



Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee Meeting  
Monday, November 1, 2021  
6:00 PM to 7:45pm  
Zoom Virtual Meeting

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### **Attendees**

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

**Not in Attendance:** Catherine Hardaway, 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, Dana Whiteside, Ocean Luo, and Naoise McDonnell

**City Staff:** **Representatives from Councilor Mejia's office.**

**Link to PowerPoint:** <http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/b6360571-52b3-427c-8ba1-13a8940305eb>

### **Opening**

On November 1, 2021 Co-Chair Norman Stembridge of the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Kelly Sherman, BPDA Planner, welcomed all and made initial announcements of meeting recording and Zoom and interpretation channel instructions. The Spanish interpreter gave their introduction and initial instructions, the Haitian Creole interpreter followed. Kelly continued with zoom etiquette instructions and an overview of the meeting agenda, to include an update on the PLAN: Nubian process to date, and also a developer update from Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT). It was also noted that this will be the final RSMPOC meeting of the year 2021. The next RSMPOC meeting will be held January 10, 2022. Norman then continued with greetings and introductions of the rest of the RSMPOC members, gave a brief overview of the RSMPOC and its responsibilities and encouraged people to get involved and remain engaged.

### **Planning Update**

Kelly Sherman, BPDA Planner, began the update of the PLAN: Nubian process and timeline. This included revisiting the original goals of the 2004 Roxbury Strategic Master Plan. Development in the PLAN area has included both private and public parcels. All City-owned (DND or BPDA) parcels have been released to the public. Development so far has slated 1311 units approved to be created in the Nubian Square area. Approximately 80% of these units are income-restricted, approximately 23% of all units are

homeownership, approximately 51% of all units are 2 bedrooms, and approximately 16% are 3 bedrooms. Furthermore, to view the development from another perspective, almost 2 million square feet of development has been approved in the Nubian Square area during the PLAN. The large majority of that has been residential development, accounting for approximately 1.5 million square feet. The other, approximately 500,000 square feet of uses include Retail, Cultural, Office, Parking, and more. Total development in the area is also expected to produce: 215 Direct Jobs, 458 Indirect Jobs, and 1379 Construction Jobs. Kelly thanked all stakeholders, and especially community members for their continued engagement and collaboration throughout the PLAN Nubian process.

## **Developer Updates**

The Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT) Team began their development updates. Dr. Aisha Frances, President of BFIT introduced other members of the development team and provided some high level information for their development plan. The team anticipates occupation of the new site in late 2023 or early 2024. Their process to relocate their campus began 5 years ago, with a search for potential sites. In September 2019 they purchased this site at the corner of Harrison Ave and Eustis St. The new campus location is less than 2 miles from the current location, but more within the Nubian Square area, and closer to amenities for their students. BFIT is Boston's only technical college, about 50% of its students are from Boston, and most of them from Dorchester, Roxbury, Mattapan, and Hyde Park. About 40% of BFIT students are from Boston Public Schools, and a majority of all students rely on public transportation. The new campus building is designed to fit with the context of the surrounding neighborhood. It stands 3 stories, or 44 feet tall, and encompasses 68,000 square feet including 23 laboratories and 7 classrooms. This will serve the roughly 600 students and 120 staff/faculty members who all utilize the building at various times throughout the day. Materials of the building are intended to support the sustainability and longevity of the building expected to last a minimum of 50-75 years. This includes being LEED certifiable, housing rooftop renewable energy, and other efforts. There will be street trees and additional vegetation added to the site, as well as a pedestrian zone to also serve as a driveway for automotive technology students. The team is estimating the creation of 300-350 construction jobs and an additional 20 permanent jobs during operation.

## **RSMPOC and Community Questions and Comments**

Kelly Sherman opened the floor for questions and comments from the RSMPOC and Community.

- A community member asked if BFIT could support the idea of Nubian Square as the nexus of public education in Boston
  - BFIT responded, yes, despite being a private institution, their mission is for the public good and they do support the idea of the community as a nexus for education.
- A RSMPOC member commended the women of the BFIT board, but also asked for expanded details on community benefits that go from BFIT to local residents, also noted that the Boston Jobs Residents Policy (BJRP) does not correspond to PLAN Nubian, as the RSMPOC has adopted policy of 51%, 51%, 15% for the area. Lastly, it was also asked the percentage of women students and their resulting job opportunities.
  - The BFIT team responded that they will take the RSMPOC jobs-residents numbers into consideration during their selection process for the General Contractor. They also

admitted that they do not have exact current numbers on hand, but their women participation numbers are not where they would like it to be yet. Most of the women are in health related programs, only some of them in construction/engineering.

- A RSMPOC identified as an alum of BFIT and commended BFIT and the role they play in the community.
- A community member asked about windows on the first floor, and also asked about community benefits which are generally based on development costs, and would like more specifics.
  - The BFIT team clarified that there are no windows on the east side of the building because of the proximity of the abutter, but the remaining sides of buildings have first floor windows allowing daylight and views.
  - They also replied that as part of the process of selecting the General Contractor more specific details of community benefits will be finalized.
- A community member asked about any programs related to transportation and accessibility (i.e. shuttle service, etc).
  - The BFIT team responded that their surveys show most students do rely on the bus system for transit and that is what they intend to amplify and support.
- A community member asked for clarification on the Article 80 process and will there be an Impact Advisory Group (IAG) for this project.
  - Dana Whiteside, BPDA Development Review, replied that the project does fall under Article 80 Large Project review, and yes, there is already an IAG for this project, which includes some members of the RSMPOC.
- A RSMPOC member asked for any projects, from Nubian Square, that go before the BPDA Board between this last RSMPOC meeting of the year and the next meeting in January, that the RSMPOC gets specifically notified.
  - Dana and Kelly both agreed.
- A community member asked if BFIT will go to the BPDA Board in November.
  - Dana confirmed that there is an intention to go before the Board in November, but several conversations, including tonight, may lead to moving to go before the Board in December.
- A community member asked if the BPDA does bring any project to the Board before community benefits are agreed upon.
  - Dana responded that any aspects of a project have a general consensus before they are brought to board for approval, therefore the questions that were raised this evening about community benefits would be generally agreed upon and rsm poc members would be informed prior to going to board for approval.
  - Norman added that topics such as community benefits also get sorted out by the Impact Advisory Group (IAG)/Project Review Committee (PRC) process.

Norman reminded all in attendance to cast their vote in the mayoral election, thanked all for participating, and adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7.45pm.