



Meeting Notes
February 2, 2009
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Dudley Public Library
65 Warren Street, Roxbury MA

RSMPOC Members Present: Darnell Williams, Norman Stembridge, Daniel Richardson, Charlotte Nelson, Joseph Cefalo, Marilyn Lynch, Donovan Walker, Frank Williams, Dorothea Jones, Beverly Adams; Roxbury Neighborhood Council: Julio Henriquez; BRA: Hugues Monestime, Ted Schwartzberg

Darnell Williams (OC) calls the meeting to order at 6:15 PM. He wishes everyone a Happy New Year and reminds everyone about the importance of beginning meetings on time, at 6:00 PM.

Oversight Committee reviews notes from January 5th meeting.

Dan Richardson (OC) makes a motion to approve the meeting notes.

Joe Cefalo (OC) seconds the motion.

Motion passes unanimously.

Darnell (OC) states the next item on the agenda is Parcels 9 and 10.

Hugues Monestime (BRA) explains that copies of the Draft Parcels 9 and 10 RFP were left in local public libraries. There is a thirty day comment period ending soon. No comments have yet been received.

Darnell (OC) asks Oversight Committee members if they have any comments. There are no comments Oversight Committee members. He then asks audience members for comments.

John Spears (audience member, architect) states that it would be helpful to know what is below Melnea Cass Boulevard (in terms of soil conditions and infrastructure).

Inez Foster (audience member, consultant) asks if there are existing documents stating what is beneath the roadway.

Darnell (OC) replies that there may be underground waterways, but he is unable to answer the question beyond that. He asks Charlotte Nelson if she has knowledge, based on her work on the Urban Ring.

Charlotte Nelson (OC) replies that she doesn't because the section of the Urban Ring proposed for this area is above ground.

Hugues (BRA) notes that this issue hadn't been discussed at summer workshops, but if a developer submits something related the Oversight Committee could address it.

Bruce Bickerstaff (Roxbury resident) also asks what is below Melnea Cass Boulevard. He adds a related question, asking how the timing of Urban Ring construction will be coordinated with development on Parcels 9 and 10.

Darnell (BRA) replies that the Oversight Committee will leave that to the developer: for now the goal is to write the RFP.

Joe Cefalo (OC) adds that the more broadly the RFP is written, the more room it will allow for creativity from developers to fulfill it.

Donovan Walker (OC) points out page 5 and asks how the South Bay trail flipped from Parcel 9 across the street to Parcel 10.

Hugues (BRA) replies that he added this error to the comment file and had it corrected.

Donovan (OC) adds that he will send his other comments to BRA and copy the Oversight Committee.

Joe (OC) notes that grammatical and procedural changes will be made by the BRA following the comment period, but any comments suggesting substantive changes will be discussed by the Oversight Committee prior to incorporation into the final draft of the RFP.

Bruce Bickerstaff (Roxbury resident) states that it should be clarified that there will be vetting process before public comments are incorporated into the RFP.

Darnell (OC) confirms Joe and Bruce's statements.

Joe (OC) adds that there will be a spreadsheet to track all comments and how/if they are incorporated into the final document.

Darnell (OC) notes that to be consistent with how it was done in the past; the spreadsheets could be distributed to local library for the public to review them. He then moves on to the next agenda item, asking Norm Stenbridge for an update on the January "working session".

Norm Stembridge (OC) explains that individuals who are members of the Oversight Committee gathered during the previous week to drill down on subjects that could not be addressed in detail at the official, monthly meeting of the Oversight Committee. One of the issues discussed was the December 15th letter to the BRA about P3. He states that group is passionate about that and wants to hear back from the BRA.

Donovan (OC) states the group wanted to hear back from the BRA by today. The group at the working session also discussed having the BRA Director attend one of the regular meetings of the Oversight Committee.

Dan (OC) notes that he hopes the request was in writing.

Darnell (OC) replies that the letter about P3 was, but that the request for the Director to visit was not.

Donovan (OC) adds that there will be a letter requesting the BRA Director to attend a regular Oversight Committee meeting.

Dan (OC) emphasizes the importance of putting requests in writing to create a paper trail to aid in accountability.

Donovan (OC) states that the group also discussed the role of the RMPOC committees.

Joe (OC) mentions that there have been many committees in addition to the Project Review Committee, including ad-hoc committees and those set up by Councilor Turner.

Darnell (OC) lists the other committees, in addition to the Project Review Committee: Bartlett 1% tax committee, Dudley Vision, support staff, community benefits and labor.

Dorothea Jones (OC) states that creating a paper trail is not only important for creating accountability with the BRA, but also for making sure the community is aware of the serious work the Oversight Committee is doing.

