



Meeting Notes
May 7, 2007
6:00pm-7:45 PM
Dudley Public Library
65 Warren Street

RSMPOC Members Present: Norman Stenbridge, Joe Cefalo, Donovan Walker, Marilyn Lynch, Daniel Richardson, John Barros, Charlotte Nelson, Jose Alicea, Michael Miles, Elected Officials: Senator Dianne Wilkerson, City Councilor Chuck Turner; RNC: Julio Henriquez,

Dan Richardson (OC-Vice-Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed the OC and public. The 4/2/06 meeting notes were unanimously approved.

Parcel P-3 Update

Dan (OC) wanted to thank the PRC Co-chairs for their hard work and acknowledged the full PRC, reading their names to the crowd.

Reggie Jackson (OC) thanked Dan and stated that the P-3 PRC had completed its work after fourteen months. The PRC has voted for the Ruggles Place proposal based on the RFP criteria and looks forward to continuing as the IAG for the parcel. He thanked the OC for their support. This was an open and honest process. Ruggles Place received 7 votes, Heritage Common received 3 votes, and Tremont Center received no votes. We have included a brief overview of the Ruggles Place project in a handout to each of you.

Marilyn Lynch (OC) asked that all the attending PRC members stand. Once we received the information we needed, our task was made easier.

Dan (OC) asked if any PRC members would like to comment. Bruce Bickerstaff (PRC) thanked everyone and stated that the PRC's work was guided by the RSMP and the Parcel P-3 RFP in order to maximize the benefits to the community.

Dan (OC) asked Bob Terrel (RNC) to make a statement.

Bob Terrel (RNC) stated that 10 days ago, the RNC was present at both the PRC vote and the ballot counting. The Board of the RNC has unanimously endorsed the recommendation by the PRC and congratulated them on the completion of their work.

Joe Cefalo (OC) asked if it would be appropriate for the OC to accept the recommendation from the PRC. Dan (OC) replied that it was Joe (OC) motioned that the PRC's recommendation be accepted. Reggie (OC) seconded this. The OC unanimously approved this motion.

Dan (OC) once again thanked the PRC.

Hugues Monestime (BRA) stated that the next steps would be to inform the BRA director of this recommendation. The BRA will meet with the Ruggles Place team and form a working committee to prepare for tentative designation.

Joe (OC) asked about Article 80 review for this project. Hugues (BRA) replied that this project would go through Article 80 Review for Large Project.

Joe (OC) stated that many times, a project could have significant changes upon completion of that process. He urged that a rationale should be explained for any major changes to the project.

Hugues (BRA) stated that the P-3 PRC would be acting as the IAG for the Article 80 process. Additionally, Hugues expected that any major changes would have explanations.

Joe (OC) suggested that the proponents speak to any potential changes as well. Hugues (BRA) replied that he would take that under advisement going forward.

John Barros (OC) felt that the BRA should combine processes to avoid any back and forth. Charlotte Nelson (OC) suggested Joe write up his comments and submit them to Hugues Monestime (BRA). Dan (OC) felt this was a good idea.

Councilor Turner (OC) was pleased that all the developers made it to the \$3/sf lease fee. As the RSMPOC, we should request the report that was the basis of this fee for discussion. Now that the process is complete, it is appropriate to look back.

Dan (OC) felt that this a good point.

Hugues (BRA) stated that this was discussed at length at a previous meeting and throughout the process. It is in the RFP. I feel this discussion could hold us back.

Dan (OC) wanted to examine the rationale because it will come up again for each project.

Julio Henriquez (RNC) felt that this would be clarified when the BRA submitted the official survey of the land that established this price. The Mosque land was worth \$1.50/sf, why is there such a difference?

Joe (OC) felt differently. When we decided to lease P-3, we asked the BRA to come up with a price and justify it, they did this. Bartlett is out of our control. The next parcel will be different. We need economic justification for each parcel, as it will be different for each one. He agreed with Hugues (BRA) that to revisit P-3 could cause problems. Going forward, he agreed with Councilor Turner, that this needs to be examined going forward.

Dan (OC) stated that he thought everyone was in agreement, that we needed to know how we got there.

Hugues (BRA) stated that he felt this issue needed to be addressed. The BRA brought someone in to the OC to explain the rationale. The other parcels will be different. P-3 is an economic generator and this was factored into the price.

Dan (OC) suggested moving on.

Senator Wilkerson (OC) felt that the issue was one of methodology and not intending to revisit P-3. How did we get there? We know that different parcels have different values. Revenue generation is not an adequate reason. There is still no agreement with the BRA on the lease fees. Also, what about John Barros' (OC) point? The city has asked for public money to help fund the waterfront. If we are giving money to wealthy developers for that, we want the same treatment for Roxbury.

Shirley Kressel (Audience Member) asked how large the project was. Hugues (BRA) replied that it was 8.6 acres and the \$3/sf lease is based on the buildout.

Roxbury Land Trust

Dan (OC) stated that the OC had asked for a presentation by Lenny Durant as a result of Councilor Turner's subcommittee on lease fees.

Lenny Durant introduced himself as the chair of the Roxbury Land Trust. The trust was created by the state as a result of parcel to parcel linkage with Parcel 18. The funds were intended to be split three ways between Roxbury, Chinatown, and the City. The development was intended to pay out funds over a ten-year period. Instead, the development was sold 2 years in and Roxbury received \$2.4 million. At the beginning, the BRA held the funds and the Trust was an escrow agent. The Trust then decided to become a 501c (3). The city and state wanted to retain some control, but after a year and a half, we succeeded. The Trust then established a MOA with the BRA where the BRA can challenge any funding decision within 15 days if our actions break the law or jeopardize our 501c(3) status. Thus, all our decisions remain ours if we do not break the law, and everything is public. We only fund organizations in Roxbury. The Trust does struggle with organizations on Roxbury's borders that work with Roxbury residents. We first asked for concept papers in early 2005. When we started, we had \$2.3 million and we have distributed \$622,000 so far with another \$205,000 being distributed this round. Currently, the Trust has \$2.1 million. We have nothing to hide and we are in complete control.

