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Date: 28-Oct-09

Project: Harrison Albany Corridor/South End Strategic Plan

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Subject: Community Meeting #1

Attendees: BRA: Sue Kim, Carlos Montanez, Marie Mercurio, Alexa Pinard, Jim Fitzgerald, Heidi Burbidge (Artist Space Initiative).
Consultants: M. David Lee, Larry Bluestone, Tom Maistros. Other City representatives: Bill Conroy (BTD)

- 1 This was the first community presentation for the Harrison-Albany Strategic Planning Process to the South End community-at-large. It was held at the Franklin House in the South End (11 E. Newton Street). This was an evening meeting from 6:15 pm - 8:00 pm.
- 2 Next meeting of the Advisory Group is tentatively set for November 18 at 8:15 pm. All community representatives were invited to attend. It was also noted that there will be an additional community wide meeting to present the final plan. A walking tour for AG members was held on October 19 at 3:00 pm for the Back Streets and Medical sub-areas.
- 3 Agenda is to inform the community of the general plan purpose and of the work that has been completed by the AG, BRA and project consultants to date as well as next steps.
- 4 The meeting started with an introduction and summary of the planning process to date by the BRA staff. Also the AG Co-Chairs provided their insights.
- 5 Reaction to New York Streets sub-area land use diagram was to address expansion of residential uses into the Harrison-Albany corridors - want to preserve the existing mix of uses and character of study area - redirect future growth to insure compatibility with existing uses. Want to address opportunities for job creation but also determine what compatible uses might be considered. Balance neighborhood and business needs to assess future build out.
- 6 BRA response - Land use and dimensional recommendations to be incorporated into a separate rezoning process. Used Fenway as an example of process. Of particular note was the use of incentives to achieve desired land uses and densities set out in the planning process.
- 7 David Lee initiated presentation (can be found on BRA web site).
- 8 Old Dover not referenced - is a distinct district and neighborhood group should be identified. There was concern that it was not represented adequately in the AG.
- 9 Susan Lee - Pleased with process - how can we bring more people to the City - mixed income - what is timeline for completion - public hearings will be scheduled to review final plan in early 2010 including density and zoning recommendations - good developed vision that reflect the character of the existing areas. Zoning process will be managed by BRA staff with a full public process.
- 10 Susan Batista - good meeting - 800 lb gorilla is the bio square lab - deterrent to growth of residential use
- 11 New York streets sub-area redevelopment - what is impact of Chinatown planning process. Rezoning is not a changing of boundaries of neighborhoods not extension of Chinatown. Process is not about establishing neighborhood boundaries but implementing a plan that is beneficial to the City as a whole, the existing owners and uses and each adjoining community.
- 12 Bill Moy expressed opinion that Chinatown boundary extends to east Berkeley. BRA reiterated that process was looking at creating a land use plan that is not neighborhood specific but good for all neighborhood and business interests
- 13 Circulation patterns for Washington Street: Will be recommendations that need to be developed in coordination of all policy bodies
- 14 The BackStreets sub-area should not be named as such, but the "Massachusetts Streets" sub-area. This sub-area needs street lights, sidewalks, gutters and storm drains that keep water out of basements
- 15 Back Streets sub-area- Community member stated that there should be more mixed-use particularly adding residential in both Back Streets and New York Streets sub-areas. Current plan reflects recommendation of the AG and City and don't conflict with existing zoning/uses.
- 16 SOWA sub-area discussion focused on MBTA site. Concerned about potential plan for rezoning - don't believe the existing zoning and landmark are not conflicted. Should not be changed. Want letter introduced as part of planning. Noted by BRA that zoning change is not definitive - changes only considered if needed to implement plan objectives.
- 17 An AG member mentioned that they did not think that New York Streets sub-area should be only 18 hour commercial uses and not residential ("18 hour uses" suggested in the sub-area's vision statement). BRA/consultant noted that language meant to represent a vibrant mixed use area not exclusive of housing - 18 hours suggests not exclusive office/light industrial uses that operate 8 to 5.

- 18 AG members noted that quality of life issues have been included thus far in the AG working session discussions - how many people love the diversity of this place.
- 19 Back Streets business owner - Infrastructure was promised when police station built but not delivered.
- 20 Should be noted that AG discussions reflected toward a more open mix of uses.
- 21 AG member reinforced understanding that there will be no net reduction of jobs in this process. - Suggested this language be added to the vision for the BackStreets sub-area.
- 22 Question about interpreting presentation - What is the drawing meant to show? BRA - reflect idea of what land uses might be allowed in subsequent rezoning process.
- 23 Does this mean that the land use designation shown on maps excludes those uses not shown. No. The list of uses is not meant to be exhaustive.
- 24 List of uses in presentation is not meant to be exhaustive but final zoning will be.
- 25 Question about vertical (ground floor) land use - may want to consider office at base.
- 26 Encourage incorporation of more green open space particularly in New York Streets area - suggested that there be green space in the center. Need to make connections under viaduct - also need to show more open space (green) throughout.
- 27 BRA - may look at providing a plan that shows the overall pedestrian/open space system.
- 28 BRA - Acknowledged that process is communicating the issues raised in the AG meetings
- 29 Should note that neighborhood is eyeing area under the viaduct for neighborhood parking needs
- 30 What about the Perkins-Elmer sites in the BackStreets sub-area? Only use preferred to not be included in redevelopment of those sites is residential.
- 31 R. Walsh (Co-Chair) closing comments - presentation was illustrative not prohibitive. Agreed that Back Streets sub-area name should be changed to Massachusetts Streets sub-area.
- 32 Marc LaCasse (Co-Chair) mentioned that there has really been a diverse set of interests expressed in the process.

