

Hyde Park Planning and Rezoning Advisory Group Working Session Meeting #11  
(Notes and Comments from the public – open to the floor from 6:45pm-8:30pm)

-Regarding new development on Fairmount AV across from the firehouse: are we addressing them in logical manner, to allow enough parking? Why allow further congestion in an already crowded area? Firehouse in the mix is an important consideration. Most people have cars, how many per unit?

SWBCDC is managing this project. There will be a separate Article 80 project review for this project. This project is not in tandem with the BRA's strategic neighborhood planning and rezoning initiative. Since they will file for their project (most likely) before the new zoning is in place, they will have to conform to the existing "base code" for Hyde Park.

-The further out you go, the more you need a car. We're at a fringe.

Understood. Hyde Park is very different from living in the Back Bay or the South End where you are less likely to need a car on a daily basis. But there are parts of Hyde Park that are very close to transit (multiple bus lines, commuter rail lines).

-Working in the square: we have X amount of space to park in, behind the bank building. Parking spaces get taken quickly in that end of the square. It's not their parking lot. Multi-level garage should be provided: it would help.

-Transit-oriented development parking: I don't see evidence of a "trend" of getting rid of cars. The BRA will provide evidence of where this is successful.

-CPR organization submitted a letter. It is an opposition letter. Advisory Group should review it. The concepts on the website were alarming.

These are concepts: people used them as a resource. The Advisory Group has a copy of the CPR letter.

-What densities are we are seeking to attract and retain?

Same densities for the residential areas and industrial areas.

We are proposing a slightly higher density in the Squares since that area is closer to transit.

-Example of Newton Center used for signage. Comprised of stores and lots of parking. Not apartments.

The BRA has plenty of mixed use photos of other town centers either in Boston or elsewhere

-There is a whole bunch of myths and truths, what are they? What is on the board now?

-Truth: SWBCDC is not part of this process

-Truth: There are no 6-story or 9-story buildings slotted for development. Those were concepts that some AG members asked about for illustrative purposes. We are talking about maybe adding some floors for offices or homes...the number of floors is still an open discussion.

-Truth: There is no city mandate for growth, density, housing units

-What environmental impact have you looked at for infrastructure? How much is going to cost the people? Who develops anything without looking?

For any project >20,000 s.f. and includes 15+ dwelling units, that project will go under extensive community review (including environmental) through the Article 80 process. See the Boston Zoning Code for description of Article 80 (<http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/pdf/ZoningCode/Article80.pdf>)

-What if Hyde Park was like it used to be? There were shops in the square, people walked to the square, now people don't want to go to the square.

-This issue is parking and density. You can't have both. When you have too many people in one place, the services can't take care of it. What if we start telling people you can put up a two story domicile with 21 units. We can barely get through Hyde Park now. There is nothing to walk to now.

Transit-oriented development suggests reduced parking needs for residents living close to transit.

-We already have enough people living here. That's what we're trying to say.

-The generation before stayed. Now there is nothing to go to in the square.

-We need more companies, not more people living here.

-If we allow it, it will be built. Question: I live close to an impacted area, on Maple Street. How will it impact my neighborhood? What studies are being done, specifically about traffic on my street? For any project >20,000 s.f. and includes 15+ dwelling units, that project will go under extensive community review (including traffic and transportation) through the Article 80 process. See the Boston Zoning Code for description of Article 80 (<http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/pdf/ZoningCode/Article80.pdf>)

-How can you access this information? <http://tinyurl.com/HPzoning>

I'm afraid of Saint Anne's School. I'm afraid of a developer coming in bringing 50 units. For any project >20,000 s.f. and includes 15+ dwelling units, that project will go under extensive community, environmental, traffic and transportation, public works, etc review through the Article 80 process. See the Boston Zoning Code for description of Article 80 (<http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/pdf/ZoningCode/Article80.pdf>)

-Are you looking to redistrict neighborhoods? There is creep now.

The BRA is not "redistricting". The BRA is going to rezone using the old boundaries from the current zoning map to do the rezoning. The boundary lines may change slightly only to reflect existing uses.

-The parcel that is zoned residential: if he wants to fill a vacancy, he now has to go to the zoning board of appeals every time.

Perfect example of how the BRA may tweak boundary lines to reflect existing uses (Tutu Italiano in a residential district currently; the BRA will recommend to change the boundary line so the owner is in a commercial district and any future improvements to the plaza will hopefully not require a variance from ISD).

-Comment to the Advisory Group: I would like you to assess your belief that living next to train lines reduces the need for cars. Measuring parking should be done by the number of people who go there and visit there.

-Why don't we leave the zoning intact the way it is now for the Squares? Why not keep it at the current zoning for three stories.

