



Meeting Notes
December 5, 2005
6:00pm-7: 45 PM
182-186 Dudley Street
Hibernian Hall

RSMPOC Members Present: Darnell Williams, Norman Stembridge, Jose Alicea, Joe Cefalo, Marilyn Lynch, Michael Miles, Charlotte Nelson, Ricardo Quiroga, Donovan Walker, Public- 20 plus

Welcome: Darnell called the meeting to order at 6:05. It should be noted that three Oversight Committee Members called ahead to announce their absence: Daniel Richardson, Barbara Barrow-Murray, and Cheryl Lawrence. Darnell also prompted a discussion around attendance and stressed the need for OC members to attend all meetings. He proposed enforcing the “three strike” rule. Joe Cefalo (OC) suggested that the OC wait until January and inform everyone that excessive absenteeism would be addressed. Darnell made the point that if someone has missed 3 meetings in a row they should be removed from the committee.

Meeting Schedule: The BRA presented a meeting schedule for 2006 listing monthly OC meetings. There was some discussion around the meeting dates and a general consensus that more meetings could be added (see later on). The meeting schedule was accepted by the group.

Review Minutes: Minutes for both 10/24/05 and 11/21/05 were presented to the OC. There was one small deletion from the 10/24/05 minutes.

- There were discussions about several issues contained in the 11/21/05 notes, especially regarding the environmental remediation of the site. Darnell (OC) stated that this was still very much a priority going forward.

Old Business:

-The first major topic concerned the issues raised by Jose Alicea (OC). Jose was concerned with the direction of the OC committee, specifically moving to the Bartlett Yard site as opposed to other parcels identified in the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan (RSMP). He also asked where the Bartlett site was in the actual RSMP document. Norman Stembridge (OC) referred Jose to the section on the Memorandum of Agreement with the MBTA on p. 87 to develop MBTA owned land in Roxbury. Darnell (OC) pointed out that there is a specific reference to the Bartlett site on p. 116 of the plan.

-Darnell (OC) went on to point that out that although Bartlett's development is clearly spelled out, the issue of choosing the next site to develop upon the completion of a RFP is important. Jose (OC) would like some work to be done identifying other parcels. Darnell (OC) agreed and suggested that parcels be brought to the OC as groups in order to accelerate the development process. Norman (OC) brought up the work of an OC subcommittee that looked at the different parcels while the focus was on P-3. He offered that the committee had looked at all the parcels in a general context, had discussed possible groupings, but had been very flexible on any proposed timetables. Donovan Walker (OC) felt that it made sense to follow P-3 with Bartlett due to the size of both parcels but reminded everyone that other parcels had been discussed. Jose (OC) made the point that at no time had a formal vote or decision making process been put forward to determine post P-3 direction. He would like the focus to remain on the cross-town corridor. Darnell (OC) responded that the focus was to develop Roxbury, so any work on Roxbury would be relevant to the OC.

At this point, Hugues Monestime (BRA) reminded the group that the MBTA made a presentation in December of 2004 on Bartlett yard. He referred to the RSMP saying that the fact that some of the proposals in the RSMP were given illustrations, but this in no way suggested any type of priority. The lack of a Bartlett Yard illustration should not be any indication of its importance. Michael Miles (OC) reminded the group that they took a tour of the site in 2004 and that it was clearly an issue of priority. He also felt it important to note that the MBTA has been waiting a year to begin this process and that the OC should not wait to work on this and possibly lose their chance for community input into the site's development. Norman (OC) agreed and felt that scale is important. Larger sites involve a much more intricate process and the OC should complete Bartlett sooner rather than later. Jose (OC) felt that MBTA urgency should not affect the integrity of the process and asked for a formal OC recommendation before moving forward. Charlotte Nelson (OC) referred to her records and stated that the Bartlett Yard site had been discussed as early as December 2004 and has been on the radar for some time.

