



Parcel P-3 PRC Meeting Notes
April 12, 2007
6:00pm-8:00 PM
Central Boston Elder Services
2315 Washington Street

PRC Members Present: Donovan Walker, Norman Stembridge, Sandra Henriquez, Dolly Battle, Reginald Jackson, Marilyn Lynch, Pat Flaherty, Khadijah Brown, Maurice Sequeira, Bruce Bickerstaff, Keith McDermott; RNC Members present: Julio Henriquez

Reggie Jackson (PRC Co-chair) welcomed the PRC and audience. The PRC has 30 minutes to prepare for the Tremont Center (TC) presentation at 6:30. He suggested each member review the responses from the TC team.

Reggie (PRC) asked that Dan Richardson's excused absence be noted in the 4/5/07 minutes.

Tremont Center Presentation

Reggie (PRC) welcomed the TC team and indicated that this session was intended to clarify your additional responses regarding financial information. There will be 20 minutes for clarification followed by 30 minutes of Q&A with PRC members.

Bruce Bickerstaff (PRC) asked them to clarify their financial package.

Patrick Lee (TC) began the presentation and introduced the TC team: Jeanne Pinado, Kenan Bigbee, and David Price. Patrick stated that there were three things that distinguished his team: experience, capability, and overall vision for the project. This is a large site, and they have put together a strong mixed-use project. The team is aware of the necessary capital needed to begin the work and has completed projects of this size and scope before. They have experience raising equity and referred to strong relationship with Bank of America. They are aware of the challenges facing development of this site.

In terms of vision, TC has attempted to respond to neighborhood priorities. They have also taken the concept of wealth generation seriously. They do not want to create big-box retail jobs, rather jobs anchored by Roxbury businesses. TC is intended to create opportunities as well as provide a system to get opportunities to Roxbury residents. TC will also expand Health Careers Academy (HCA), which helps prepare students for careers in the healthcare field.

Jeanne Pinado (TC) stated that large parts of this project would be financed through public equity such as New Market Tax Credits, Historical Tax Credits, and other affordable housing loans and grants. This team has lots of experience utilizing these tools. Additionally, ten years ago Madison Park CDC created ACT Roxbury, aimed at

cultural and economic development. The CDC also has job training and technology programs and partners with other organizations on youth programs.

Patrick (TC) stated that the last proposal had an element of student housing. TC no longer has any student housing in the proposal and now focuses on a mix of housing, education, retail and commercial as well as a parking garage that will be available to abutting institutions.

Marilyn Lynch (PRC) asked why TC had changed their program.

Patrick (TC) responded that the team wanted to create a proposal that contained extensive community benefits and remained financially feasible. The first submission did not achieve this objective. After listening to the response of the PRC, we made changes.

Bruce (PRC) asked about the projects financial structure. How would this help the community? Jeanne (TC) responded that Madison Park CDC is a 50% partner in TC. The revenues that go to the CDC directly fund Roxbury programs. The Board of Directors is Roxbury base, providing an element of community control as well. There are opportunities in this project for people who would work at TC as well as business opportunities for Roxbury residents.

Bruce (PRC) asked how MPCDC helped business development in the community. Jeanne (TC) responded that the real estate element of the CDC subsidizes all of the other programs. This is the model of a successful CDC.

Sandra Henriquez (PRC) asked about jobs and the overall net gain. Patrick (TC) stated that two existing businesses would be moving to the site, Whittier Street Health Center (WSHC) and HCA, all the rest of the jobs would be new jobs.

Patrick (TC) went on to address minority-hiring issues. In the past they have worked with project contractors and sub-contractors with success. With the experience we have, the numbers we project are real and the oversight is real. This data would be collected and reported.

Dolly Battle (PRC) asked about the union issues with construction jobs, especially because many union members are not Roxbury residents. How is Roxbury going to build Roxbury?

Patrick (TC) replied that the TC team shared her concerns. In developing Orchard Garden in 1997, state legislation was needed to go forward to manage union and residents issues. In this project we started to tackle this issue early and developed a plan and as a result 42% of the work force was minority. Patrick gave a personal example of being able to help a former teen who had had mentored find a job on the project. The Section 3 requirements and the work plan helped make the goals achievable. The unions can be difficult on this issue, but we have history of success.

Jeanne (TC) stated that if an owner and general contractor were on board, especially before any agreements are signed, then good things could happen.

Dolly (PRC) asked about reporting these numbers. Jeanne (TC) replied that they are compiled monthly. Dolly (PRC) wanted assurance that Roxbury residents would get a

chance. Patrick (TC) replied that she was right to ask this and that this team has had success in this area when hiring has been strictly monitored.

Khadijah Brown (PRC) asked about project phasing. Kenan Bigbee (TC) referred to the packed indicating the project phasing. The project would be completed in 3 phases. The first phase included housing, parking, commercial/office space, the Roxbury Community Cultural Center, and the Community Resource Center. Phase Two would build more commercial and housing, as well as open space and the redevelopment of the HCA space. Phase Three would include the WSHC building, as well as other commercial space. The entire project is expected to be completed by 2012. This phasing is necessary because Northeastern is no longer subsidizing a large portion of the project.

