



Meeting Notes
November 4, 2013
6:00 PM – 7:05 PM
Dudley Square Public Library
65 Warren Street

RSMPOC Members Present: Darnell Williams, Felicia Jacques, Beverly Adams, Norman Stenbridge, Dorothea Jones, Kevin Cherry, Kenneth Smith, Nicole Flint Thomas, Charlene Nelson, Valeda Britton; Notes: Kijana Rose; BRA: Hugues Monestime

Darnell Williams calls the meeting to order at 6:04 PM. He points out that Jorge Martinez and Sue Sullivan will not be with the group tonight. Tomorrow is obviously a very big day in the city in terms of the electoral process. He welcomes everyone to the meeting and invites them to join the Committee at the working session scheduled for November 18th. Next he acknowledges all elected officials and representatives of elected officials in the room. With 8 Committee members having arrived, he invites Melnea Cass developers to present their updates.

Kamran Zehedi from Urbanica reminds the group that last month he mentioned developers from a group called BCBGI in China. It is an investment company linked with the industrial bank of China that are interested in the project, so they've begun their due diligence in investigation and are interested in supporting any figure. Urbanica is looking to meet with someone from California who has requested a lot of information, which his assistant has been putting together. There are a couple of construction companies that are pricing the project, including Tishman and Cranshaw. Tishman priced the project at a very high number, 100% union, so we're working with Cranshaw to see where they come in, but expects it to be about 20% higher. He had a conflict before but believes that it could be completed for an estimated 43 million. Also, Tom O'Malley will not be providing new market tax credits for this project; they decided to go for supermarkets and that hotels are not on the agenda. He met with Marvin Gilmore from Century Bank who connected him with the Senior VP named Gerry, who is very familiar with new market and tax exempt financing, so Urbanica is currently putting together a package for his review and will hopefully start working with him. Lastly there is a meeting scheduled with Starwood, who has shown huge interest, on November 22nd regarding the hotel franchise.

Darnell Williams asks about the conversation that KX started with Agar?

Kamran Zehedi confirms that he did have a conversation and it was the same result as before. There is a current project they are doing in South Boston, however they are showing much interest, but this is a different market. At the same time, it is important for

Roxbury to have this market, and they haven't seen any money from the government for this project – everything is from investors. Hopefully the Mass Works grant will come through by the end of this month. Next they will need to finalize the budget, including the contractors, designers, and engineers.

Darnell Williams asks if there are any questions?

Beverly Adams asks where Tishman is based?

Kamran Zehedi states that they have an office in Boston that was bought by the company Agar.

Beverly Adams asks where Cranshaw is based?

Kamran Zehedi states they are a Boston-based company with an office in Newton.

Beverly Adams asks how they value the engineering?

Kamran Zehedi explains that they study each component of the building and see the price versus other conceptual designs. They will work together to bring the budget to a reasonable number.

Felicia Jacques asks KZ to confirm that he expects the number to be between 50-55 million? She asks specifically what he is looking at on construction costs alone?

Kamran Zehedi explains that it will be between 40-45, or \$250 dollars per square foot. Tishman came close to 55 with a lot of costs for the underground work. He figured each parking space would be about 50-60 thousand, but they are coming in at about 100 thousand per space, and 10 million costs just in the underground work. There are two components to the project: the hotel and the residences, which have similar costs. However the parking doesn't bring in income, and since the costs to build are so high the program for the basement and ground floor needs to be resolved.

Felicia Jacques asks if the construction right now is 5 floors, woodprint?

Kamran Zehedi confirms that it is 5 floors, concrete. He went to East Boston and saw a Cranshaw project where they are using the same method. It is saving the project around 3 million dollars, plus or minus the construction.

Felicia Jacques says that they are also doing that at Charles Field. She asks if it will be about 40 million for the construction loan and will Century Bank be lending that?

