



**MassDOT Turnpike Air Rights Parcels #12-15
CAC Working Meeting #6
Wednesday, January 11, 2012, 6:00 p.m.
Location: St. Cecilia's Parish Hall**

CAC Attendees:

Brandon Beatty, Back Bay Resident
Kathleen Brill, Fenway Civic Association (FCA)
Fritz Casselman, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB)
David Gamble, Boston Society of Architects (BSA)
Valerie Hunt, Fenway Neighborhood Resident
David Lapin, Community Music Center
Meg Mainzer-Cohen, Back Bay Association
Barbara Simons, Berklee Task Force
Jan Sprawka, Fenway Studios
Gil Strickler, St. Cecilia's Parish
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
Johanna Sena, Office of Boston City Councilor Michael Ross
Michelle Snyder, Office of Boston City Councilor Michael Ross

City of Boston Attendees:

Jonathan Greeley, BRA
Lauren Shurtleff, BRA

State of Massachusetts Attendees:

Robin Blatt, MassDOT
Martin Polera, MassDOT
Bill Tuttle, MassDOT

Members of the Public:

Kenan Bigby, Trinity Financial
Alexandra Brax, The Chiofaro Company
Harold Brown, The Hamilton Company
Jameson Brown, The Hamilton Company
Margaret Driscoll, Resident of 360 Newbury
Frank Edwards, Trinity Financial
Mark Fortune, Boston Building Trades
Matthew Hoffman, Dalton Street Resident
Walt Hunt, FCA
Lilly Jacobson, FCDC
Eric Jahan, Elkus-Manfredi Architects

Christopher Janes, Resident of 360 Newbury
Mark Junghans, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
John Martin, Elkus-Manfredi Architects
Adam McCarthy, McNamara/Salvia, Inc.
Dennis Rieske, Developmental Resources
Steve Samuels, Samuels & Associates
Tina Schaefer, Resident of 360 Newbury
Peter Sougarides, Samuels & Associates
Adam Weiner, Weiner Ventures
Bill Whitney, Berklee College of Music

Members of the Press:

Ashley Fairey, The Boston Courant

Meeting Summary

On Wednesday, January 11, 2012, the sixth 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 6:10 p.m. in St. Cecilia's Parish Hall by Jonathan Greeley, BRA Planner. Jonathan reviewed the agenda, noting that the final development team to present their proposals for Parcels 12, 14 and 15, Weiner Ventures/Samuels & Associates, was in attendance tonight to do so.

He then turned the meeting over to Bill Tuttle, MassDOT Deputy Director of Real Estate and Asset Management. Bill explained that Peter O'Connor is no longer serving as the Director of the Office of Real Estate and Asset Management. On behalf of MassDOT's Secretary Richard Davey and Chief Financial Officer Dana Levenson, Bill stressed that this process will continue to move forward, with Bill as the lead contact. Following tonight's presentation, MassDOT will formally ask for each development team to submit revised proposals. The process will not be opened back up to the general public, but rather will allow each team to change their proposals based on the fact that the original submittals are over three years old and were the product of a very different real estate and investment climate. This request should be issued in about a month or so, and each team will have approximately one month to respond with their new information. This allows each team to modify their proposals further based on the feedback they have received from the CAC over the last several meetings.

Questions and comments made by the CAC in response to Bill's announcement included the following:

- Fritz Casselman, CAC Co-Chair and NABB, stated that if the developers are going to resubmit, he believes it would be useful to look at all of the proposals presented thus far in order to allow the CAC to provide feedback to each team.
- Meg Mainzer-Cohen, CAC Co-Chair and Back Bay Association, then asked that the audience send any comments they have to Jonathan Greeley or Lauren Shurtleff, BRA Planners, so that they can share them with the full CAC.
- Massachusetts State Representative Marty Walz commented that it is of utmost importance to use the next month productively. Bill replied that the proposal update process by MassDOT should take approximately two months, which is an accelerated timeline for reviews like this one. Following resubmittal, the State will begin a financial review of each proposal, concurrent with the CAC process.

- Kathleen Brill, FCA, asked if the CAC will be given an opportunity to provide the developers with comments. Bill confirmed that this was the case.
- In response to a question from Representative Walz, Bill indicated that in all likelihood, the decision will go to MassDOT's Board since there is a lease execution involved. He added that this will be unclear until all of the proposals come in.

Meg and Fritz then turned the meeting over to the Weiner Ventures/Samuels & Associates development team, led by Adam Weiner of Weiner Ventures and Steve Samuels of Samuels & Associates, who jointly gave a PowerPoint presentation (available on the BRA's project website: <http://www.tinyurl.com/Parcels12-15CAC>) of their proposal for Parcels 12, 14 and 15. Adam began with Parcels 14 and 15, by noting that their team owns an adjacent terra firma parcel bounded by Cambria and Scotia Streets, which was formerly owned by St. Cecilia's Church as the site of their shrine. The team's approach for all of the parcels is based on the master planning concept of how to make this portion of the city better. Since Weiner Ventures submitted their proposal in 2008, their team has made changes to their proposal, as well as added Samuels & Associates and Elkus-Manfredi Architects to their team.

Steve Samuels explained that they had taken the best parts about the proposal submitted in 2008 and brought those elements forward to the current proposal, which represents a project that can be constructed and financed today. A large portion of the proposal for Parcels 14 and 15 is grounded on terra firma, which makes the entire program more feasible, and also avoids any potential tunnel issues. In addition, the truck access to the Hynes Convention Center would function the same as it does today, which is one less complication. The proposal for Parcel 12 is focused primarily on the activation of Massachusetts Avenue, and therefore the financial gains achieved on Parcels 14 and 15 would be used to pay for Parcel 12's construction.

