



Meeting Notes
April 7, 2008
6:00pm-7:45 PM
Dudley Public Library
65 Warren Street

RSMPOC Members Present: Norman Stembridge, Donovan Walker, Dan Richardson, Michael Miles, Dorothea Jones, Marilyn Lynch, Joe Cefalo, Charlotte Nelson; RNC: Julio Henriquez, Elected officials: Councilor Chuck Turner; BRA: Hugues Monestime, Jonathan Greeley, Dana Whiteside, John Dalzell

Dan Richardson (OC Vice-Chair) welcomed everyone. Joe Cefalo (OC) mentioned that February's notes had not been approved. The March notes were unanimously approved.

Parcel 8, 9 and 10

John Dalzell (BRA) presented the OC with a revised work plan that included a workshop on Boston's overall economy and economic future. The workshop would take place on Thursday, January 24th.

Donovan Walker (OC) asked if it would include a discussion on institutional expansion. John (BRA) replied that it was much broader than that and very comprehensive.

Dorothea Jones (BRA) mentioned the minority business program and getting more information on that.

John (BRA) replied that he would need to follow-up on that issue. It is important to note that the two RFPs crafted by the OC have gone into great detail on this issue. This will focus on permanent jobs.

Joe (OC) asked if this date was final. John (BRA) replied that it was a suggested date, and it would be for a 2-hour meeting.

Norman Stembridge (OC) asked if this was still a community workshop. John (BRA) replied that it was, but would be a bit different.

Julio Henriquez (RNC) spoke to linking job opportunities with young people. John (BRA) stated that the BRA would be facilitating conversations during the second part of the workshop and one of the topics would be job access and training. There is a good opportunity here with the public parcels to facilitate the community's goals.

Councilor Turner (OC) stated that there have been meetings with elected officials to force action on the minority jobs program. We hope for a resolution by the summer. The current proposal does not set requirements, but gathers information.

Julio (RNC) asked about Urban Design and Quality of Life. John (BRA) replied that these were catch-alls for opens space and plazas. There are a range of discussion topics.

Julio (RNC) stated that the work is determining how Melnea Cass is going to look and feel. We still need a specific approach. We don't want the Urban Ring.

John (BRA) stated that the feel of Melnea Cass is a good point. The idea behind re-alignment is to create a better, more neighborhood friendly, road.

Dan (OC) indicated that 4/24 was a good date.

An audience member brought up the minority business issue and indicated that there had been no policy for four years. Since the suspension of the policy, MWBE contracts have dropped significantly. Also, the procurement side is just as important, especially with the spending of tax dollars.

Councilor Turner (OC) indicated that the ordinance died four years ago because a disparity study showed that the city gave a larger percentage of contracts to MWBE than the percentage in the marketplace. Without the ordinance, there has been a significant drop, so there has been a move to get the ordinance back.

Donovan (OC) echoed Julio's comments on job training. There is a training program at Albany Street and maybe there is an opportunity for people in the community to take greater advantage of it. We need to discuss job training programs.

Dan (OC) felt this was a good point. There is a committee for this.

Charlotte Nelson (OC) looked for Councilor Turner to continue to provide updates on the issue. Councilor Turner (OC) felt he might be able to bring an update to the June meeting. Charlotte (OC) asked that the information be distributed to the community as well.

Dudley Vision Project

Dana Whiteside (BRA) stated that the nominees for the DVATF have been approved by the Mayor. We are now contacting these individuals and working to schedule an orientation meeting. There are five OC members on the DVATF. As part of this process, BTD and BRA will be working with the DVATF on a Dudley Transportation Action Plan. The OC members of the DVATF were a part of the consultant selection process. The consultant team will work closely with the DVATF on Dudley Square traffic and transportation issues. The MOU for the DVATF is still in the process of being finalized.

Donovan (OC) asked about what type of notice the community would receive for the demo of the Guscott and Children's Services buildings.

Dana (BRA) hoped to have this information ready for the 1st DVATF meeting.

Donovan (OC) explained that he felt this information would be important to the community and require some changes in Dudley. He also requested a newsletter for updates.

Dana (BRA) replied that he was unsure of the demo dates and would pass them along when he received them. He hoped for significant lead time and the point is well taken. Dana was unwilling to commit to a newsletter, but committed to some method of sharing information with the community. He hoped to have an update at the May meeting.

Donovan (OC) stated the need for the community to be informed. Maybe Main Streets could be involved in helping to distribute information.

Julio (RNC) asked if the transportation consultant was the same as for the traffic model.

Dana (BRA) replied that it would not be. The product is different, but that they would use the existing traffic model to look at short and long term improvements to Dudley Square. Tetra Tech Rizzo is still involved in completing the work of the Roxbury traffic model.

Donovan (OC) was involved in the process in choosing the traffic consultant for Dudley and commended the BRA on the process.

Audience Member Bruce Bickerstaff asked for information to be posted on the web.