Kamran Zehedi states that the loan will be about 30-35 million, and both Century Bank and Eastern Bank have shown great interest in funding the project. The person at Century is very familiar with state and tax exempt bonds. The Chinese investors and banks are also very eager to come into this new market program and should be financing up to 85%

of the costs. The next step is to make sure this project will stay within the budget, otherwise that will be a negative IRR.

Felicia Jacques asked if they've advanced from the construction cost on 50% CDs?

Kamran Zehedi states that they haven't, and it is still 50%.

Felicia Jacques states that there is room.

Darnell Williams asks if there are any other questions? With none, he invites P3 Partners to present their development update.

Jeffrey Feldman introduces himself and Barry Gaither from P3 Partners. He reminds the group that they filed the EPIR at the end of August and entered the Article 80 process. As part of the process there was a public review period, which ended on October 22nd. They are coordinating with Peter Meade and the BRA, trying to fit into their very busy schedule, to schedule another public meeting including the Boston Civic Design Commission architectures to review the community input. P3 has been hard at work putting together documentation, and has mostly continued the vigorous leasing effort, both on the retail and commercial office space fronts. The retail program is the same as it was discussed in the past – it's going very productively. There is a bit of disappointment with the office program, but the group has been pleasantly surprised about the progress made on that front as well. Things are good where they stand and they will continue to report on new features as they develop.

Barry Gaither explains that he is having a problem with his throat and won't be doing much talking this evening.

Darnell Williams asks if there are any questions?

Felicia Jacques asked about the progress of their last scoping session?

Jeffrey Feldman explains that they have not had their scoping session yet. It was originally scheduled for October 22nd, but due to scheduling issues at the BRA they've been postponed.

Felicia Jacques asks if they've gotten feedback?

Jeffrey Feldman explains that they've gotten feedback from different departments. The BRA is reviewing their work but there has been no formal response or feedback at this time.

Felicia Jacques asks if the lack of feedback is jeopardizing anything?

Jeffrey Feldman says that it is not.

Darnell Williams asks if there are any additional questions?

Barry Gaither apologizes for having to leave early.

Darnell Williams invites the representative from Bartlett Place to present their status update.

Mark Matel from introduces himself as the project manager from Bartlett Yards. The group has been working diligently on the demolition and remediation pieces. He informs everyone that the original meeting with the zoning commission has been postponed, and is tentatively scheduled for November 20th.

Darnell Williams confirms that this was the zoning appeal?

Mark Matel responds that it was a meeting with the Zoning Commission for the PDA.

Darnell Williams asks if there is a time for the meeting?

Mark Matel says that it starts at 9, but the order will be decided that day. They are preparing the demolition documents and meeting on Friday to finalize everything. Primarily they are working on the MBE and WBE numbers, as they have federal money and the numbers are currently low. He reminds the group that co-owner Arnold Johnson is working diligently. To clarify what is holding them up, he explains that the EPA is on the selection team and they are very critical about the contractors selected, as they want to make sure that those selected have remediation and demolition experience, because of the sensitivity of the contaminants on site. In prior meetings the community has asked about what those contaminants are, so there is a full document available at the library. Just to clarify, the site is a former bus garage and the contaminations are related to automobile fuel tanks, which were removed in 2005 by the MBTA, though there was one tank left in a bigger building. Currently there are two buildings on the site – one by Washington Street, and one in the bus yard in the back. The tank was in the building on Washington Street, and there is also petroleum and high lead content in specific areas of the site. There is high lead content in the mulch on Guile Street, Lambert Street, and by Bartlett. That is there probably as a result of dumping washing machines and home appliances there. Also, some community members expressed a concern for cutting down some shrubbery, which was recommended by LSB. The shrubbery needs to be cut down to get contaminants from the upper portion of the site, but Bartlett asked that some be maintained, so some trees will be taken down but the majority will not be. They've finalized all documents and the actual bid documents are ready to be bid on. By the end of the month Bartlett will hopefully select a contractor and will have a meeting to talk about remediation so as to get more specific about strategies, including what will be taken out, and what they'll use to mitigate. For sequencing purposes the demolition will be first and then they will take the buildings down. Once both are down the site will be excavated, and then they'll go underground. He reminds the group that David Price was asked at the last meeting for a development schedule, and directs them to the last page of the status update where that is included. He points out that it is a tentative outline, and

notes that they've pushed up the home ownership piece to begin earlier in the process. It initially was slated in the last phase, but will not start a year earlier. That move was always on their radar, but the group was unsure as to where it would fall within the entire development because of sequencing.

