



Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee Meeting  
Monday, October 7, 2019  
6:00 PM to 7:45pm  
Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington St, Roxbury

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## Attendees

**RSMPOC Members:** Valeda Britton, Dorothea Jones, Nefertiti Lawrence, Marisa Luse, Charlotte Nelson, Norman Stembridge, Susan Sullivan, Lorraine Payne Wheeler, Frank Williams, Frederick Fairfield, Steven Godfrey

**Not in Attendance:** Catherine Hardaway, Kim Napoli, True-See Allah, City Councilor Kim Janey (Ex-Officio), Rep. Liz Miranda (Ex-Officio), Rep. Jon Santiago (Ex-Officio), Rep. Chynah Tyler (Ex-officio), State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz (Ex-Officio)

**BPDA Staff:** Muge Undemir, Charlotte Ong, Devin Quirk, Morgan McDaniel

**DND Staff:** Beverly Estes-Smargassi and Donald Wright

**Link to PowerPoint:** <http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/297a9971-d43f-49cb-aaef-9201535c2931>

## Opening

On October 7, 2019 Co-Chair Norman Stembridge of the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee called the meeting to order. It was asked if there were any members of the press or individuals recording the meeting. No individuals identified themselves. The meeting agenda, committee responsibilities, and Master Plan's original goals were reviewed, as well as the remaining 2019 RSMPOC public meeting calendar.

## Planning Update

Muge Undemir, BPDA Senior Planner, presented the planning update. Included in the update was an overview of the publicly owned parcels in Dudley Square that are currently undergoing or planning to be developed – i.e. those that have been designated, are under construction, are completed or included in the RFPs, as well as privately owned parcels, including those that have been approved and those that are still undergoing the Article 80 process. The update also included a breakdown of rental, homeownership, income-restricted and market-rate housing out of all the development proposed since 2013: a total of 2,056 units have been proposed and/or built, with 78% rental units, 13% homeownership, and 38% income-restricted and 53% market rate. Out of the total development, a key highlight from the breakdown of housing numbers was that the housing development through PLAN:

Dudley Square allowed for 48% homeownership units (compared to 13% homeownership overall), and 76% income-restricted (compared to 38% income-restricted overall), showing that through the PLAN: Dudley Square process, there are more homeownership opportunities and income-restricted provided.

The update also included an overview of the PLAN: Dudley Square process to date, including the latest workshops on May 20<sup>th</sup>, June 17<sup>th</sup> and July 22<sup>nd</sup>. The next workshop will be held on October 21<sup>st</sup> regarding Crescent Parcel and Malcolm & Putnam Parcel (Parcel AB). While there had been some previous planning done around the Crescent Parcel with other adjacent developments, this will be updated through the upcoming planning process and there has been limited planning on the Malcolm & Putnam Parcel. Invitations have been sent out but more outreach will be done in the upcoming days. More information on the full PLAN: Dudley Square process and set of slides are available on the website. (<http://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/plan-dudley-square>)

The update reviewed the evaluation criteria in the RFPs, specifically on diversity and inclusion and development without displacement as well as sustainable development which were all issues that the community has been most passionate about. Highlighted in the update was also that development without displacement as a criteria, while new to the process, will be replicated for all city-owned land throughout the city.

The update also provided a quick recap of the Blair Lot, Parcel 8, and Nawn RFPs.

#### **Parcel 8 + Nawn Factory**

- Parcel 8 + Nawn Factory are within the Eustis Street Protection Area and underwent a historic review process. The Nawn Factory also has preservation guidelines owing to its historic significance. With the latest information that the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology will be abutting Parcel 8 and Nawn Factory, the RFP includes requirements for Nawn Factory and Parcel 8 applicants (if separate from each other) to work together and with the Benjamin Franklin Institute. The latest versions that were voted on at this meeting are available on the website. ([Parcel 8](#), [Nawn Factory](#))

#### **Blair Lot:**

- The Blair Lot site will be used for housing and commercial uses especially cultural, art or entertainment uses, with open space provided on the property for community programming and access. Key highlights are that affordable homeownership is a requirement, as well as replacement of public parking spots, and providing opportunities for the community to own commercial space in Dudley Square ([Blair Lot RFP](#)).

Muge Udemir then reiterated that the next workshop is on October 21<sup>st</sup> 2019 regarding Crescent Parcel and Malcolm & Putnam Parcel.