Darnell (OC) suggested that the group take a formal vote on the issue. Before that he wanted to remind everyone that it was important to not let the MBTA move forward without the participation of the OC. He respected the opinion of Jose (OC) but recommended that the OC go forward with Bartlett Yard. He suggested that the subcommittee continue to look at the other parcels and work on grouping and prioritizing them beginning in January. Joe Cefalo (OC) agreed but felt that Jose's points bring to light a larger issue of scheduling. When an RFP is completed, the group should be able to sit down and reflect on the process and agree on the next steps.

Darnell (OC) felt that this was a good idea. He also felt that after 18 months on P-3, the OC had hopefully developed some "boiler plate" language that could be implemented on each RFP with some adequate "wordsmithing". Jose (OC) agreed. Mike (OC) also agreed but cautioned that each RFP developed will have its own local flavor depending on the neighborhood. Marilyn Lynch (OC) expressed concern that as a resident in the Bartlett "area" she wanted to make sure the meetings will be held in the exact neighborhood allowing all abutters to express their views. Darnell (OC) suggested the Shelbourne as a meeting site. Ricardo Quiroga (OC) agreed on the "boiler plate" language point. He also asked what

did the subcommittee recommend when it met? Darnell (OC) responded that the subcommittee did not have a formal recommendation but that it had only done some preliminary grouping of the parcels.

At this point a motion to vote was passed, and comments were made. Jose (OC) felt that the subcommittee should make a formal recommendation and Norman (OC) agreed that Bartlett should go next. Before taking the vote Darnell felt that this issue speaks to lessons learned and the going forward the process would be different. The subcommittee will work to develop a plan for the remaining parcels.

Vote- 8 in favor, 1 opposed, Bartlett yard will be the next RFP developed.

Parcel P-3 Update:

-Hugues (BRA) presented the full timeline for P-3. OC members had received a copy of this proposed timeline from the BRA along with their copy of the P-3 proposal. Hugues reviewed the chronology of the process beginning with 2 site visits (to P-3) in January. There will be a respondents' conference on January 17th and the Project Review Committee can take questions from the RFP respondents at this time. There will then be a three-month window with proposals being due on April 3rd, 2006. This exceeds a period of 120 days for the proposals. When the proposals have been received, the PRC (PRC) will meet with the BRA for proposal briefings. On May 11th the respondents will present to the Community.

-Darnell (OC) asked about the presentation to the committee, who will be presenting? Hugues (BRA) stated that only those proposals that meet the criteria would meet with the PRC. June 6th is the comment deadline.

-Mike (OC) asked if for convenience, there could be two presentations to the community? Hugues (BRA) responded that that issue should be decided by the PRC.

-Donovan (OC) felt that the PRC would not be able to do anything for 3 months and that the timeline seemed aggressive. Norman agreed but also noted that proposals will not even be finalized until April 3rd. Is there the ability to adapt the timeline after that point? Donovan (OC) felt that there should be some interaction between the PRC and OC. Darnell (OC) suggested a meeting in May to facilitate this.

-Donovan (OC) asked when the final determination would be? Hugues (BRA) responded that the tentative date is July 13th.

-Darnell (OC) offered that this is a suggested timeline and the meetings could be added or changed going forward. Jose (OC) said that this timelines should be a PRC issue, not an OC one. Darnell said it is an issue that both groups should work together on.

-Jose asked if all these meetings will be public ones. Hugues (BRA) and Darnell (OC) replied that due to the sensitive financial information in some of these proposals, unless otherwise noted, some of the meetings would not be public beyond the PRC or OC.

-Hugues stated that the only firm dates were the date of issuance (12/2/2005) and the Proposal Due Date (4/3/2006).

-Darnell (OC) asked Marilyn and her fellow PRC members to look at the timeline and its feasibility and get back to the OC.

Bartlett Yard:

-Darnell wanted the OC members to know that the BRA is simply providing information as a way to help the OC vision the process. It also recognizes that P-3 and Bartlett Yard are two different places with different constituents and needs. The BRA presentation is design to provide examples of what can happen.