Dana (BRA) felt that would be looked at when determining communication strategies. We want to be very open with the community when a timeline is determined.

Dan (OC) replied that this needed to happen. He thanked Dana for the update.

Dudley Design Competition

Hugues Monestime (BRA) reiterated that this was occurring on conjunction with the AIA Conference being held in Boston. The BRA pushed for Dudley Square to be the focus of the contest. Information has been placed at the BPL, passed out in meetings and advertized in newspapers. The 1st Community Charette will take place on April 15th at Hibernian Hall. More than 35 teams have entered the contest and we want to ensure community participation. This is for the new developable site created when the police station moves to a new location. The jury is comprised of residents and business owners from Dudley Square.

Donovan (OC) asked for confirmation that this would not restrict the OC. Hugues (BRA) replied that it would not.

Jonathan Greeley (BRA) added that this competition would not affect the OC process at all.

Parcel P-3 Update

Barry Gaither (ELP) introduced himself as a member of the Elma Lewis Partners development team and provided an update on his team's progress regarding Parcel P-3. He indicated that Urban America was no longer a partner in this project, and that their role had been assumed by Jones Lang LaSalle. The development team has received letters of intent from Partners Healthcare and Northeastern University. Both intend to lease space in the project, and the NU space would be for academic and research space, not student housing. Whittier Street Health Center has also agreed to own and occupy space on the site (this was indicated in the original proposal). In terms of the Arts Education piece, the development team has received a letter of intent from the MFA and hopes to receive one soon from Mass Art. Overall, the team expects to ask the BRA for a short extension and continue to work on re-drafting plans to accommodate new uses in the project. There have been some delays, but no reversals.

Tom Welch (ELP) introduced himself as part of the Elma Lewis team and spoke to conversations being held with Heath Careers Academy (HCA) to relocate to Parcel P-3.

Barry (ELP) added that they hoped to have further conversations with other education institutions including Madison Park TVHS, the John D. O'Bryant, and Roxbury Community College.

Tom (ELP) indicated that perspective tenants have looked at the various educational users of the site very favorably. He added that with more than \$1 billion in development coming before the OC due to the RSMP parcels, the OC could and should play a role in working with unions and construction companies to help create jobs for Roxbury.

Councilor Turner (OC) asked about how conversations with potential tenants were going.

Tom (ELP) replied that the major tenants they were working with had not been affected by the sub-prime crisis, and had expressed interest in investing in the project. In particular, the interest from NU was around academic and research space for long-term use.

Charlotte (OC) asked what he meant by long-term.

Tom (ELP) indicated that it would likely be a 15-year lease with 5-year options. NU would probably like a longer period of time. Long-term leases will help create wealth for the lead partner in the project, the National Center for Afro-American Artists.

Michael Miles (OC) asked if the scope had changed or any new partners were involved.

Tom (ELP) indicated that Cavanaugh Advisors had been brought aboard, and that their principle, formerly involved in William A. Berry, had tremendous experience with construction in the LMA. They would be managing the construction. He also anticipated that William A. Berry would be the lead construction company on the project.

Norman (OC) asked what potential obstacles the team saw for the project.

Tom (ELP) replied that he was fairly confident. The original pro-forma had been reworked by Jones Lang LaSalle and indicated higher returns. As a result, we feel we have sufficient contingencies built into the project. We feel our biggest issue could be the national economy and the value of the dollar.

Joe (OC) asked about the \$3/sf ground lease issue. Where did it stand?

Tom (ELP) indicated that they were not far enough along in the process to engage the BRA on this issue, but the tentative designation documents had indicated that this would be negotiable.

Donovan (OC) asked when this would be going back to the PRC. Dan (OC) replied that it would once a PNF had been filed as part of the Article 80 process.

Donovan (OC) also asked about Jones Lang LaSalle. Joe (OC) indicated that they were a well-respected national development firm out of Chicago. Tom (ELP) added that this group brought tremendous capital and resources to the table. They had also gotten involved in the crosstown project. They feel that the P-3 site is a very strong location for development.

Barry (ELP) indicated that the entire project would be completed in the 1st phase and the second phase only included the performance theatre, which a capital would need campaign to raise the necessary \$75 million for construction.

Donovan (OC) asked when it would be built. Barry (ELP) indicated that they hoped for 1st phase construction to be complete by 2011-2012. The second phase should be completed by 2014.

Tom (ELP) indicated that Jones Lang LaSalle agreed with the importance of the cultural elements on-site.

Dan (OC) thanked the ELP team for their presentation.

Charlotte (OC) asked about the historical preservation of the Ferdinand site.

Councilor Turner (OC) spoke of a meeting with Tom Miller (BRA) and elected officials. It has been determined that the Guscott building could not be saved. We saw the logic in this and Byron Rushing has taken a lead in discussions with the BRA to look at new designs for the building. He also brought up the Bartlett Yard issue. He suggested a call to the MBTA by the executive committee.

Audience Member Bruce Bickerstaff asked where the OC chair was.

Meeting Adjourned.