

## 11/16/10 Hyde Park Advisory Group Working Session #13 Meeting Notes/Comments:

This meeting was open to the public.

All but three Advisory Group members were present.

The consultant team (CSS) continued a presentation of draft recommendations for the Hyde Park Neighborhood Strategic Plan. The first part of the presentation was made at the prior 10/19/10 meeting. This draft list is posted on the project website.

Timeline: Draft recommendations have been presented in their entirety to the Advisory Group and public members in attendance of both the October and November meetings. There will be no meeting in December, but a draft plan will be presented to the Advisory Group in January 2011 (tentative) in a public setting. After incorporating any comments to the draft plan, a subsequent community-wide meeting will be held in February 2011 (tentative).

### Comments included:

- One Advisory Group member questioned the recommendation on potentially widening the sidewalk in Cleary Square (along River Street, heading east). Concern was about narrowing the travel lanes, which already seemingly tight and congested. They were not sure as to how great of a benefit the widening of 2' would be.  
Response: this would be more likely a longer-term recommendation in the plan. The BRA knows that Public Works has been in the neighborhood – is in the neighborhood – doing improvements. So, any new improvements would have to be done in the longer-term future.
- An Advisory Group member wanted to know more about specific uses allowed in industrial zoning both presently and in other previously-adopted neighborhood zoning codes.  
Response: The subsequent rezoning process will take a very detailed look at this, but for now, the overall recommendation for industrial districts is broad, suggesting that LI-1 will be more restrictive in industrial uses (and potentially allow artists' mixed use – i.e., work space/residential), while LI-2 will most likely be less restrictive in industrial uses. Marie Mercurio at the BRA has compiled an industrial comparison of uses treated in both LI-1 and LI-2 districts found in Roslindale and Brighton, respectively. These are both neighborhoods that have been previously rezoned. Roslindale has LI-1; Brighton has LI-1 and LI-2. Please contact her for a copy of this at “marie.mercurio.bra@cityofboston.gov” or 617-918-4352.
- An Advisory Group member is slightly disappointed about 40'/3 story height recommendation in the Squares. Believes that the community needs to capitalize on the location of the three commuter rail stations and look toward the future.
- An Advisory Group member mentioned \$50,000 in time and fees that the Applicant had to spend for the 3-story Townsends mixed-use building to become constructed. The Member suggested that the new zoning involve less process for projects that seemingly provide vitality to the commercial district to so as not hinder economic development in the future. Same Member agrees that population increase will likely happen in Hyde Park, but that this process should not “zone away” those increases since a small influx of people over time means overall economic growth for a community
- Carole Schlessinger from CSS recommended a “payment in lieu of parking” strategy to respond to the issue which suggested that public parking is deficient in the Squares. Some municipalities allow developers to pay a fee in lieu of providing the parking spaces required by the zoning ordinance, then use the revenue to finance public parking spaces (i.e., parking structure) to replace the private parking

spaces the developers would have needed to provide. There was general support from the Advisory Group on this, but the question remains how to do it. Hyde Park would be the first neighborhood in the City to do this.

- An Advisory Group member was in support of the height limit being designated only by feet so as to allow the grade to determine the actual number of stories in that building. There seemed to be general support for this recommendation from both the Advisory Group and audience, and suggested that anything >40' should have to go through a detailed review process.
- An Advisory Group member asked how fine-grained the detail needed to be when looking at the commercial districts. Each project will be different from the next and will be reviewed on a case by case basis. No one exact height will be perfectly appropriate for each and every development that may come into Hyde Park. It depends on a case-by-case basis.
- The public again commented with concerns of the feasibility of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) given that the transit being proposed with additional heights and density is lower-frequency commuter rail, not high frequency subway service. Examples were given of where TOD has lowered car ownership. An example of mixed use TOD was given in Dorchester along the Red Line. This was suggested that the examples were not a one to one comparison. The cost and fare structure that the MBTA has set for commuter rail needs to change as well. A resident suggested that any increase in frequency on the lines serving Hyde Park will “never happen in our lifetime”. Any recommendations to suggest changes with the MBTA schedule, frequency, fare, cost and service will be duly noted in the neighborhood strategic plan.
- A resident asked about new development potentially going in across the street from the Fire Station, and would this development have to be reviewed by BPS and BFD. Tai Lim, Project Manager at the BRA spoke to the BRA process and assured the community that any large scale development mixed use project >20,000 s.f. of development or  $\geq 15$  housing units would have a full review by the community and all city agencies.
- A resident mentioned that there needs to be an improved (bus) connection from Fairmount Hill to Forest Hills.
- Again, the topic of controversial uses such as churches, day cares, and group homes, was brought up in this meeting.

Response: The subsequent rezoning process will take a very detailed look at this. Marie Mercurio at the BRA has compiled a comparison of these uses treated in all districts found in Hyde Park, Roslindale, Mattapan, W. Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, and Dorchester. Only Hyde Park, of all of these neighborhoods, has not been rezoned. The summary of this comparison shows that Churches must be allowed in all districts in all neighborhoods as per a State law (Dover Amendment), a stand-alone Day Care facility is treated as an education institution and use restrictions can be placed on them. Accessory Family Day Care seems to be allowed in most residential districts (State law?), but are more restricted in the commercial areas. Group Homes (General) as defined to include residents recovering from addiction and operated by the Commonwealth, can be restricted in the various zoning districts, while Group Home (Limited), as defined to include residents with mental or physical disabilities, seems to be allowed in all residential districts (State law?). Please contact Marie for a copy of this at “marie.mercurio.bra@cityofboston.gov” or 617-918-4352.