The Strategic Plan recommendations would suggest a slight change in physical form of the Squares in response to the large number of issues that the BRA has heard about the Squares. How can negative be turned into positive without change?

-Old estimates for population growth were used. It is actually growing not shrinking.

BRA response: The BRA's Research Dept said that the demographic-socioeconomic summary that is being referred to here was done for Hyde Park prior to the City contesting the Census Bureau about the City's overall population being misrepresented as decreasing. Since those overall numbers ultimately increased overall due to the petitioning by the City, our summary for Hyde Park should show an increase (but only slightly) as well. The BRA Research Dept is happy to get that updated summary completed for the final report. This demographic summary is something standard that the BRA provides for all planning reports, and again, our interest in exploring slightly greater heights in the Squares was not predicated on the findings of this summary.

-Concerns from a resident on Truman Highway:

-A big piece of the pie is missing. The stakeholders who own the property in the square. The major players who own the land are not part of the discussion. How can we move forward?  
The BRA continues to invite them to meetings.

-Overlays of concepts are wonderful, but unless we have the owners and unless we can make meaning, we can't go forward. What can we do to bring them to the table?  
They can not be forced to attend meetings.

-The state controls the highway, but I live on property controlled by city zoning. Is this zoning piece part of that bigger picture?

-Lot sizes. New numbers were put up. Would the average size of lots be cut in half?

NO. Lot sizes would remain the same. Names of the zoning districts would change.

S-.3 → 1F-9000 (minimum lot size = 9000 s.f.)

S-.5 → 1F-6000 (minimum lot size = 6000 s.f.)

R-.5 → 2F-5000 (minimum lot size = 5000 s.f. for 1-family / 8000 s.f. for 2-family)

R-.8 → 3F-4000 (minimum lot size = 4000 s.f. for 1-family / 6000 s.f. for 2-family / 8000 for 3-family)

H-1 → MFR (minimum lot size = 5000 s.f. for 1<sup>st</sup> unit, 1000 s.f. for each addtl' unit)

-A lot of cancer in the neighborhood. Lives across from a former tannery. Concerns about unearthing and putting living beings on that soil. Brain, lung and breast cancer are a major issue. Have studies looked at this?

Any large scale residential development project will have to be cleaned up to residential standards, if to be constructed on a brownfield site. If large enough to trigger Article 80 review, there would be a coordinated environmental component as part of the larger review process.

-Water Street ended just beyond Dana AV. If that was turned into the old Water Street. You want vision...but it's the residents' vision.

-The property owners raised rents on stores that we loved to go to. People raising rents drove out businesses people like. Tailor shop, cleaners and clothing store went out of business because the rent was raised so much. Is there any way to stop that kind of thing?

Property owners set their own rents. Hyde Park Main Streets may have examples of local commercial rents. Most likely, they are much less than other neighborhoods in the City.

-I don't feel safe in Hyde Park. A lot of people don't feel safe walking around. There is too much stuff going that we're afraid of.

Enforcement with E-18

-At the last meeting there was a promise we would see the plan from Roslindale.

Please contact Marie Mercurio at the BRA for a hard copy at

"marie.mercurio.bra@cityofboston.gov" or 617-918-4352. Otherwise, download a copy at

"[http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/pdf/PlanningPublications/Ros\\_finalreport.pdf](http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/pdf/PlanningPublications/Ros_finalreport.pdf)"

-People that use the neighborhood for cut-throughs to get where they are going have a bearing on what you're trying to do.

The BRA has been made aware of certain cut-throughs in the neighborhood through the neighborhood strategic planning process. Talk with the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services Representative, Councilor Consalvo's office, Boston Transportation Office or your local police (E-18) for enforcement and follow-up.

-I am very disturbed about Saint Anne's School. That has me very worried.

Any large development project will go through a thorough Article 80 public community process before being built.

-I bowl every Wednesday at Ron's in a seniors league. We have a good team- it is a great place and great example of the kind of place that should be used to encourage people to stay in Hyde Park.

-Are we going to reward the bad behavior of the property owner over the last 15 years? Are you saying you are using zoning to reward these kind of people?

-If you have a better mousetrap people will find their way to your door. If you don't have a product that people want, your business will fail. Changing the zoning won't change their business.

Agreed. But it will allow and forbid the types of businesses that the community would like to see in the future, in the event ownership changes hands. Also, zoning will guide and require better design ideas for storefronts and signage to a greater extent than what the existing zoning is doing.

-The stakeholders are us, not the business owners. The only issue we're all here for is: I think zoning is being responsible to our neighbors and the children we'll bring into our neighborhood.

-What do we have to do to have safe neighborhoods? We are the stakeholders.