



## **PLAN: Downtown Advisory Group Meeting #5**

Wednesday, July 17th, 6:00 p.m.  
Location: Boston City Hall, BPDA Board Room

### **Advisory Group Attendees:**

- Barbara Boylan, The Druker Company
- Paul Chan, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of New England
- George Coorsen, Downtown Boston Residents' Association (DBRA)
- Alison Frazee, Boston Preservation Alliance
- Arturo Gossage, Chinatown Residents Association
- Gilbert Ho, Chinatown Main Streets
- Susanne Lavoie, Wharf District Council & Greenway Conservancy Board
- Joshua Leffler, Beacon Hill Civic Association
- Lydia Lowe, Chinatown Community Land Trust
- Seth Riseman, Boston Society of Architects
- Anita Lauricella sitting in for Rosemarie Sansone, Downtown Boston Business Improvement District
- Rishi Shukla, DBRA
- Ann Teixeira, SpeakEasy Boston & New England Philharmonic
- Tony Ursillo, DBRA

### **Ex-Officio Attendees:**

- Captain Kenneth Fong, BPD
- Roger Mann, MBTA

### **City of Boston Attendees:**

- Arreen Andrew, BPDA
- Katherine Eshel, Environment Department
- Jonathan Greeley, BPDA
- Vineet Gupta, Transportation Department (BTD)
- Mary Knasas, BPDA
- Matt Moran, BTD
- Dwan Packnett, Mayor's Office of Economic Development
- Natalie Punzak, BPDA
- Tad Read, BPDA
- Kennan Rhyne, BPDA
- Stefanie Seskin, BTD
- Lauren Shurtleff, BPDA
- Jacob Wessel, Mayor's Office of the Chief of Streets
- Corey Zehngebot, BPDA
- Jill Zick, BPDA

### **PLAN: Downtown Consultant Team:**

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- Matt Ciborowski, ARUP
- Kathryn Firth, NBBJ
- Shauna Gillies-Smith, Ground
- Rodrigo Guerra, NBBJ
- Chris Herlich, NBBJ
- Alex Krieger, NBBJ
- Conor Semler, Kittleson Associates
- Brian Swett, ARUP

**Public Attendees:**

3 members of the public

- Barry Keppard, Metropolitan Regional Planning Council
- Lois Stanley, Tufts University
- Sam Weissman, Jumbo Capital Management

**Advisory Group Members Unable to Attend:**

- Rob Adams, Boston Society of Landscape Architects
- Peggy Ings, Emerson College
- Jung Shen Kuo, Josiah Quincy Upper School & Asian Community Development Corporation (ACDC)
- Chuck Labins, Tufts Medical Center
- Karen LaFrazia, St. Francis House
- Angie Liou, ACDC
- Herb Lozano, Roxbury Innovation Center
- Beatrice Nessen, Friends of the Public Garden
- Peter Paravalos, MBTA
- Mary Ann Ponti, Saint Anthony Shrine
- Joyce Sanchez, Boston University
- Theresa Tsoi, Chinatown Business Association
- Jason Wright, Suffolk University

**PLAN: Downtown Website:** [bit.ly/plandowntownboston](http://bit.ly/plandowntownboston)

Materials and the Presentation from the Advisory Group can be found here:

<http://www.bostonplans.org/news-calendar/calendar/2019/05/22/plan-downtown-advisory-group-meeting>

**Meeting Summary:**

On Wednesday, July 17th, the fifth meeting of the PLAN: Downtown Advisory Group commenced at approximately 6:10 pm with an introduction by Kennan Rhyne, BPDA Senior Planner, in the BPDA Board Room in Boston City Hall. The focus of the meeting was mobility and public realm.

Kennan offered follow-up responses to questions from the last Advisory Group (AG) meeting on June 20, 2019 covering the topics of climate and resiliency. Katherine Eschel from the Environment Department presented a summary of ongoing climate resiliency efforts across the city, including

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Carbon Free Boston. Kennan then reiterated the draft PLAN: Downtown goals that relate to resilience, mobility, and the public realm.

The City of Boston has completed several mobility-focused studies and plans, which are included on [slide 10 of the presentation](#). Kathryn Firth, NBBJ, and Conor Semler, Kittleson Associates, presented a qualitative assessment of public space and transportation connections within the PLAN: Downtown study area.

After a discussion among the AG, captured below, Kennan shared the upcoming dates for summer engagement pop ups.

### **Advisory Group Questions & Comments**

- An AG member asked for documentation of sidewalk condition and quality.
  - The PLAN: Downtown team omitted this material from the presentation because of its granular nature, but assured the AG that this level of detail will be studied before any future sidewalk or street enhancements are completed (under a separate scope of work).
- Stefanie Seskin, BTM, responded to a question about the relatively recent Beacon Street separated bicycle facility. Initial findings have shown that average speeds have dropped as more bicyclists have started using the street. BTM will consider altering traffic signals if needed in the future.
- Regarding the Downtown Crossing Pedestrian Zone, an AG member mentioned that existing pedestrian assets in downtown could use improvement, particularly in the immediately adjacent context that connects.
- An AG member responded to the presentation by agreeing that we must prioritize and maximize our existing pedestrian assets and mobility networks.
- An AG member asked about the advantages of incentives versus punishments to reprioritize active modes of transportation, such as increased parking prices or new pedestrian zones. The member also stated that disruptive transportation technologies will likely emerge in ways we cannot currently imagine.
  - The PLAN: Downtown team explained that any studies and precedents explore policy implications of incentives/punishments for behavior. Typically, incentives are more motivating to shift patterns. It will be critical that plans and designs for downtown are flexible enough to accommodate unpredictable technological advancements, while still prioritizing foot traffic.
- An AG member shared that Chinatown will be hosting a workshop to discuss housing, streets, and open spaces, and that all are welcome to join the discussion. The workshop will focus on a plan to improve public space in Chinatown and improve safety along Kneeland Street.
- An AG member observed that car and pedestrian conflicts occur downtown regardless of traffic signals because pedestrians often ignore traffic signals and endanger their safety.
- An AG member emphasized that mobility strategies downtown will need to be well integrated with city-wide transportation networks, as changes to car or public transit in the city's core will have ripple effects of the neighborhoods.

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- An AG member expressed concern over the conflict between pedestrians, drivers, and cyclists. How do we approach this problem without the resources to enforce traffic laws?
- An AG member stated that pedestrian-focused intersections and streets create a welcoming and vibrant downtown and shared her appreciation for pedestrian prioritization at key intersections.
- An AG member reiterated that bicycle lanes have improved street safety for cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers.
- An AG member suggested that new or future technology can also be implemented in the street like LED lighting to enhance safety and wayfinding.

### **Public Questions & Comments**

- There were no public questions or comments.

Kennan concluded the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance and participation. The next Advisory Group meeting will be held in September 2019. The meeting concluded at 7:45 pm.

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