-John Dalzell (BRA) began his presentation by reiterating Darnell and spoke of the lessons learned from P-3 and applying those lessons to Bartlett Yard. This presentation was designed to provide the OC with guideline criteria as well as possible use and design scenarios.

-Joe (OC) asked about presentations on use by organizations such as Dudley Main Streets. He also asked if the BRA can send pertinent info out to the OC before the meetings so they have a chance to review it? Darnell (OC) said that he was working with Main Streets offline on that possibility.

-Darnell (OC) asked the BRA to look into this.

-John (BRA) stressed again that this presentation for informative purposes only. The BRA would like to conduct a community workshop presenting big-picture ideas and break out into groups to solicit feedback. These groups would be organized around topics of interest. The proposed topics would be: 1.) Connectivity and Neighborhood Structure 2.) Site Use and Density and 3.) Sustainability and Quality of Life. After lengthy discussion, each group would report back and the info would be documented.

-Darnell (OC) felt that there should be some core themes related to lessons learned during the P-3 process and that those themes should be included. John (BRA) agreed and felt that an OC member should make a presentation to the public on this.

-Darnell (OC) then asked for OC reactions.

-Norman (OC) mentioned that there are a number of issues to be worked out. For example, what about the properties of abutters? Will this development fall under the Dudley Street Neighborhood domain?

-Charlotte (OC) would like from end communication to be a priority in order to make sure that the commitment to the Roxbury neighborhood is upheld. She asked if one meeting was enough. John (BRA) responded that there would be one meeting for the workshop and one for feedback.

-Joe (OC) asked about zoning issues. What is acceptable in terms of height and density? These points should be clearly outlined so that any discussion does not turn into “fantasy land”.

-John (BRA) stated that Roxbury zoning is 15 years old. The OC should be representative of a current vision for the site and given housing priority what is the right issue today. Should we choose to change zoning, it opens up possibilities.

-Donovan (OC) remembered discussing the value of different sites and how this might be a good place to consider senior housing. He felt that there should be a place for people whose current homes are too big but would like to stay in Roxbury.

-Peter Lee (Audience) asked that the OC make community input a priority and to think about weekends as meeting possibilities.

-Rid Singleton (Audience) suggested surveying the community for more input.

-Darnell (OC) wanted the message about these meetings to go out to everyone possible: mailing, email, newspapers, flyers.

-Mike (OC) seconded Darnell’s point and suggested having one workshop on a weekend and one on a weeknight to provide residents with two options. Darnell (OC) liked both of these points.

-John (Audience) asked about the possibility of Dudley Main Streets presenting to the OC. Darnell (OC) talked about groups wanting to present to the OC as well as trying to provide equal time to everyone. He will discuss this offline with those parties and recognized that there are a number of groups that would like this opportunity.

-Jose (OC) felt that making sure all were heard was important.

-John (BRA) began to propose dates for possible community workshops. After much debate, tentative dates of 1/28/05 and 2/13/05 were proposed. The BRA will check on site availability for those dates starting with the Shelbourne. His hope is that after this community-based process there should be an enough information to begin drafting a rough RFP. Mike (OC) suggested that both dates have the same presentation so all community members have a chance to express their views. The BRA will aggressively get the information for these dates out to the public.

-Donovan (OC) asked who will capture all this information? How do we ensure that all voices are heard? John (BRA) responded that the BRA will be collecting the data and putting it together. He also suggested that OC members participate in sessions to get a general feel for what people are thinking. The BRA and consultants did this process for the RSMP development. Mike (OC) wants to ensure data integrity.

-Rod S (Audience) asked why this is a housing priority site? John (BRA) stated that it is merely a zoning regulation from 25 years ago. The BRA has not made any designation for the future of this parcel. Darnell (OC) stated that the future of Bartlett Yard will be determined by the OC and the Bartlett Yard PRC.