



**MassDOT Turnpike Air Rights Parcels #12-15
CAC Working Meeting #4
Thursday, November 10, 2011, 6:30 p.m.
Location: The Boston Conservatory, Concert Room**

CAC Attendees:

Brandon Beatty, Back Bay Resident
Kathleen Brill, Fenway Civic Association (FCA)
Fritz Casselman, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB)
Valerie Hunt, Fenway Neighborhood Resident
David Lapin, Community Music Center
Meg Mainzer-Cohen, Back Bay Association
Barbara Simons, Berklee Task Force
Steve Wolf, Fenway Community Development Corporation (FCDC)

Ex-Officio Attendees:

Massachusetts State Representative Marty Walz
David Blaisdell, Office of Massachusetts State Representative Marty Walz
Elizabeth Corcoran-Hunt, Office of Massachusetts State Representative Byron Rushing

City of Boston Attendees:

Jonathan Greeley, BRA
Lauren Shurtleff, BRA

State of Massachusetts Attendees:

Robin Blatt, MassDOT
Peter O'Connor, MassDOT
Martin Polera, MassDOT
William Tuttle, MassDOT

Members of the Public:

Stefan Bieri, Resident of 360 Newbury
Kenan Bigby, Trinity Financial
Alexandra Brax, Chiofaro Company
Derrick Chan, Resident of 360 Newbury
Despina Chrysochos, Resident of 360 Newbury
Dharmena Downey, FCDC
Margaret Driscoll, Resident of 360 Newbury
Jim Dunn, Boston Architectural College
Frank Edwards, Trinity Financial
Steven Gallanter, Fenway Resident
Doug Husid, Goulston Storrs
Walt Hunt, FCA
Lilly Jacobson, FCDC
Christopher Janes, Resident of 360 Newbury
Chris Julian, Resident of 360 Newbury

Melissa Julian, Resident of 360 Newbury
Bernard Lidestri, Resident of 360 Newbury
Nancy Ludwig, ICON Architecture
Matt Marotta, ICON Architecture
Kathleen Means, Resident of 360 Newbury
Steve Mitchell, Chiofaro Company
Chris Nolan, Resident of 360 Newbury
Karla Rideout, Resident
Steven Riggs, Berklee College of Music
Martin G. Schaefer, Resident of 360 Newbury
Tina Schaefer, Resident of 360 Newbury
Carol Sharp, Resident of 360 Newbury
Stephen Sorkin, Resident
Peter Sougarides, Samuels & Associates
Bill Whitney, Berklee College of Music
Xinyne Wang, FCDC
Adam Weiner, Weiner Ventures
Dwight Wyatt, Resident of 360 Newbury
Matt Zahler, Trinity Financial

Meeting Summary

On Thursday, November 10, 2011, the fourth working session of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Turnpike Air Rights Parcels 12 – 15 Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was called to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. in the Concert Room of the Boston Conservatory by Jonathan Greeley, BRA Planner. Jonathan reviewed the agenda, noting that tonight represents the first of a series of meetings where the developers who had submitted responses to the 2008 MassDOT Request for Proposals (RFP) will present their projects to the CAC. Once the proposals for each parcel have been vetted, the 12 CAC members will take a vote to make recommendations to MassDOT. MassDOT will take the CAC's recommendation into account and then make the ultimate decision. Following that, the selected proponent(s) will begin the Article 80 Development Review Process with the City.

Fritz Casselman, CAC Co-Chair and NABB, added that the CAC members should look at each proposal with an open mind, and take note of the positives and negatives for each proposed project.

Fritz then turned the meeting over to Kenan Bigby, the Project Manager for Trinity Financial, who gave a PowerPoint presentation (available on the BRA's project website: <http://www.tinyurl.com/Parcels12-15CAC>) of their proposals for Parcels 12 and 13, which they submitted proposals to MassDOT for back in 2008. Kenan explained that they have advanced their ideas for Parcel 13 more since then, owing to the fact that they were the only team to submit a proposal for Parcel 13. For this reason, they have been able to go out and begin working with the community on refining their proposal. Nancy Ludwig, President and Senior Principal at ICON Architecture, Trinity's architect for Parcels 12 and 13, also led a discussion of the evolution of the proposal's detailed design.