John Martin, Elkus-Manfredi Architects, then offered the CAC and wider audience to come up and look at the physical model of the proposal. Adam McCarthy, McNamara/Salvia, Inc., also offered an explanation of how the project would work from a structural engineering standpoint.

Questions and comments made by the CAC in response to the Weiner Ventures/Samuels & Associates team's presentation included the following:

- In response to a question from Valerie Hunt, Fenway Neighborhood Resident, Steve Samuels replied that the ground floor space of Parcel 12 along Boylston Street and Massachusetts Avenue would function as retail space.
- In response to a question from Representative Walz regarding the team's parking strategy, Adam Weiner replied that it is possible that some additional parking spaces within the Parcel 12 structure could be used for overflow from Parcels 14 and 15. Eric Jahan, Elkus-Manfredi Architects, added that the numbers shown in the presentation are preliminary and are only representative of what fit into the massing model.
- Fritz Casselman asked if the team could build out their proposal without use of the parcel owned by Prudential Financial, and further asked if this would make that parcel undevelopable. Steve replied that while his team's proposal could be built without incorporating that parcel, they recognize the importance of activating that portion of Boylston Street and would prefer to see something happen there.
- Meg Mainzer-Cohen asked if the tunnel issue would be triggered if they were to include the parcel owned by Prudential Financial. Steve replied that this was affirmative and that their team would then be willing to look into it.

- In response to a question from David Lapin, Community Music Center, Steve indicated that their proposal for Parcel 12 does not include any land owned beyond the limits of the parcel. The parking lot adjacent to Parcel 12 on Boylston Street, for instance, was just purchased by Harold Brown of The Hamilton Company.
- Jan Sprawka, Fenway Studios, asked if the team were to be designated for Parcels 14 and 15 only, would they be able to then reduce the height of the building proposed on those parcels. Steve replied that their team has not explored that option and does not know if this would be the case.
- In response to a question from Brandon Beatty, Back Bay Resident, about the unique challenges of air rights construction verses building on terra firma, Adam McCarthy replied that there is a huge cost premium to consider when building on air rights over live traffic. The cost of shutting down traffic is also something to be considered, and for obvious reasons can be very complicated. Steve added that it is incredibly difficult to simplify any of this information; each case differs widely from another. He also pointed out that there are a number of different agencies that each element of construction would have to be cleared with, which only complicates the situation further.
- In response to a question from David Gamble, BSA, about what is driving the team's reduction in the height of the proposal from 2008 to now, Steve indicated that the current height seemed appropriate considering the financing and massing.
- Fritz Casselman asked if the team could build the proposal for Parcel 12 alone. Steve responded that the proposed density on Parcels 14 and 15 allowed for a lower density proposal at Parcel 12.
- Representative Walz asked if there was any news to report regarding the status of the parcel owned by Prudential Financial. Bill Tuttle replied that Prudential has issued a letter indicating that they have entered into a joint venture with The Chiofaro Company for development on Parcel 15, but noted that it is still unclear if they would be willing to work with another team if they were to be designated on Parcel 15. He added that it is highly unlikely that they would say anything to this effect at this stage.
- In response to a follow-up request from Representative Walz, Bill replied that he will try to get a representative from Prudential Financial to come to a CAC meeting, but added that he is highly doubtful that they will agree to this.
- Steve Wolf, FCDC, commented that Trinity Financial's proposal for Parcel 12 differs greatly from the one presented by Weiner Ventures/Samuels & Associates, and asked if this means that Trinity has somehow made a mistake in their numbers. Steve Samuels replied that both proposals are working towards the same goal of activating the space, but using different tools to accomplish this. He added that their team was cognizant of keeping a view corridor open from Newbury Street, as well as from the 360 Newbury building.
- Brandon Beatty asked why the team did not offer a proposal for Parcel 13. Steve replied that they had previously owned the former Institute for Contemporary Art building as well as the Dylan's building on Boylston Street, but once it became clear how complex it would be to build on Parcel 13, they focused their energies on the other parcels and divested themselves of those assets.
- In response to a question from Fritz Casselman about wind impacts, Steve acknowledged that this is a big issue for pedestrian comfort, and noted that if designated, their team will go through the existing process in place, set by the BRA, during the Article 80 Review Process. Jonathan Greeley explained that wind studies are very costly and added that the City would not ask a developer to perform one prior to

the Article 80 Process. Lauren Shurtleff also stated that even if the City were to require the teams to perform a wind study on their proposals at this stage, the results would differ from the ultimate result since a massing model will yield different results than a fully designed building.

- David Gamble commented that it would be very helpful if the other development teams could also prepare a physical model of their proposals.

Questions and comments made by the public in response to the Weiner Ventures/Samuels & Associates team's presentation included the following:

- Tina Schaefer, Resident of 360 Newbury, asked if the Civic Vision for Turnpike Air Rights document will be updated, since there have been a number of changes in the neighborhood since the study was completed. Jonathan replied that this has come up a number of times, and reiterated that the overall goals of the document are the same today as they were when it was published. He also added that all of the projects that have been completed since then were approved with the knowledge that these parcels were slated for development, as laid out in the Civic Vision.

Meg and Fritz then suggested that the next CAC meeting in mid-February serve as a forum for the CAC to engage in a discussion of each proposal. The intent would be for the CAC to provide feedback to each development team in advance of submitting their updated proposals to MassDOT. Jonathan and Lauren agreed to facilitate this discussion and work with each team to provide the necessary materials for this meeting. They will also work with the CAC Co-Chairs to determine meeting agenda and format.

In closing, Jonathan also noted that the BRA will ask Bill Whitney from the Berklee College of Music to present the school's vision for the area at an upcoming meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:25 p.m.