



**Downtown Waterfront Municipal Harbor Planning
Advisory Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, June 26, 2013
Atlantic Wharf, 290 Congress Street

Attendees

Advisory Group:

Jack Hart, Vivien Li, Lorraine Downey, Joanne Hayes-Rines, Bob Venuti, Suzanne Lavoie, Bruce Berman, Joe Gambino, Rick Dimino, Lois Siegelman, Linda Jonash, Greg Vasil, Ann Thornburg, Jim Klocke, Eric White, Meredith Rosenberg, Jake Glickel, Philip Griffiths, Bud Ris

City of Boston:

Richard McGuinness, BRA; Lauren Shurtleff, BRA; Chris Busch, BRA; Kristin Abbott, Councilor Linehan's Office; Gary Mendoza, Department of Neighborhood Development;

Consultant Team:

Tom Skinner, Durand & Anastas

Government Representatives:

Valerie Gingrich, CZM; Hugh Hawthorne, NPS

Members of the Public:

Morton Zisk, Quinton Kerns, Aeron Hodges, Gary Zimmerman, Aysu Kes Erkul, Tiana Alves, Danielle Pillion, Bill Zielinski, Pam McDermott, Tom Palmer, Sy Mintz, Thomas Nally, Chris Fincham, Victor Brogna, Bill Zielinski, Peter Brill, Don Chiofaro Jr., Jamy Madea, Steven Comen, Steve Mitchell, Robert Stricker, Mary Holland, Jim Duffey, D. Stone, Heidi Wolf, Lara Rosenberg, Sarah Ritch, Peter Nichols, Maria Puopolo

Meeting Summary

Richard McGuinness, BRA, opened the meeting and discussed the Atlantic Wharf venue and referenced the public amenities, water transit dock, BSA space and open space resources associated with the building that resulted from the municipal harbor planning process specific to the property. He mentioned that many of the City's harbor plans are over 10 years old now, noting that harbor plans outline planning goals and objectives that are long-term and require flexibility to accommodate future property owners and development programs. He referenced Fan Pier and Pier 4 as examples where an MHP was developed a decade ago and subsequent amendments have been necessary due to the specificity of the original MHP. He then mentioned the transportation issues raised at the last Advisory Committee meeting and noted that the BRA has discussed the matter the Boston Transportation Department and would be reviewing the issue with the local TMA. He noted the discussion will continue and indicated the City may need to consider planning process and guidelines that address changes in parking ratios and investments to public transit and preferences as they relate to uses that are less traffic intensive and more transit oriented.

Jack Hart, Chair, referenced the proposed development at One Congress Street, Government Center Garage, and the planned reduction in parking and the relationship to transit oriented development.

Suzanne Lavoie, MHPAC member, requested a clarification regarding the Request to Notice to Proceed (RNTP) and the document's reference to the Downtown Community and lack of open space. Chris Busch, BRA, noted that the reference in the RNTP came from the Parks Department's Open Space Plan (2008-2014) which defined the Downtown Community as including the waterfront as well as adjacent neighborhoods.

Bruce Berman, MHPAC member, noted that Zipcar has been working well and can function to assist in alleviating traffic congestion. Ann Thornburg, MHPAC member, indicated that the issue is not just traffic but also night life in the area and people drawn to area attractions, and that a balance needs to be developed. Lois Siegelman, MHPAC member, noted that two things need to be supplemented, one being the MBTA service and the other being ferry services which could better serve Charlestown, Downtown and South Boston.

Rich McGuinness transitioned into discussion of the RNTP indicating that the MHP process is a regulatory exercise and the RNTP is a required submittal which outlines the City's approach, objectives and goals as they relate to the planning area. He noted the document will be submitted to the MA Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM), and subject to public review and comment; the state will then issue a Notice to Proceed which defines the scope and gives direction for the planning process.

Vivien Li, TBHA, inquired as to whether the Committee would be going through the document page by page and when the comments are due. Chris Busch, BRA, indicated a draft of the RNTP was provided to the Committee on June 14th and comments were requested by today's meeting. He further mentioned that the RNTP could be submitted by the end of the week if comments are received and the BRA Director signs off on the document. He then referenced the submittal deadlines for the state's Environmental Monitor, which the RNTP must be noticed in after submission to CZM. Vivien Li, then asked if the Advisory Committee is advisory to the City or to the State. Rich McGuinness verified that the MHPAC is advisory to the City.

Tom Skinner, Durand & Anastas, then provided a presentation on the regulations specific to the RNTP, the document's content, and the RNTP filing process. He noted that the RNTP is a scope, providing an overview of what the City intends to do in the MHP and approach to the MHP, as well as analyze issues related to waterways programmatic issues within the planning area. He specified the RNTP identifies planning issues and opportunities and serves as an official means of informing and engaging the public in the planning process. The draft RNTP and planning objectives were then discussed.

