



Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee Meeting
Monday, September 14, 2020
6:00 PM to 7:45pm
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Attendees

RSMPOC Members: Valeda Britton, Dorothea Jones, Nefertiti Lawrence, Marisa Luse, Charlotte Nelson, Norman Stembridge, Lorraine Payne Wheeler, Frederick Fairfield, Susan Sullivan, True-See Allah, Frank Williams,

Not in Attendance: Catherine Hardaway, Steven Godfrey, 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: Kelly Sherman, Morgan McDaniel, Dana Whiteside, and Naoise McDonnell

City Staff: Representatives from Councilor Janey, Mejia, and Wu's offices.

Link to PowerPoint: <http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/6c27a566-0936-4000-8ee2-8a01ba421cec>

Opening

On September 14, 2020 Co-Chair Norman Stembridge of the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone to the resumption of RSMPOC meetings, the first since the pandemic. Several announcements were made regarding the use of the new virtual technology platform during the public health crisis. Norman informed participants that the meeting would be recorded and participants had the option to turn off their video, as well as Spanish and Haitian Creole interpretation audio options for participants to join. Kelly Sherman, BPDA Planner, announced the evening's presentation was also available in Spanish and Haitian Creole. Dana Whiteside, BPDA Deputy Director, provided commentary regarding the use of new technologies during the current public health crisis, and Zoom user tips and instructions. Norman continued to give a brief history and overview of the RSMPOC, mentioned the new RSMPOC Engagement Subcommittee - with more to come - and rundown of the agenda for the evening.

Brief Overview

Kelly Sherman, BPDA Planner, made her introduction, welcomed residents to the meeting, and proceeded with the planning update.

Planning Update

Kelly Sherman, BPDA Planner, presented the planning update, which included an overview of the PLAN: Nubian Square parcels, Blair Lot, Nawn Factory, and Parcel 8. Morgan McDaniel, BPDA Real Estate Officer, provided more details on these parcels, including that the Project Review Committees (PRC) for each parcel had resumed reviewing project submissions. She also announced that design guidelines for Crescent Parcel are being finalized and the goal is to bring a RFP to the November board, only after meeting and reviewing with the community.

Development Update

Dana Whiteside, BPDA Deputy Director, presented a high-level overview of four development projects. The Bartlett Place project, a mixed-use, multi-phase development, has been partially completed, while some phases remain underway. Two upcoming public meetings remain on September 24 and October 1, and the public comment period has been extended to October 9. The Madison Tropical project, also a mixed-use, multi-phase development, has two phases completed, while the last phase is currently under review. This project has a PRC meeting on September 28 and a public meeting on October 9. The 2147 Washington Street project, also a mixed-use development, has been Board Approved. This project will consist of ground floor commercial, parking, and a mix of market-rate and affordable rental and homeowner residential units. Finally, the 135 Dudley Street project, also a mixed-use development consisting of residential, retail, and parking is still under review. Upcoming meetings are still being scheduled between the developer, the BPDA, and the Department of Neighborhood Development (DND). Lastly Dana noted that anyone can find more information and give public comment on each project at the BPDA website.

RSMPOC and Community Comments

- Norman Stembridge (RSMPOC) announced their new Engagement Subcommittee and introduced Marisa Luse as chair of the subcommittee.
 - Marisa introduced two other members of the subcommittee from the RSMPOC and announced a list of initial recommendations they have made and implemented, including, but not limited to:
 - Recording meetings
 - Update of the BPDA website
 - Multiple language letters to be distributed to the community at least 4 weeks in advance
 - Stated their goal is to provide more ways and more time for community members to be engaged and informed.
 - Also stated their website has been updated to provide feedback intake abilities, reaching the subcommittee directly.

