



Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee Meeting
Monday, May 3, 2020
6:00 PM to 7:45pm
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Attendees

RSMPOC Members: Valeda Britton, Dorothea Jones, Steven Godfrey, Nefertiti Lawrence, Marisa Luse, Charlotte Nelson, Frederick Fairfield, Susan Sullivan, True-See Allah, Frank Williams

Not in Attendance: Catherine Hardaway, Norman Stembridge,

BPDA Staff: Kelly Sherman, Muge Undemir, Morgan McDaniel, Ocean Luo, Dana Whiteside, and Naoise McDonnell

Link to PowerPoint: www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/76eaa2e1-5450-48af-b221-93919369e7d9

Opening

On May 3rd, 2021 Co-Chair Steven Godfrey of the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Kelly Sherman, BPDA Planner, welcomed all and provided several initial announcements. These announcements included instructions on the use of the Zoom platform, and an introduction of the Spanish and Haitian Creole interpreters. The interpreters made their initial announcements and gave instructions to join the interpretation channels. Kelly continued by providing further Zoom etiquette instructions and a brief overview of the meeting agenda. Steven initiated introductions of the rest of the RSMPOC members and gave an overview of the RSMPOC, its history, and its responsibilities.

Planning Update

Kelly Sherman, BPDA Planner, provided several updates on the PLAN: Nubian process to date. These updates included a review of the recent Parcel 3 (P3) Workshop in April. Topics of this meeting included a review of potential uses and layout of the site, and the solicitation of community feedback. Kelly also announced the release of the P3 Pre-Development Survey to solicit developer feedback on potential uses and layout of the site. Kelly also reported that the nomination period for the Crescent Parcel Project Review Committee (PRC) has closed and the list of the members of the new PRC will be released soon. Lastly, several updates were highlighted on PLAN: Nubian development data, and Northeastern University was introduced to present on their project at 840 Columbus Avenue.

Northeastern University Presentation

The Northeastern University (NU) team began by recalling its last appearance before the RSMPOC in November 2020. The team acknowledged the proximity of their project to P3 and Nubian Square and listed several updates to their project at 840 Columbus Ave since their last appearance. They summarized the project as a redevelopment of the surface parking lot across Tremont Street from Crescent Parcel. As a result of community input, they announced the amount of units has been reduced to 250 units, reducing the amount of new student beds from 945 to 800. Also, the ground floor, 5-story podium will include space for community engagement and economic development programs. One example of the type of programming that Northeastern has already hosted, is a consultant-led small business development workshop. Kelly Sherman, repeated Zoom instructions to view the correct language of the presentation on screen, and opened the floor to RSMPOC and community members for questions.

RSMPOC Comments

- An RSMPOC member stated Northeastern has been open to having future RSMPOC meetings hosted in the new building, but there are still concerns regarding size of building and other potential community benefits.
- An RSMPOC member asked about exploration of mixed student and private housing within the proposed 250 units.
 - NU responded that the city has encouraged as much student housing as possible and they are not aware of any mixed student and private housing.
 - The RSMPOC member asked a follow up question regarding where project review group meetings can be accessed and who is in those review groups.
 - NU responded that Community Advisory Board info can be found on the project website but can also be emailed out if requested.
- An RSMPOC member asked if there are opportunities for NEU students to serve as mentors and teachers to local youth.
 - They are currently exploring a Northeastern University Ambassadors program where students can serve as a message board about NU resources.
- An RSMPOC member asked what does the 5-story podium plus 250 units look like and how does that include 800 student beds.
 - The housing units are to be built on top of the podium and come in a variety of sizes, such as 1-bed, 2-bds, 3-bds, etc. This type of housing size diversity was highly requested by students.
 - The RSMPOC member asked a follow up question about the programs and cooperatives created as a result of the development, will these cooperatives and programs be permanent or temporary.

the current NU master plan. It may be included in their next master plan in 2023.