Darnell Williams says that the biggest question he has is that in Phase 1 he sees that rental units are 60, including 32 low-income units, but he does not believe that rental units were in the original purview of the project?

Hugues Monestime clarifies that it was a general mix that included not just affordable housing units, but ownership and rental as well.

Darnell Williams wonders if the rental units were not emphasized.

Mark Matel says that they are starting to document everything to address what was originally proposed and then what has changed overtime. He believes the first proposal was affordable and rental units, and then it changed to include the homeownership. The document he mentioned will be finished fairly soon, and will include what was addressed in the original RFP and where the project is now. It will include the original goals, and might also challenge some of the buzz that has come up recently, particularly since the discussion began of the feasibility of modern rate units.

Darnell Williams refers to the documentation provided today and points out that he does not clearly see where each bucket, including building a,b, and c, incorporates the low income housing tax credit. While he's not admonishing Bartlett for the low income, he is just not seeing the balance between the thirds. The issue isn't the low income tax credit; it is that he would like to make sure the balance is consistent with the oversight plan that MM is saying is forthcoming.

Mark Matel states that there is a draft document on the website that addresses the issue. It is not completely finished, but it is on the website.

Darnell Williams explains that, for example, if one looks at the for sale town homes listed, it reads 60 units as a part of phase 1 and 2, but there is no indication of how it will end up on the back end. It would be helpful if those clarifications were made.

Beverly Adams asks to return to the discussion about contamination, and asks specifically if Bartlett has reached out at all to the immediate abutters to find out whether their property also has contamination?

Mark Matel states that they have not, but they have communicated with the abutters to talk about the contaminants on the site.

Beverly Adams asks if, for instance, their yards were contaminated because of the site, has Bartlett considered any contamination on the exterior of the site?

Darnell Williams clarifies that Bartlett has tested within the brick walls, but BA is asking about outside the walls?

Beverly Adams confirms that she is asking that, or if they've had any interactions at all with immediate abutters regarding contamination?

Norman Stembridge explains that the entire site is boarded, and although he is not an expert, it would be unusual for the contamination in Bartlett Yard to have spread.

John (not sure of last name) explains that in one of his jobs as an architect he found that contaminants tend to flow downward. The housing surrounding Bartlett is all isolated, and any change that the pollutants from the lower area would spread outward, he believes, is very small. He thinks they are safe but points out that there is nothing wrong with sticking a test pit in and seeing if there is anything in there.

Darnell Williams asks if there are any other questions?

Charlene Nelson asks BA if she has heard any feedback from the abutters?

Beverly Adams states that she has not.

Nicole Flint Thomas asks how many trees there are now and how many will remain after the contaminants are eliminated and they are cut down? She also asks if that could contaminate other yards?

Mark Matel explains that he does not know the exact count, but only the large trees have been accounted for, so he doesn't know how many shrub trees there are, either.

Nicole Flint Thomas requests that he please forward that information to her.

Darnell Williams asks if there are any additional questions? With none he invites Madison/Tropical to present their status update.

