naming of Cass center and would like clarity on naming of this project. There was always the understanding the hotel would somehow be named Melnea and now that it is almost complete, name doesn't incorporate Ms. Cass.
  - A representative in public relations from the development team said that it is in the hands of Marriott and they have to wait for them to make decision and will report back as soon as they have information. Hoping hotel will open February.
- Councilor Janey added she had concerns with the hotel workers out on strike for over a month and the branding material. Information shared with the monitoring committee showed not just removal of Cass name but branding used Boston and South End when this is clearly in Roxbury. The fact that there is already a name on hotel that is not reflective of Melnea Cass seems like an answer.
- John Barros stated the City's position has been to include the name. He believes the developer can name building without infringing on Marriott's branding. The developer and landlord can name the building itself regardless of what the lease is. Also would suggest to Marriott they look to location Roxbury first in marketing.
- Councilor Janey voiced she thought there is a way to both pay homage and brand it Marriott. Form community standpoint there was initially a lot of excitement to drive foot traffic in Dudley. Now, Instead of celebrating opening of hotel they are instead in a stalemate.
- A RSMPOC member stated over next couple of days Marriott's upper management will receive communications from committee members and other groups that this needs to be done.
- A RSMPOC member added looking back over all meetings initially there was a good sense of understanding with Marriott company so is disheartening to hear that now have to abide by national and international policies. She hoped they would remember negotiations and communications that previously happened with Marriott.
- A RSMPOC member stated during earlier part of project there was on open dialogue and now it has been closed. Clarity around permanent jobs is needed.
  - HR director for the hotel stated they have worked with many groups continue and have had some great job fairs that produced quite a few qualified candidates. Also have had interview sessions at career links in Roxbury and can meet with Monitoring Committee.
  - Another representative from the development team added they have begun to actively recruit. Have had 2 job fairs Reggie Lewis at end of august. Have reached out to project

hope, Boston career links, Mandela housing, urban league and handed out information to other community organizations. Job fairs and positions have been in banner and DSNI radio ad. Doing second round interviews 43 positions total.

- Importance of ongoing transparency RSMPOC member stated her cousin is working on the development she didn't know she was going to be here. Added that many of the groups mentioned were suggested by monitoring committee and is important to continue to work with them.

### **Community Comments**

- A community member expressed concern that there are companies and developers coming in under false pretense and by not following what was said in process are disrespecting community and Melena Cass. This is why it important that people from community are watch dogs.
- What are responsibilities of any projects saying one thing and doing another?
  - Dana responded that by and large it is public land expectation is that development team will do right thing. The requirement around specific name is a tough one to legislate.
- John Barros stated the presentation that were made with Melena Cass hotel that we thought were favorable I don't think they tried to do a bait and switch, but are trying to balance corporation and how to respect community. If we had known this was going to be a problem could have stipulated something up front. There are no real legal levers around naming, but now can do a better job going forward.
- A community member asked if Marriott gets to decide.
  - Marriott gets to decide how they brand their hotel. The Developer/landlord can ask how they brand the building i.e "Melena Cass building" still operating even if operator leaves.
- Councilor Janey stated she believed there is way to do both such as Marriot Residence at Melena. Legal Sea Food is an example they have for example they have Legal Crossing in Downtown Crossing there is way to do both.
- A community member asked if the name is falling by the wayside is anything else? What responsibilities are there?
  - John Barros answered the RFP has very specific requirements and new language has been added and continue to work with community. Have taken very seriously trying to make sure is addressed naming.
- A community member asked if there is a legitimate nondiscriminatory reason for rebranding as South End over Roxbury.
  - This is not a decision made by the owners but Marriott.
- John Barros stated the relationships should stay live and open between community and development team.
- Councilor Janey announced the Gentrification and Displacement in Roxbury City Council Hearing will be held Tuesday November 13 5:30pm at the Bolling Building.

Meeting adjourned