Bruce (PRC) and Trust member asked Lenny to explain why the Trust did business with a bank outside of Boston.

Lenny responded that the funds were originally deposited in a minority-owned bank, One United. But, the rate of return was only around 1.5%, even slipping as low as 1%. In the interest of the Trust and to protect the community's money, we switched to Citizens. One United was given an opportunity to match the rate of return, but they were not able to do so. We acted in Roxbury's best interest, making the move a business decision.

Audience Member Dolly Battle asked who is, “we”? Who makes decisions? Lenny replied that the governor and mayor appoint the board of the Trust, and the local elected officials sit on the board as well.

Dolly asked for names. Lenny replied that he was the Chair, and the rest included Jeanne Pinado, Bruce Bickerstaff, Senator Wilkerson, Rep. Fox, Willie Rodriguez, and Oscar Pratt. Inez Foster is a consultant. We have a website and advertise in the Baystate Banner. We have worked hard to put this together and show the community that we could handle this responsibility. Once it is established, it becomes about the institution.

Dolly stated that all of this was news to her. Dan (OC) suggested Dolly follow-up with Lenny or Inez after the meeting.

Councilor Turner (OC) stated that in April of 2006, an OC sub-committee began to look at the lease fees. During this process, we met with Lenny Durant. The sub-committee felt the focus should be on the structure, and then worry about the money. Hence, we thought it might be prudent to work with the members of the Trust. We felt they could help us do some of the work, especially with establishing independence from the BRA. We hoped that they could work with the subcommittee to establish another trust for this money, but wanted you to hear from Lenny first. The next move is to vote as a subcommittee to ask for their assistance.

Dan (OC) clarified that an OC group would work with members of the Trust to work on setting up our own trust.

Councilor Turner (OC) added that the OC would have to determine how decision-making would occur in this process. He proposed an electoral process to determine the board of any trust created.

Senator Wilkerson (OC) stated that we could be seeing revenue in as little as 1-2 years. What would the role of the Trust be? The Senator referenced the Boston Connects process, where half the Board is elected officials and the other half are neighborhood representatives. There are currently a number of vacancies for neighborhood representatives. She was on the Board of Trustees for the Trust and wrote the legislation for Dukakis. There is a level of flexibility if this body uses the benefits of the Trust under the RSMPOC.

Julio (RNC) stated that there is already a Roxbury Trust. Why would the OC establish a Trust, we do not even know how much money we will have from the BRA.

Dan (OC) the sub-committee is reporting back on their work. Also, the OC is going to expect a substantial portion of the lease fees, no less than 75%.

Councilor Turner (OC) stated that the BRA is financially independent from the city, with assets of more than \$20 million. They recently gave a \$30,000 grant to Project Place to clean Dudley Square. The BRA initially received money from funds for urban renewal and invested this money in land, then leasing it to developers. This created a flow of income. They are able to act as they choose. Can we get them to do this? It is up to us.

The community would support us in this fight and we would create a new model for neighborhoods.

John (OC) also talked about the geographic restrictions, we would want to avoid those.

Senator Wilkerson (OC) stated that the trust did not create the boundary issue; Roxbury itself has issues with its boundaries.

Councilor Turner (OC) stated that the RSMP includes some land not known as Roxbury, DSNI is included.

Dan (OC) said that was why a map was included in the plan. We worked on this.

Joe (OC) stated that in concept, this was good. Lenny pointed out that the Trust was created by an act of the Legislature and has legal status. The OC does not have the same status. South Boston had a recent issue where their group was struck down as illegal. This idea has great merit, but first we need to figure out how we legalize the entity, and then worry about negotiating with the BRA.

Councilor Turner (OC) agreed, but in 1983, there was no RNC in Roxbury. Then the RNC was created to assist with the city development process and have a voice in land decisions. We should not let the current framework stop us. We should come with a strategy and work to implement it.

Joe (OC) agreed and stated that when money enters the picture, it changes everything.

Charlotte (OC) asked the sub-committee to submit its proposal in writing to the OC.

Donovan (OC) stated that it was a unanimous vote on leasing the parcels of land, but we did not determine how to negotiate the percentage of the lease fees for the community. We need to put this on the agenda. He suggested a minimum of 75% go to the community.

Councilor Turner (OC) stated that the sub-committee looked at this, but focused on the structure before focusing on the money. Donovan's question should be brought to the sub-committee.

Senator Wilkerson (OC) asked how much of this was the work of the sub-committee?

Donovan (OC) felt this was not their charge.

Senator Wilkerson (OC) stated that the OC should meet with the BRA. There needs to be a resolution on this issue. We are already moving to the third parcel.

Jose Alicea (OC) asked for a report back on this from the OC.

Charlotte (OC) stated this should be the first item on the June 4th agenda.

Jose (OC) made a motion that anyone meeting with any outside entity should automatically bring a written report back summarizing the meeting. It was unanimously approved.

Councilor Turner (OC) asked for a motion that the sub-committee bring back a written report.

Charlotte (OC) asked why a motion was needed.

John (OC) stated that there was no need. We need to work to set up a framework and galvanize the community.

Dan (OC) asked for a Bartlett Yard update. He hoped that the PRC would be set by the end of May.

Hugues (BRA) stated that one proposal was submitted for the Bartlett Yard site. The PRC will review the proposal.

Audience question as to whether the proposal could be rejected by the PRC. Hugues (BRA) replied yes.