



Meeting Notes
March 6, 2006
6:00pm-7: 45 PM
Boston Public Library
65 Warren Street

RSMPOC Members Present: Darnell Williams, Norman Stembridge, Daniel Richardson, John Barros, Joe Cefalo, Marilyn Lynch, Charlotte Nelson, Donovan Walker, Senator Dianne Wilkerson, Excused: Barbara Barrow-Murray, Reginald Jackson Public-30 plus

Welcome: Darnell Williams (OC Chair) called the meeting to order and introduced the agenda.

Review of Minutes: The minutes for the 2/6/06 RSMPOC meeting were unanimously approved.

RSMPOC Attendance Discussion: Darnell (OC) announced that current records show that 4 members of the OC are in violation of attendance requirements (missing three consecutive meetings). As the process for Bartlett moves forward, it is going to be increasingly important for the OC to be at full strength, as five OC members will have to serve on the Bartlett Yard PRC. He proposed working with the BRA to replace those 4 individuals with new members who would go through the same selection process.

Joe Cefalo (OC) suggested sending each of the four members a letter explaining the situation and asking for a firm commitment to the process or to step down and allow someone to take their place. Donovan Walker (OC) agreed, feeling this step was a common courtesy. Charlotte Nelson (OC) stated that we did determine this policy some time ago and the OC should follow its own determinations.

Darnell (OC) stated that the absence policy needs to be established or not with the ultimate goal of ensuring that all OC members have a firm commitment to the process. Joe (OC) still felt that it would be prudent to ask for a resignation or a commitment.

Dan Richardson (OC) asked how the OC could encourage the ex-officio members to attend more regularly. Darnell (OC) responded that while not always present, many of the ex-officio members send representatives to the monthly meetings. In addition, the issue at hand is the 15 voting members of the OC, the ex-officio members do not have a vote and their presence does not affect the ability to have a quorum for voting purposes.

John Barros (OC) asked for an opportunity to address the attendance record following the meeting.

Charlotte (OC) asked how many openings were there currently on the committee. Darnell (OC) stated that there was one opening due to resignation. Charlotte (OC) also asked how to act on Joe's suggestion and what steps should be taken. The committee agreed that letters should be sent immediately and a response should be in hand by the April meeting.

Sen. Dianne Wilkerson (OC) asked for clarification from Joe on this strategy. Joe (OC) replied that the letter should ask the OC member to affirm their commitment or to resign and let someone else fill their slot. Any perspective member should have to go through the same selection process as the current members. Darnell (OC) suggested that there were individuals approved as "alternates" and that the search should start with them.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) also stressed that the language in this letter is extremely important and that the OC's authority is limited to making recommendations to the city that a member be removed for lack of participation. Darnell (OC) stated that he recognized the Senator's point and that the "three meeting rule" has been officially voted on by the OC committee.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) also reminded the OC that the often-flexible nature of community meeting dates can make community meetings difficult to attend for even the most dedicated.

Bartlett Yard Summary: John Dalzell (BRA) distributed a draft of the Use and Design Guidelines for Bartlett Yard with accompanying comments generated by the community workshop on 3/2/06. John emphasized that the BRA was still working on incorporating the output from the workshops. While highlighting several of the points in the draft he also mentioned that the community would like to emphasize quality design and materials for any development on this site.

Both Dan (OC) and Charlotte (OC) were present at the 3/2/06 meeting and reported that they thought it was a very productive workshop. Dan (OC) made the point that we should remember that development of Bartlett is occurring within the context of other projects in the neighborhood, such as Modern Electroplating. Also, he reported that the MBTA has assured him that the yard has been properly remediated.

Darnell (OC) took this into consideration but reiterated community concerns and assured that the OC will make sure due diligence is done.

Mark Boyle (MBTA) reiterated that this property will be sold without any Activity and Use Limitations and that the MBTA considers the site remediated.

Darnell (OC) talked about using "boiler plate" language from the P-3 RFP in the Bartlett RFP while incorporating Use and Design guidelines unique to the Bartlett site. Ideally, this will expedite the process.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) asked at what point does the BRA factor in Bartlett with other Roxbury development? There are a number of other projects ongoing in the Roxbury community and we should be aware of those as we determine a direction for Bartlett.

Norman Stembridge (OC) stressed that the entire region around Bartlett is being consulted, from Dudley to Highland Park.

John (BRA) stated that this document, which is still in draft form, is focused on capturing meeting output and generates discussion helpful to create the RFP. The BRA will certainly consider development within Roxbury,

Darnell (OC) stressed that the OC is sensitive to all community issues and input and gave the example for Dudley Square Main Streets having a chance to share their vision. P-3 taught the OC some lessons and they will continue to listen to the community when trying to determine the best overall use for the parcel. John B (OC) suggested that this is an issue that could be flagged for developers within the RFP. Darnell (OC) stated that the OC will try to avoid operating in a silo and will relate Bartlett with other area projects such as P-3 and Jackson Square.

Charlotte (OC) noted that traffic flow on Washington Street should be studied.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) also reiterated that not every parcel can have its own grocery store. It is important to plan for Roxbury as a whole and what makes best sense for the community at large. Not every parcel within Roxbury can be fully sustainable. Also, the economic reality should be realized. For example, Haley House is doing very well in Dudley Sq., do you want to create a competitor for that growing business?

Darnell (OC) stated that after the Bartlett RFP, it is the OC's job to explain the how and why to the community. John (BRA) suggested updating the matrix from the BRA that looks at the macro development picture.

John B (OC) made a request that the BRA provide the OC with three tools: 1.) An overall traffic study for Roxbury 2.) The BRA's strategy for economic development within Roxbury 3.) A look at Roxbury density, where do people live and where are the services they need.

Joe C (OC) stated that the OC agreed to take a brief break upon completing Bartlett to assess the Roxbury landscape and determine the next parcel for development.

Darnell (OC) would like to share lessons learned and progress made with the community.

Marilyn Lynch (OC) suggested taking community questions recorded earlier in the process and providing answers to the community in some forum.

Dan (OC) reiterated the point about Washington Street traffic and also parking. Darnell (OC) agreed.

Pat Courtney (Audience) suggested setting up a weekly Q/A section of the banner as well as Globe and Herald articles.

Charlotte (OC) reminded the BRA that they had agreed to send out the workshop findings to the participants. John (BRA) acknowledged the request.

Bruce Bickerstaff (Audience) asked if the municipal plaza was part of this process.

Sen. Wilkerson (OC) reminded her fellow OC members to be mindful of current and future opportunities for all of the RSMP sites and urged completing RFP's in an efficient manner while still focusing on community participation.