- An RSMPOC member suggested partnership and continued communication with NU.
- Kelly thanked all for contributions and moved onto updates for the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan (RSMP) parcels.

Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Parcels Update

- Bartlett Station updates
 - Andre Jones, Senior Project Manager, Nuestra Comunidad provided the update.
 - Building B and E complete
 - Building F2 and F4 A80 approved
 - Building F1, F3, F5 beginning A80 process
 - Oasis Park is being designed in partnership with a community advisory committee and is set for construction Q2/Q3 2021.
 - Commercial space in the building had been leased to a grocery store, gym, and pre-school. Those tenants' move-in had been delayed due to the pandemic, but they will soon become able to occupy the building.
- A community asked for the identification of a certain building.
 - It was identified as Building A with first floor commercial space and 60 affordable rental units.
 - The development team would like a restaurant in the commercial space, as per community input.
- A RSMPOC member asked why Bartlett Station PRC members do not come to any of their meetings; and also what number of permanent jobs will be provided at Bartlett Station.
 - The response to the latter question was 100 permanent jobs.
 - The RSMPOC member asked a follow up question, what businesses would employ these positions.
 - These positions would be for tenants at Building B and commercial tenants at Building A and other on-site jobs.
 - The RSMPOC member requested data on the number of jobs and the businesses that will employ these jobs. A grocery store, gym, and school will not equal 100 permanent jobs.
 - This data can be shared, but the exact tenants of Building A are not yet known.
 - Dana Whiteside, BPDA Development Review, responded to the first question of the RSMPOC member that there will be moves made to ensure there is better participation by PRC members.
 - The RSMPOC member responded that this has been promised for nearly 2 years.

- We need PRC members to properly vet Bartlett.
- A community member of the Boston Jobs Coalition (BJC) asked can we get contact info for new employers of Bartlett Station to go over their hiring plan. BJC regularly does this and has done this already with the grocer on site in 2019.
 - Yes, the team can send contact info of new employers
- Kelly Sherman read questions and comments from community members in the chat, including can the data report of Bartlett Station jobs include pay rates; and can the PRC member list be shared.
- Parcel 10 updates
 - Bob Pezzini, VP of Real Estate, Madison Park Development Corporation provided the update.
 - Project Notification Form (PNF) submitted Dec 2020
 - Anticipating Article 80 approval in June 2021
 - City of Boston DND funds and Mass DHCD subsidies were not approved at this time because the project does not have Article 80 approval yet. The team will reapply later this year after anticipated Article 80 approval.
- A RSMPOC member asked since A80 approval is anticipated in 2 months, what community benefits are being created from this project.
 - The response was affordable rental and homeownership units.
 - The RSMPOC member acknowledged the importance of affordable housing, but asked besides housing what benefits will be created for the larger community, since this project is receiving public funds.
 - As the third phase of a larger project, other phases have contributed benefits to the community as well. Tropical Foods is a community benefit, there are other affordable units at other sites, and there are local commercial tenants at another site.
- A community member asked how can this project and site accommodate green space on the Roxbury side of the site and relate to the Melnea Cass Greenway project.
 - Yes, this space will be accommodated on Melnea Cass and Washington St, including bike space and new trees.
- A RSMPOC member asked if we can get a list of Community Benefits from this project site as well as all the other developments in PLAN: Nubian Square.
 - Yes, that can be shared, remembering that this is the 3rd phase of a multi-phase project.
 - The RSMPOC member replied when we do receive these lists of Community Benefits, especially of multi-pharse projects, we would like the list of benefits from the whole project.

- A RSMPOC member raised concern about how these projects specifically benefit children of the community, suggesting scholarships and closer partnerships with local schools. Housing should not be the only community benefit considered.

Steven Godfrey, Co-Chair of the RSMPOC, closed the meeting with hopes for the community benefits, and Bartlett Station jobs data, continued communication and collaboration with Northeastern University, and encouraged all to join and share notice of upcoming PRCs.

Meeting adjourned at 7.45pm.