Linda Jonash, MHPAC member, noted that the Greenway Study covered both sides of the Greenway and inquired as to whether the MHP process would address both areas. Richard McGuinness responded that the MHP is specific to areas subject to Chapter 91 jurisdiction so only the waterside parcels adjacent to the Greenway are subject to the planning process. He further clarified that the Greenway Study Guidelines, which apply to the Greenway District would be implemented through zoning changes, with the caveat of the MHP area which will undergo zoning after completion of the MHP process.

Bruce Berman, inquired as to whether there will be a planning analysis of parcels where there are no proposed changes or development programs. Richard McGuinness responded that there would not be further analysis beyond what was completed as part of the Greenway Study if there is no proposed development scheme. Jamy Madeja, Environmental Attorney, asked why an analysis would not occur

for parcels that do not have a defined development program. Richard McGuinness noted that the Greenway Study already conducted that analysis, reviewing all the parcels along the Greenway that could be developed and framing out various height and dimensional parameters for those parcels to ensure they do not degrade or negatively impact the Greenway open space parcels. Tom Skinner also noted that all the property owners within the planning area would be coming in to discuss their properties and any development plans.

Ann Thornburg, noted the RNTP provides a good broad base outline, however, it would be helpful to have more details on the properties within the planning area prior to discussion of substitutions and offsets. Richard McGuinness, noted that the Committee would be provided with details outlining what existing zoning provides, what the Greenway Guidelines outline and if there is a development proposal, how that development program relates to the underlying zoning and planning as well as wind and shadow impacts. He added that we have asked all property owners within the planning area to appear before the Advisory Committee to discuss their property and any proposed changes or modifications. After the presentations the Committee will analyze what is proposed in relation to the Guidelines and Waterways standards and with the technical assistance of the consultants, review how the proper public purpose provisions of the tideland regulations will be preserved and enhanced. He clarified this level of detail and analysis will not be in the RNTP.

Richard McGuinness reiterated that Advisory Committee members may comment on the draft RNTP prior to submission to CZM as well as during the 30 day public comment period after submission to the State. He further noted that the document has been refined based upon comments by CZM, with most of the detail to follow in the MHP document.

Vivien Li, expressed concern with possible changes in City and BRA administration over the course of the planning effort and the value of detail within the RNTP to specify issues that are important to inform the future administration and ensure continuity. She expressed that the document was uneven and lacked emphasis in some areas. Ann Thornburg, added the document should better calibrate big issues within the planning area such as the RNTP reference to the open space shortage in the Downtown Waterfront and better defining open space goals. She also referenced activation within the area and what might be a reasonable goal for activation give space and traffic considerations.

Linda Jonash, expressed concern over the meeting schedule format with the property owners presenting their development plans within a vacuum of public aspirations for opens space and the public realm. Richard McGuinness responded that it is helpful to have the development program s presented first to better understand the planning area and begin to frame out opportunities for mitigation and open space and activation offsets.

Rick Dimino, A Better City, emphasized the importance of framing aspirations as the committee studies the planning area the need to avoid getting into a level of detail more appropriate for the MHP within the RNTP. Bruce Berman seconded Rick Dimino's comments.

Vivien Li, referenced new insights on the Harbor Garage and Harbor Towers resulting from the walking tours held last March and the importance of hearing from all the property owners within the planning area at future meetings. Bud Ris commented that changes within the context of the planning process is not just possible on the three parcels where development is anticipated, but change is possible everywhere, and emphasized the importance of hearing from all the property owners. Ann Thornburg

added that Harbor Towers Trustees have been focused on how the ground level environment can be improved at Harbor Towers and attempts to be responsive to comments on pedestrian flow and use.

Jamie Medeja, requested that the RNTP address all the parcels within the planning area and asked that all the properties are planned for. She expressed concern that property owners may not have standing in the future if every parcel is not planned.

Steven Comen, Harbor Towers resident, asked that the Chapter 91 process addresses future construction logistics and possible impacts on water quality, the harbor, the environmental and transportation.

Sy Mintz, Broad Street resident, raised concern over access to information and documents related to the planning effort and the need to capitalize on input from the public and the Advisory Committee. Richard McGuinness noted that all the presentation materials and documents are posted on the BRA's webpage and the MHPAC meetings and document related comment periods are opportunities for input.

Victor Brogna, North End resident, inquired as to the web address to review the RNTP. Chris Busch responded that the RNTP has only been distributed to the MHPAC members for input and there will be a public comment period on the document after it is submitted to the state.

Richard McGuinness then discuss the formation of the MHPAC subcommittees which include the topics of climate change, programming and water dependent uses, to delve more deeply into some of the topics specific to the planning area. He noted the initial member lists were developed based upon MHPAC member interests and areas of expertise, however, any member may participate in any of the subcommittee groups. He further mentioned the working group meetings will open to the public and scheduled for the early fall.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:25 p.m.