Russ Tanner introduces himself as the Director of Real Estate at MPDC and a partner in Madison Tropical LLC. As he indicated to Hugues, he did not complete a new written update, as the major matters are still the same. The new supermarket is going through the closing process, which they are pushing to get done in November, though it might turn into December. Before Thanksgiving they are pushing to work out a number of key business issues with the BRA, but that is what it is and those will get settled. Phase 1 is still moving forward. They have proceeded with a few things, and in the meantime they have completed the archaeology study they were required to do, and found nothing. He apologizes, though it was the answer they liked. They have the site remediation all teed up, and decided not to implement that until the business issues are solved with the BRA, which he hopes will be later this week. They will start the remediation under the license agreement, which was mentioned at the last meeting. It is not terribly polluted but they need to get some things out of the way. Regarding sub contracting they are using NEI as

the general contractor, and there are bids on the sub trade, but they will not buy out until further into the process. They've lined up close to 40% minority business and about 2% women business, but are trying real hard to buy locally and get the number to 25% local. It's a pretty lengthy process but that is where they are.

Darnell Williams asks if there are any questions from the Committee?

Felicia Jacques asks if there is anything contingent upon the supermarket closing in November?

Russ Tanner explains that the ground leases are specific to the supermarket, but becomes a template for the other phases of the project, so it's a two-pher. But M/T is ready to go on the ground lease for the supermarket.

Kevin Cherry asks a question about what the hold up is, as they went through a fire drill in August where M/T indicated that they needed to get things done or the lender, which was BOA, would not have the tax credits. It's November, so where is the sense of urgency? Are you sure that the ground lease is the primary hold up, is there something outside of the scope of the RFP? He is curious to know what the exact hold up is, as there is some specific language in the RFP regarding the ground lease so he is wondering if there is something else being negotiated?

Russ Tanner confirms that there was pressure before to get it done. M/T was pushing hard to get it started by the end of the summer as a portion of the new market tax credits were set to expire at the end of September. For those who have been following, Bank of America, very much to the pleasure of M/T, brought tax credits from other parts of the country to this project, and a portion had expired but they were able to bring others from other parts of the country by swapping out. However, those will expire if they aren't put into the deal this year, so everyone is under the gun to get this thing started. In terms of the business issues, there is a 90-page ground lease that naturally has too many issues and there are too many lawyers working on it.

Kevin Cherry asks if there is a drop deadline here?

Russ Tanner states that Bank of America has said they are past the drop deadline, and are living on borrowed time right now. Tropical Foods would appreciate if the Committee chimed in to the BRA – but also believes they are close to closing this week.

Darnell Williams reminds the group that the issue in July was that M/T was trying to get support for an extension of the PDA that would include the entire site, which was denied after further investigation by the PRC.

Russ Tanner states that the PDA issue goes way back before July.

Darnell Williams asks if that is not when M/T came to the Committee and asked for support?

Russ Tanner denies that it is, and states that they asked for support for the expanded PNF in Article 80.

Darnell Williams respectfully disagrees.

Kevin Cherry remembers that they did ask for support of the expanded PDA but that it might have curtailed some public process rights and under the short window of time that was presented they did not feel like taking the opportunity at that time was the right thing to do.

Darnell Williams explains that they vetted it thoroughly and chose not to move on it.

Russ Tanner states that they did not use a PDA permit there.

Darnell Williams asks if there are any further questions? With none he thanks M/T and highlights two things that he would like to bring to the attention of the community. One is that himself and DJ, JM, NS and CN are meeting with Director Meade to have a conversation around community benefits. This community has suffered four decades of disinvestment, so they will ask how does the community benefit and what are the economic benefits of these projects? DJ made a copy of an article that was printed in 2012 of community benefits that were distributed as a result of development in the Prudential Center, and organizations that benefited were all from the community. CN pointed out that the Committee would need to resurrect this issue to let the developers know that it will not fall. We're looking at linkage funds and for non-profits to benefit from the funds that come out of this reinvestment.

Valeda Britton asks the chair for a photocopy of the article he mentioned?