Kenan explained that Trinity Financial chose to add the Boston Architectural College (BAC) to their proposal to make the project work better for the surrounding community and the BAC. He

introduced Jim Dunn, the Executive Vice President of the BAC, who explained the college's existing operations and use of space in the immediate vicinity of their campus, which is in the process of expanding to better accommodate the needs of their students. With the purchase of the former Institute for Contemporary Art building on Boylston Street in 2006, the school is now in the midst of redesigning the alley behind in order to make it more amendable, since it will connect to their main building on the corner of Newbury and Hereford Streets. Jim continued by noting that the school hopes to be able to house approximately 200 students if the Trinity proposal for Parcel 13 is chosen to proceed; this would allow approximately one fifth of the existing students to be housed on campus.

Questions and comments made by the CAC in response to the Trinity's presentation included the following:

- Fritz Casselman commented that he would like to have seen more detail on the proposal for Parcel 12.
- In response to a question from David Lapin, Community Music Center, Nancy Ludwig replied that there is a connection from the residential lobby to the parking garage.
- In response to a question from Kathleen Brill, FCA, Nancy replied that the redundant elevator for access to the MBTA Green Line at the Hynes Convention Center station would occur at the other end of the platform by Massachusetts Avenue. She added that while the MBTA does not currently have funding for this work, they have met with the MBTA and their consultant, Kleinfelder SEA, to discuss preliminary plans.
- In response to a question from Valerie Hunt Fenway Neighborhood Resident, regarding the lack of funding by the MBTA for this modification, Kenan Bigby indicated that if selected, Trinity will work with MassDOT and the MBTA to build the access into the building once the funding is available.
- Fritz Casselman noted that the tunnel beneath Massachusetts Avenue should be explored as a route to enter the station directly from Parcel 12.
- Steve Wolf, FCDC, commented that he appreciated the gap wall concept on Massachusetts Avenue that would provide the opportunity for some sort of design element along the sidewalk adjacent to the Parcel 13 building.
- In response to a follow-up comment from Steve Wolf, Nancy replied that the current massing scheme for Parcel 13 is largely a result of the structural constraints facing the project. The design will continue to evolve as the project moves through the Article 80 process.
- In response to a question from Brandon Beatty, Back Bay Resident, Nancy responded that the tallest portions of the Parcel 13 building are located on air rights. She also explained that the building's structure will rest on caissons that are drilled down within the existing median between the travel lanes on the Massachusetts Turnpike below.
- David Lapin asked about the marketability of locating dwelling units on the north side of the Parcel 13 building facing the Turnpike. Kenan replied that there will not be any units facing north, since the building's corridor will be on the north side.
- In a follow up question, David Lapin asked about the combination of student housing and rental units in one building. Kenan explained that the buildings will function independent of one another.
- Fritz Casselman asked how Trinity plans to enliven Boylston Street. Nancy replied that while they are still in the conceptual phase, she envisions a restaurant or retail space, and added that the BAC lobby will be an active display space for student works, similar to the gallery space on Newbury Street.

- In response to a question from Kathleen Brill, Kenan replied that the parking garage for Parcel 13 will be accessed off of Boylston Street, with the alley in the rear to be used for service access only. Kenan added that they have not yet performed a transportation study, but they have spoken with the community about the use of the alley.
- In response to a question from Barbara Simons, Berklee Task Force, Kenan indicated that while the project was originally conceived as a condo building, the project team will revisit this before construction.
- In a follow-up question from Barbara Simons, Kenan responded that the BAC would work with the BRA to determine whether this expansion would trigger Institutional Master Plan (IMP) review. Currently, the school provides the City with information on their operations.
- Meg Mainzer-Cohen, CAC Co-Chair and Back Bay Association, asked if there are any air quality restrictions since the project will be located about the Turnpike. Peter O'Connor, Director of Real Estate and Asset Development for MassDOT, replied that because Parcel 13 will be built on a deck and not above a tunnel, there are less challenges to the project in this respect. Nancy added that this will be investigated in detail during the Article 80 process.