#### **Good Jobs Standards Update**

Following the Planning Update, two representatives from the Boston Jobs Coalition's Roxbury Good Jobs Committee, read a statement prepared by the Boston Jobs Coalition (BJC) on their perspective on the RFP language for these three parcels. The BJC acknowledged the positive approach taken by the

Economic Development Office in negotiating with the BJC regarding the Good Jobs Standards language in these RFPs but wanted to urge for the RFPs to also include a requirement that the developers for these three parcels adhere to the 7 principles of the Good Jobs Standards as it currently only relies on the honor system with no enforcement and consequences for the employers who do not meet the Standards.

Devin Quirk, BPDA Director of Real Estate responded by thanking the BJC for their continued advocacy, effort and hard work and said that he was excited to continue to pilot and grow the Good Jobs Standards further in collaboration with the BJC. He acknowledged that there are currently no requirements for the Good Jobs Standards at this stage in the RFPs, which is the start of the development process, but the BPDA will see what is proposed by potential developers and work through the development review process to set up frameworks to support the Good Jobs Standards, with community input and that are many more opportunities to continue working through these issues and to address the concerns that have been raised regarding the Good Jobs Standards.

### **RSMPOC and Community Comments**

- A community member asked when the BJC started working on the Good Job Standards was it the understanding that the Standards would be a requirement since it has been a few years that the BJC has been working with the City. A BJC representative responded that in the beginning there was no commitment that there would be a requirement for the Standards and also that the RSMPOC took the position that it fully supported the standards but also said that it would not play a role in the implementation of the Standards on April 6, 2015. Since then, the BJC has been negotiating with the Mayor and Office of Economic Development. While the BJC appreciates the fact that the City put in the RFPs the Good Jobs Standards that the developer has to respond to, the BJC still wants to push for the Good Jobs Standards to be a requirement and not just an evaluation criteria.
- A RSMPOC member followed up and responded that the Committee fully supported the formation of the Standards. The member voiced a question regarding the construction component if there would be a review of the trades, skills and jobs required for projects on city-owned land and the numbers of residents from Boston, women, people of color who will have opportunity to work on these projects and whether the emphasis that the Good Jobs Standards have would be on permanent jobs versus construction jobs. A BJC member responded that the emphasis was on permanent jobs.
- A community member said that the RFPs do not commit to a carbon-free Boston in a legal form and that there is a zoning variance required to widen the road for boulevard form and how the zoning variance will be delivered is not specified in the RFP and the RFP requires far less climate mitigation than is required to meet the Mayor's climate mitigation efforts, including a review of the level of contamination that is in the soil and ground water and that the RFP does not address these things. Furthermore there is a 'loophole' for developers who are able to support the projects on these sites without any public funding to not provide affordable housing for the neighborhood also the Area Median Income (AMI) levels does not reflect the community.

- Devin Quirk (BPDA) responded that the BPDA has worked to demystify what the Area Median Income is but still has more work to do and to clarify with the community member, the issue raised is referring to the 10% of units that must be issued to low-income households who are residents of Boston. However, it should be emphasized that the 1/3, 1/3 of affordable housing would still be required regardless, and if the developer requires public funding, there is an additional 10% of very low-income housing that needs to be provided. It is very unlikely that developers will be able to build 2/3 affordable housing without public funding so it will still trigger the 10% affordable housing requirement. On sustainability, the BPDA is trying to be a leader in this area and believe that public land should be for public good and that there is still scope to look at remediation and such environmental issues through the development process and that the BPDA is trying to lead by example to achieve carbon free, carbon neutral developments.
- Muge Udemir (BPDA) added that the RFP is asking for proposals to be submitted and the BPDA will evaluate proposals based on these criteria but it is not written into law that it is a requirement, it is a proposal that is evaluated and when the developers go into more detail in their development plans and do more investigation, this is the opportunity for us to go into more detail and to push developers and hold them to higher standards and at this point this is the best we can do right now.
- A community member followed up and said that she has met with the City many times, her organization standards for alternatives for the environment. The RFP is a beginning of negotiations but also the beginning of legal contracts though it does not set the minimum threshold of environmental standards for the community. Muge Udemir (BPDA) responded that the BPDA will continue to have these conversations about environmental standards.
- A community member asked if there is an issue about loopholes in the RFPs and if there is any way for the committee to look into it to make sure that the community is not disenfranchised or overlooked and taken advantage of? How can developers come in here without providing any security for the community? The community member followed and said that we are literally here watching our community get destroyed by the developers so we do not just want to hear staff shuffling around words and instead I really want to see some solidarity from you and to feel supported and protected and not just some words.
  - Muge Udemir (BPDA) apologized that the community member did not feel that her concerns were being heard and responded that the RFP itself outlines criteria for evaluation and the proposals have to fit within the criteria that the BPDA has set, with these criteria having been shaped by community input through the workshops that have been held on these RFPs for the past few months.
  - A RSMPOC member followed up and assured the community member that the committee does review these things and make sure that they are able to get the most