- A RSMPOC member asked when 135 Dudley and 2147 Washington are having/scheduling their developer meetings
 - Dana Whiteside (BPDA) responded they are both being scheduled with enough advance time for the community in mind, and reminded all that although 2147 Washington has Article 80 approvals, there is still opportunity for PRC/IAG to review - including chance to review Cooperation Agreement, all before final Board Approval.
 - A RSMPOC member asked if mitigation agreements have been made before or after Article 80 approvals.
 - Dana Whiteside (BPDA) replied that they are made before approvals, and reiterated that these and all projects still have upcoming opportunities for public input.
- A RSMPOC member reminded all that RSMPOC meetings will continue to meet virtually for the foreseeable future.
 - Dana Whiteside (BPDA) repeated that the city will also be using the virtual format into the next year.
- A RSMPOC member expressed a concern that developer presentations every other month should actually come in writing monthly, even if they are not presenting and the RSMPOC should have the report at least a week before their meeting.
 - Dana Whiteside (BPDA) and other RSMPOC members agreed
- Kelly Sherman (BPDA) introduced Matt Moran of the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) to speak on a current street project on Columbus Avenue
- Matt Moran (BTD) announced the Columbus Avenue street project
 - The project runs along Columbus Ave starting from Walnut Ave, down through Egleston Square, continuing down to the Jackson Station T stop.
 - Project will add bus lanes to the middle of streets with station stops similar to the Green line Huntington Ave area.
 - BTD and MBTA began construction this month and hope to have completion by end of this year.
- A community member questioned traffic reroutes during construction and how this is determined.
 - Not enough consideration for public safety
 - Matt Moran (BTD) responded that a Traffic Management Plan was created, and that during peak periods of constriction 2 lanes of traffic will be rerouted, and that one ultimate goal of the project is to improve safety and pedestrian crossings.
 - The community member asked for clarification on how decisions are made to maximize safety.
 - Matt Moran (BTD) replied that their engineering consultant is being reviewed by the MBTA, the Disability Office, as well as the construction division of the BTD.
 - Another community member asked for clarification of where the project was located and reiterated the concern for safety, especially during construction periods.

Community Questions

- Samuel Hurtado, Chief of Staff, Council President Janey, asked for an update on Blair Lot and the need to address vibrancy and economic vitality in the area.
 - Morgan McDaniel (BPDA) responded that the PRC has resumed reviewing submissions for the parcel in July and there will be more updates to provide soon
- A community member asked if there was a new PRC being formed for Parcel 10 or any other parcels? And also wanted to hear more from the city about the legality of virtual meetings and concerns that some community members do not have internet access
 - Dana Whiteside (BPDA) replied that Parcel 10 does have a PRC established and they are meeting twice towards the end of October, no others being formed. Also, despite technology access issues the City is making every attempt to improve access. Some ways include allowing phone calls into meetings and accepting emails, as well as improving and updating the website.
- A community member asked for an update on Parcel 3 and parking and traffic considerations in Nubian Square.
 - Dana Whiteside (BPDA) replied we are currently undergoing a thorough review process of Parcel 3 before we re-release an RFP. Likely RFP will not be released well into next year. Also lots of internal discussion going on related to a parking program for Nubian Square, once those thoughts and discussions are more formed we will be looking to share that with the community
- A community member mentioned displeasure in how we are progressing with PLAN: Nubian parcels and RSMPOC should take note. The pandemic, as well as the opioid crisis is overly affecting Nubian Sq. Bartlett has taken 10 years, designed to be a wealth creator yet we are losing community members to gentrification and displacement. We should have a meeting on parcels in October before the election and holiday season. Need clear dates and times and expeditious activity for Nubian.
 - Dana Whiteside (BPDA) agreed that we are not looking to slow down the process because of the pandemic, and we are committed to updating a timeline and making decisions, especially regarding Blair Lot.
- A community member questioned 135 Dudley, the parking situation, contamination, and what the city is doing if there is no parking there. Also posed a second question regarding if Madison and Bartlett have had any project changes.
 - Dana Whiteside (BPDA) replied that both Bartlett and Madison have changed to reduce their commercial space. And regarding 135 Dudley the City is seeking and applied for funding source to support remediation, also simultaneously looking at a parking program for Nubian as a whole and the development projects coming online.
 - The community member replied that the city should not have been surprised by contamination in Roxbury and should not have led the community to believe they would

get the project in the first place. Also funding remediation is a good solution for parking in the area.

- A community member/resident expressed concern for changes at Bartlett yards and that the RSMPOC support her Neighborhood Association objections to the project, including:
 - Loss of $\frac{1}{3}$ of wealth creation mechanism
 - Loss of affordable housing, from 60% low AMI to $\frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3}$
 - Loss of green space and onsite parking
 - Increase of overall number of housing units from 323 in 2013 to 382 proposed now
 - Norman Stembridge (RSMPOC) replied that RSMPOC will review and follow up and see what they can accomplish.
- A community member reiterated an earlier point to speed up the development process. Stated that right now there are historical low interest rates, and because of social justice movements lots of corporate and philanthropic money available. This climate may change in the new year and we should move to get as many projects as possible to the October board meeting.
 - Norman Stembridge (RSMPOC) responded that we are certainly not looking to slow down development but also will not speed up at the expense of community health. But they will do their best to improve.
- A community member/local business owner expressed concern of parking in Nubian Sq and clients having issues with parking and how acutely lack of parking affects business bottom line and ability to stay open.
 - Norman Stembridge (RSMPOC) agreed and replied that current parking is not sufficient and there is a need for a parking plan. Blair Lor was purposefully left vacant for a while to keep that parking option open.
- A community member reiterated earlier points to speed up the development process.

Norman Stembridge, Co-Chair of the RSMPOC closed the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7.45pm.