Questions and comments made by the public in response to the Trinity's presentation included the following:

- In response to a question Dwight Wyatt, Resident of 360 Newbury, Kenan responded that the orientation of the building on Parcel 13 is in response to the structural constraints rather than the noise from the Turnpike below. To clarify, Nancy added that there should not be any increase to noise levels in the surrounding area as a result of the building's construction, but stressed that a noise study will be performed as part of the Article 80 process.
- Chris Julian, Resident of 360 Newbury, asked if Trinity had considered a lower building on Parcel 13 that spans the whole section of the Turnpike. Kenan replied that they had looked at other building configurations – but noted that because of the structural constraints associated with air rights development, these other configurations were not feasible. He added that the BRA's Civic Vision for Turnpike Air Rights document also guided the development of the building's design. Nancy also noted that the podium cost is the most difficult to bear in projects like this, so they tried to minimize it as much as possible.
- In response to a member of the public about the project timeline, Kenan explained that the next step in the process is to proceed with design development and the Article 80 process, but that this will not move forward until the development team has received the green light from the CAC and MassDOT.
- Dwight Wyatt asked how the residents of 360 Newbury Street should engage in this project, noting that the project will have a negative impact on the views from his apartment. Brandon Beatty responded that residents should attend the CAC meetings, as well as contact Boston City Councilor Michael Ross and Massachusetts State Representative Marty Walz, and make their views known.
- In response to a follow-up question from Dwight Wyatt about who Trinity met with at 360 Newbury, Kenan replied that they have met with the Board of Trustees, who have been opposed to all of the schemes presented by Trinity. Jonathan stressed that the BRA has only just seen these most recent proposals, and that there is still a long way to go. The CAC includes representatives from the neighborhood and 360 Newbury.

Moreover, Parcels 12-15 were all identified as potential development sites in the late 1990s. Meg Mainzer-Cohen added that all of the CAC members have been asked to keep an open mind until all of the proposals for each of the parcels have been presented.

- Christopher Janes, Resident of 360 Newbury, commented that the renderings on the western side of the building are lacking. Kenan replied that they are still in the conceptual stage, and that there are still many layers of review ahead, including the Article 80 Development Review process, review by the Boston Civic Design Commission, review by the Back Bay Architectural Commission, and review by the CAC. The final design will be based on that process. Fritz Casselman added that the meeting in January will provide the CAC and public with an opportunity to review the other proposal for Parcel 12, submitted by Weiner Ventures. Lauren Shurtleff, BRA Planner, also stressed that all of the original submittals to the MassDOT RFP in 2008 can be found on the BRA's project website.
- Dwight Wyatt asked why the bulk of the proposed building for Parcel 12 is located over the Turnpike when there is a cost premium associated with building over air rights, adding that in his opinion, the building will block the view of the sun from further down Newbury Street, towards the Boston Common. Kenan replied that the proposal was put together based on the guidelines established in the Civic Vision for Turnpike Air Rights, which established a preference for height along the Massachusetts Avenue corridor.
- Tina Schaefer, Resident of 360 Newbury, asked if the Civic Vision could be revisited, particularly in how it relates to 360 Newbury. Meg Mainzer-Cohen responded that this has been mentioned, noting that the CAC process represents a step in the fulfillment of the Vision.
- Christopher Janes commented that the parking ratios proposed by Trinity seem low since there is not a lot of parking in the neighborhood. Kenan replied that this is an open topic of discussion, noting that while some people would prefer there to be more parking, others would prefer there to be less.

In addressing comments from the public, Jonathan Greeley noted that the Civic Vision for Turnpike Air Rights has identified Air Rights Parcels 12-15 as potential development sights since 2000. He also reiterated that this was the beginning of an extended public process where the CAC would be evaluating each proposal for the Air Rights Parcels, listening to public comments, and making recommendations to MassDOT. The CAC's role would then continue as the selected development teams proceed through the BRA's Article 80 permitting process. Additionally, many of the questions raised by both the CAC and public are shared by the BRA and MassDOT and would need to be addressed as the process moves forward.

In closing, Fritz Casselman commented that the CAC will have to take into account all the competing interests. He added that many of the CAC members are residents of the surrounding neighborhood and are familiar with the concerns expressed by the residents of 360 Newbury, as many of them have witnessed development like this take place near them.

The next CAC meeting will be held on December 1st at 6:00 pm in St. Cecilia's Parish Hall, located at 18 Belvidere Street.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.