benefits for the community. However, there is no guarantee about which developers will come in.

- The community member followed up and responded that she is concerned about the 'loophole' that was raised and said that the community should have a sit down conversation with the developers and how can it be that there is no clause that makes it mandatory for the developers to do XYZ and there needs to be something mandatory from the beginning.
- Devin Quirk (BPDA) responded that it is 100% mandatory for 2/3 affordable housing for all three parcels that are going out for RFP and that the issue that the first community member originally brought up was how deeply affordable the units would be. The earlier community member responded that the issue that was brought up was that if the developer doesn't take public money for funding then the 'loophole' allows for the developer to avoid the additional 10% deeply affordable housing units that are restricted to Boston residents.
- A RSMPOC member responded that we have always been pushing developers hard on these issues including environmental concerns and for example previously there was a developer who was planning to have underground parking but during investigation it was found that there were environmental issues and the developer was then required to redesign the development plans and had at-grade and above-grade parking instead so that it wouldn't release harmful substances so please do not think that the RSMPOC is giving away projects to developers who do not care because we do not do that.
- A community member asked if there is only a single bidder and does not meet the evaluation criteria then will this proposal be rejected or still be accepted? Muge Undemir (BPDA) responded that yes if there is a single bidder who does not meet the criteria and are not meeting the goals of the RFP then we can reissue the RFP and reject this single bidder, and also relook the language of the criteria to provide a better framework for potential developers.
- A community member said that the definition of affordable housing the RFP does not meet the standard of affordable housing in the community which is lower than the citywide standard. Devin Quirk (BPDA) acknowledged that it was true that the AMI in the neighborhood was lower than the citywide AMI, however he also voiced his confidence that developers who are submitting proposals on this site will require public funding in order to provide the 1/3, 1/3 of affordable housing and furthermore, if the developers who submit proposals to the RFPs are not meeting standards then we do not have to select them and can reject these bids and reissue the RFP again. A community member followed up and asked if he lived in the neighborhood. Devin Quirk (BPDA) responded that he did not but he has been participating in the PLAN: Dudley Square process for a long time and has been at these workshops and RSMPOC meetings for a long time.
- A RSMPOC member voiced his thanks to the BJC for their work on the Good Jobs Standards and ensuring that this has been included in the RFPs and asked for clarification that there was a RSMPOC vote that was taken to support the BJC and that while the City has said that there has

been a lot of progress and put in the language in the RFP but then the bigger question is how do you move something from values to policy since we clearly see that there is a lot of activity for development.

- A BJC representative responded that the BJC took the position that the Good Jobs Standards needed to be a requirement and they were pushing for these Standards to be requirements. When the RSMPOC took its decision, it took the position that while they supported the Standards, they would not oversee the implementation of the standards and that was something for the City to oversee instead so that was when the BJC started conversation with the Mayor and John Barros (Office of Economic Development).
- Devin Quirk (BPDA) followed up and responded that the question of when does a value become a policy could be seen in the diversity inclusion requirement as two of the twelve requirements are now policy as they are now instituted as requirements across the city for city-owned parcels that now have to include those standards and requirements. The difference between the diversity inclusion requirements and the Good Jobs Standards is that the latter is currently still a pilot as there are no completed projects yet, but the BPDA with the City are really committed to having this be more permanent.
- A BJC representative then questioned whether it was only the case that once it is built and occupied then the City will be willing to move forward as policy and that it is not feasible to put the cart before the horse.
- Devin Quirk (BPDA) responded that in every RFP that we do, we will include community process and there is a strong importance placed on Good Jobs Standards.
- A RSMPOC member said that she was also from Roxbury and had concerns about the developments that are happening and clarified if the question was that the BJC wanted a policy for Good Jobs Standards in place before the RSMPOC voted because the policy will be part of the request but it is not currently a policy.
- A RSMPOC member said I want to go back over the way the RFP will be reviewed to clarify things for the community and that there has been a lot of community involvement in the process and in the last batch of developers, there was a lot of focus on affordable housing and there will be opportunity to interview the developers once the RFPs go out and proposals are received and the community can ask for the same things you are asking for tonight of these developers who submit bids.
- A RSMPOC member said I appreciate the BJC for pushing forward and being consistent over the years and although not a requirement for Good Jobs Standards right now, the same language has been included in the RFPs as evaluation criteria. The RSMPOC would want to hear the City's take on such language to be included as requirements for all RFP in these developments but there hasn't been an opportunity yet for the RSMPOC to have a one-on-one with the legal team regarding the legal language and legality of putting in such language as requirements.