Darnell Williams offers to scan and send it tomorrow. The remaining part of the agenda is to discuss the meeting schedule draft for next year and to receive community input. The schedule for next year is comparable to what currently exists: it will be the first and third Monday of every month, unless something is going on. For the record, he counted the neighborhood meetings attended on behalf of the Committee throughout their tenure and discovered that they've attended 200+ meetings over a 10-year period, not including the Dudley Vision and Urban Ring meetings that they've also attended. This Committee doesn't receive any compensation, but participates because they are residents that are transparent and professional, and who care about Roxbury. They are not here for the pay or the good conversation, but because they care about the outcomes. He asks if there are any thoughts on the calendar? With none, he asks if everyone is in agreement? He then opens up the floor for community input.

John Walsh (community member) introduces himself as a member of the Labor Committee and stresses development goals of 51-51-15 for the Boston residency program. He explains that there is normally a preconstruction meeting before bidding

where the developers can let them know what they want, so they should make sure that they include that in there as part of the contract.

Darnell Williams confirms that Dorothea Jones and others have been working diligently on that process.

Dorothea Jones offers that there is a monitor committee meeting every other week on Friday, and points out that John Walsh is one of the people fighting for jobs, so he can explain what the committee does.

John Walsh (community member) explains that if a MBE or WBE is hired, it doesn't mean developers will get the right figures that are actually required. He uses the Cranshaw project in East Boston as an example, as they came up with terrible figures. It is important for everyone in the neighborhood to get a job, and he wants developers to understand that. A contractor can come on a job and say they didn't know those were the project requirements, so before that happens the developers should confirm early on that those are the goals.

Darnell Williams asks to confirm that there are preconstruction meetings?

John Walsh states that there are, and that the constructors can give them a projection of how they will supply the workforce as part of the contract. That way constructors cant look the other way and people from the community wont be walking by the site wondering why they cant get work.

Dorothea Jones explains that developers like those who built the Ferdinand building started off barely meeting the Boston jobs residency requirement, and based on continual meetings and input that the committee provided, including standing outside of the picketing, they were able to insist and meet their goals.

Darnell Williams asked if they were the same as the city requirements, or more?

Dorothea Jones explains that in Boston it is 50% Boston residences, 10% minority and 10% women. The OC requires 51% Boston, 51% minority and 17% women. Last week Shawmut confirmed that the numbers on Ferdinand are now 65-50-19, and those are the number the committee would like to see. It benefits the Boston community and women, and that's just Shawmut's efforts. Some other developers are not meeting the goals, so the committee meets every other week to argue that the numbers are not being met. The Committee expects developers, when they bring people in, to ensure that Boston residents and people of color will be working on the site.

John Walsh (community member) states that Cranshaw comes in 20% lower on a bid and nothing is being done and they are paying the workers lower. So developers should have everything ironed out before the work starts.

Darnell Williams thanks JW for his insights, which were very helpful.

Alyssa (community member) makes the suggestion that WBEs and MBEs should not be the only priority, but that the Committee might want to consider family-owned businesses to be a priority as well.

Darnell Williams states that her point is well taken, though it might be difficult to modify the numbers at this stage.

Alyssa (community member) stresses that the number of family-owned businesses must be increased.

Jason Sudman (community member) introduced himself as the new chief of the Southern Baptist Church, and though he is not fully brief asks to inquire about the Dearborn school being demolished, as his church community is largely concerned about how that will affect their parking access?

Darnell Williams asks if there is any further information about the Dearborn project?

Norman Stembridge explains that they are at the point of finishing the feasibility study before anything moves forward. The school is designated to serve students in STEM education, but isn't sure if they've discussed construction or demolition.

Nicole Flint Thomas confirms that it will be torn down.

Darnell Williams offers that he can discuss parking with JS after the meeting is adjourned. He briefly recaps the presentation that was given two weeks prior by the BTB and the BRA about the parking and traffic issues in Dudley Square. The Dearborn School plans may impact the church parking, but that project is further enough down the road that there is enough time beforehand to discuss alternate solutions. He asks if there are any additional questions, and with none he adjourns the meeting at 7:07 PM.