Julio Henriquez (RNC) notes that it should be made clear to the BRA that the developers of Parcel P-3 should be treated with the same respect as other developers in Boston.

Donovan (OC) states that the working group discussed setting up a separate committee to address community benefits.

Darnell (OC) asks if that is the same as the leasing committee.

Norm (OC) states that Oversight Committee needs to put together a template for community benefits.

Dan (OC) notes that he believes that a committee has already put together a report on that. The committee members were John Barros, Jorge Martinez and Chuck Turner.

Darnell (OC) adds that the Executive Committee has met with an attorney to discuss community benefits.

Joe (OC) states the Project Review Committee should be invited to discussions P3.

Scotland Willis (Roxbury resident) states his concern about percentage community benefits. He asks what the attorney's role is.

Dan (OC) replies that the attorney's role is assist the committee as they forward in negotiations with the BRA.

Scotland Willis (Roxbury resident) states that he is significantly concerned that the process would move forward without addressing community benefits. He is concerned that Oversight Committee hasn't held the BRA accountable on P3.

Bob Terrell (RNC) adds that the Roxbury Neighborhood Council has met with the BRA Director and stood with the Oversight Committee in unanimously supporting Elma Lewis' designation for P3. He suggests that the Oversight Committee asks the BRA in its next letter to re-designate Elma Lewis for P3. This would be out of respect for the work the Committee has done.

Darnell (OC) clarifies that Elma Lewis' designation had lapsed: there was no de-designation. He suggests the Project Review Committee goes back to review their notes to determine what financial sources and uses submissions were required, and at what point.

Julio (RNC) states that it needs to be clarified that the lapse occurred because an extension that had been requested was not granted, while other developers have been granted extensions.

Donovan (OC) states that stuff doesn't trickle down.

Charlotte Nelson (OC) states that the action item is to have the P3 developers meet with BRA board.

Dan (OC) asks if the BRA said there would be a process, with a new RFP for P3.

Bruce Bickerstaff (Roxbury resident) asks where the State Senator will fit in the process.

Darnell (OC) replies that this will be addressed in new business.

Katie Anthony (Emerging Green Builders Group) next gives a brief presentation on her organization's annual Green Design Competition. The group will sponsor a design contest for Parcels 9 & 10 for students. The design competition is a learning process that will seek to emulate the real life process for development. On February 24th the

Emerging Green Building Group will host a session on social equity to which community members are invited.

Charlotte (OC) next gives an update on Dudley Vision. She took back concerns from merchants about traffic impacts. The taskforce is looking for items from the traffic study to be implemented: synchronization of lights is one of the items that can be implemented easily and quickly.

Norm Stembridge (OC) adds that remediation of the Modern Electroplating site has begun.

Arthur Hurley (Dudley Sq. property owner) gives an update on his experience as an abutter to the construction at the Modern Electroplating site and member of the task force. He states that the contractor has been a good communicator, has given updates and been very responsive. He adds that both city agencies involved have kept a very close watch. There is not yet an exact timeline on building demolition.

Donovan (OC) notes that a future concern when demolition occurs is the impact of dust on a children's' playing field nearby.

Mohammed Abdus-sabur (Wentworth Institute of Technology, Architecture Faculty) briefs the Oversight Committee on a class he is teaching that is focused on Roxbury. During the upcoming semester, he will be teaching a studio on development on Parcels 8, 9 and 10. Several students attended the previous working group session and will continue to follow the work of the Oversight Committee to inform their class-related work.

Dan (OC) next gives a Parcel 8 update. Representative Rushing called him and would like to meet with the BRA. The BRA Director agreed to meet. He is waiting for follow up responses from both men.

Joe (OC) states that the majority of Parcel 8 is owned by the state, by the DCR specifically. Surplus state land goes through the Chapter 7 process.

Bob Terrell (RNC) notes that what Joe described is the process for disposition of surplus state land. He adds that in the back of Roxbury Strategic Master Plan book there is memorandum of understanding between the BRA, city and state were the state essentially states the BRA will be its agent for the disposition of this land.

Donovan (OC) states that he is concerned that Parcel 8 is not ready, unlike Parcels 9 and 10.

Hugues (OC) clarifies that the larger part of Parcel 8 owned by the state was not part of the memorandum of understanding. The addition of that part is what is taking time.

Darnell (OC) states that if the group is going to revisit Parcel 8, it should visit the crescent parcel at the same time.

John Spears (Audience member, architect) notes that in his opinion, a disposition for Parcel 8 without the Harrison Supply part would not be a good idea.

Meeting adjourns.