## Voting on RFPs

Norman Stembridge, Co-Chair of the RSMPOC, then announced that the RSMPOC will now move forward with the vote. The motion was made for each of the parcels to be voted on individually and to proceed with the voting in that manner. The motion was seconded. The RSMPOC unanimously agreed.

#### **Parcel 8 Vote**

- The motion was made to approve the RFP for Parcel 8 as was currently written. The motion was seconded. No request for discussion was made.
- All members present voted in favor.

#### **Nawn Factory vote**

- The motion was made to approve the RFP for Nawn Factory as was currently written. The motion was seconded. No request for discussion was made.
- All members present voted in favor.

#### **Blair Lot vote**

- The motion was made to approve the RFP for Blair Lot as was currently written. The motion was seconded. No request for discussion was made.
- 1 RSMPOC member abstained, the remaining 10 RSMPOC members voted in favor.

Norman Stembridge then said now that the RSMPOC has voted to move the RFPs forward, this is the beginning of the process and that the RFPs will now move forward to be released and requested Muge Undemir (BPDA) to clarify the next steps.

Muge Undemir (BPDA) announced that the next workshop for the next set of RFPs will be on October 21<sup>st</sup> and notifications went out through email earlier but reminders will be resent every week in the lead up to the workshop. For the RFPs that were voted on today, the BPDA will bring up to the BPDA board meeting for Parcel 8 and Blair Lot on Oct 17<sup>th</sup> and the schedule for the BPDA Board Meeting agenda can be seen on the BPDA website (<http://www.bostonplans.org/about-us/bpda-board/board-meetings>). Community members can attend the meeting in person at the BPDA Board Room on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of City Hall or can choose to watch it online as it will be live-streamed. DND will take charge of releasing the Nawn Factory RFP. In the meantime, community members should consider joining the Project Review Committees (PRC) for these three RFP sites as the PRCs will be involved in evaluating the proposals that the City receives and while the BPDA will also be reaching out to City Councilors, State representatives and Office of Neighborhood Services liaisons for recommendations, community members present should also recommend people who can serve on the PRCs by filling out the forms available outside on the sign-in table or online (<http://www.bostonplans.org/documents/planning/downtown-neighborhood-planning/plan-dudley-square-roxbury/project-review-committee-nomination-form>). The BPDA is currently going through the process of forming these PRCs and will notify people who have been nominated. A RSMPOC member added that the role of the PRC is really important and they meet every other week and as a committee of 15 people, sit together to discuss and evaluate the projects and be a crucial part of the process.

## Additional Community Comments

- A community member asked how is it possible that the RSMPOC did not get to meet with the City's legal team but still completed the vote on the RFPs for the three parcels. A RSMPOC member clarified that the review with the legal team that was mentioned earlier was not about the RFPs themselves or the RFP process but on the Good Jobs Standards and how to get the right legal language to make this a requirement for future RFPs. Muge Udemir (BPDA) added that there has been proper legal review of the RFPs and any changes that have been raised through the community process will then be updated and looked over by the legal team.
- A community member asked whether the meeting notes are historical record and why there was no video or audio recording of the meetings and why were there no legal binding documents for the meeting process or to have a legal stenographer present at these meetings.
  - Muge Udemir (BPDA) clarified that BPDA staff take notes for every meeting and these notes are then published online. All the notes from previous meetings can also be found online along with the presentations from previous meetings. These are all public information that is made available online on the BPDA website. (<http://www.bostonplans.org/document-center?program=10>)
  - The community member followed up and asked where are all the processes for meetings published so that people who are new to the RSMPOC and PLAN: Dudley Square processes can know about their rights and process and be part of the process without being seen as disruptive and whether there were reading materials on the process and what the RSMPOC does etc.
  - Muge Udemir (BPDA) responded that the background of these processes and history are all available on the BPDA website, including the RSMPOC goals, roles and responsibilities that came out of the PLAN: Dudley Square process and were briefly covered in the beginning of the meeting today (<http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/79c8a1cd-c8a1-4bdc-bd3d-4514ed714801>) and the notes for every meeting, the processes, timelines and presentations at every meeting and workshop are likewise all available on the BPDA website. (<http://www.bostonplans.org/document-center?program=10>) The RSMPOC has their own documents governing their processes and they are likewise subject to public meeting laws. Muge Udemir also offered to speak personally with the community member to go over the processes.
- A community member commented that there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> set of RFPs that will be going out in the near future. A BJC representative responded and said that they are asking for at least a discussion of what will be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> set of RFPs with the first ask being that the City lawyers or legal team come to a meeting of the community to speak to whether the requirement for the 7 principles of the Good Jobs Standards are legal or not and there needs to be a discussion with the City lawyers to make it very clear because if it is not illegal to have those requirements to move forward then it is a political question and not a legal one. The second ask is for a



discussion on the housing that we expect to have in 2027 and how much market-rate housing are expected in 2027. The year of 2027 was picked because it is unlikely that the 3<sup>rd</sup> set of RFPs will produce buildings and development by then so the community needs to look very carefully at how many market-rate apartments will be there in this community by 2027 and that the BJC does not see why workers should not also have access to good jobs because if this community will have 13,000 to 15,000 market-rate housing units by 2027 then costs will be skyrocketing and we need to have responsibility to make sure that workers will have access to good jobs in keeping with rising costs so is it a legal or policy question to have Good Jobs Standards is a critical question to answer.

- A community member questioned what the process will be now after the vote on the RFPs has been completed and asked whether the process is that the RFP will go to the BPDA board and after the BPDA Board approves the RFPs then they will go out to bid and the Project Review Committees will evaluate the proposals that come in then the developers will be selected.
  - Muge Udemir responded that after the RSMPOC has made the vote today, the Parcel 8 and Blair Lot RFPs will be submitted to the BPDA Board for approval and once the Board approves the RFPs, the RFPs will be issued. Simultaneously, the BPDA will also ask for Project Review Committee for these RFPs. The RFPs will go out for 90 days and potential developers will be able to submit proposals over the next few months the PRC will meet regularly to look at every single proposal and compare these proposals based on the criteria and evaluate how these proposals have met the criteria that the community has helped to formulate. After this evaluation, the PRC will make their recommendation to the RSMPOC on which developer they support. The RSMPOC goes through the PRC's recommendations publicly at the RSMPOC meeting and after there is a decision by the RSMPOC, it goes back to the BPDA Board and the BPDA Board will recommend the developer. This then starts the Article 80 process for either Small Project Review or Large Project Review. For Small Project Review the developer would need to submit a development information packet and as part of the Large Project Review, the developer would need to include assessments on shadows, materials, parking, traffic etc. and this document can be up to 400 pages and all this information is made publicly available. City Commissions and Agencies will look at the proposal and ask questions as part of the scoping determination of the project. Once the design is set up, the project will also go to the Boston Civic Design Commission, and other departments like the Transportation Department, Disabilities Commission, and Environment Department etc will also look through the project design and plans and provide comments and guidance. Information will be put online as the projects move through the process. Also another point of note is that after it makes its recommendations to the RSMPOC and the developer is selected, the Project Review Committee also becomes the Impact Advisory Group (IAG) and the IAG will see the project through until it gets its permit to get built. The IAG is therefore critical to keep the developer accountable. Contracts are only signed at the end of the Article 80 process. More information on the Small and Large Project Review

processes can be found online, including the Citizen's Guide to Article 80.  
(<http://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-review/what-is-article-80>)

Norman Stembridge, Co-Chair of the RSMPOC closed the meeting and reminded everyone that the next workshop would be on October 21<sup>st</sup> 2019 to discuss the Crescent Parcel and Malcolm & Putnam Parcel.

Meeting adjourned at 7.45pm.