Reggie (PRC) asked about the cultural center and how it would raise money. Kenan (TC) replied that the cultural center would be on the first floor of the corner building at Whittier and Tremont. The upper floors would be commercial space.

Sandra (PRC) asked for clarification of the housing location on the site. Kenan (TC) used the site map to display the housing locations. There would be 200 homeownership units and 30 units of affordable rental housing.

Maurice Sequeria (PRC) asked about the sale of units given the ground lease conditions. Patrick (TC) replied that while not conventional, this type of strategy has been used before. He referred the Trinity's Ashmont Station project. That project has a mix of ownership and rental units.

Donovan Walker (PRC) asked how long the project would take. Kenan (TC) replied that Phase I would be completed by 2010. Phase II by 2011. Phase III by 2012.

Donovan (PRC) asked about resident priority for the HCA. Kenan (TC) replied that some students would have that opportunity.

Donovan (PRC) asked about outreach to Madison Park and the O'Bryant. Jeanne (TC) replied that they had met with the headmasters of both schools.

Donovan (PRC) questioned whether they had talked with the O'Bryant. David Price (TC) replied that they had met with the O'Bryant headmaster who indicated a parking need for staff as a priority. There was discussion about access to the parking garage as a result.

Keith McDermott (PRC) asked how the team's other projects had stimulated their neighborhoods. Jeanne (TC) replied that 2201 Washington Street was vacant when acquired by Madison Park CDC. They have been able to get 7 businesses employing 150 people to move there. At YO Boston's peak, there were more than 200 visitors in the building daily. This kind of traffic helps Dudley Square. The CDC's office has recently moved and the Department of Transitional Assistance has moved in, bringing over 100 employees.

Additionally, Hibernian Hall had brought in traffic with hosting events. The ballroom is booked at least one weekend night through July, bringing outside traffic to Dudley. This helps to change perceptions.

Norman Stembridge (PRC) asked if the number of ongoing projects in the city would affect this project. Patrick (TC) replied that there would be no negative impact. Because of TC, we have declined to bid on several projects, such as Bartlett Yard. Trinity was founded in 1987 and has done more than 1 Billion in development and employees 20 people. We focus on MA, but some development in RI and CT. One example is the Dorchester Shaw's. Trinity owns the building and Shaw's is a tenant. Another is the old TB hospital, where Trinity owns 27 of 57 acres. It is small but we are careful about who we select. Trinity also has a lot of experience working with Madison Park CDC and has a good track record. This is more than bricks and mortar and Madison Park brings great experience in the social aspect.

Marilyn (PRC) asked about traffic. Patrick (TC) replied that if designated, they would engage in a traffic study of the area as a result of Article 80. TC would work together with the BRA, BTD, and PRC to examine traffic issues. Jeanne (TC) added that Howard Stein Hudson was available as a traffic consultant.

Patrick (TC) noted that Whittier Street residents expressed concern about maintaining parking and access on Wittier Street. As a result, the TC proposal calls for a widening of this street. They would also like to put an additional traffic light on Tremont Street, but would need to engage the city on this.

Jeanne (TC) felt that it was important to slow traffic down and make Tremont Street less like a highway.

Dan Richardson (OC) stated that there was a real need for traffic calming and that this should be part of any proposal.

Dolly (PRC) stated that there is already a lot of traffic to I-93. Once you add in all the new construction, slowing things down won't help. Jeanne (TC) agreed, stating that she crossed Tremont Street every day.

Sandra (PRC) stated that in her role as the head of the BHA, she has asked for a traffic study along Tremont and Melnea Cass to examine current conditions.

Maurice (PRC) asked about Deruko Pharmacy and its location. Patrick (PRC) replied that it likely would be located on the 1st floor of the WSHC building. There would also be an emergency entrance on the ground floor as well.

Bruce (PRC) asked about integrating the abutting neighbors. Jeanne (TC) stated that they would put together an advisory group for the entire process comprised of representatives from these groups. They also planned on a youth center for the site. The CDC has a lot of experience with this. There would be outreach about jobs and housing opportunities.

Patrick (PRC) spoke about parking opportunities for the Reggie Lewis, for BPS and for the Mosque. The garage is not designed to be free parking, but they want to address this issue with these and other groups. Other neighbors felt that the widening of Whittier Street was really important. Reverend Hogan wanted considerations on Downing Street

that his church would not be facing the rear of a number of buildings. We have complied with this request with our design.

It is important to note that the family building has set aside 5,000 square feet for a community resource center. This space would be utilized for people to build on career and job opportunities.

Dolly (PRC) reiterated the traffic and parking issues in the neighborhood. There are other abutters, but the focus should be on people who live there.

Dan (OC) felt that teenagers were being ignored. Space is needed for supervised recreation for young people. It needs to be more than just open space.

David Price (TC) agreed. He has met with Madison Park CC staff and they have urged them to direct youth to this community center, which has been underutilized. When youth are encouraged, progress can be made and TC hopes to do the same thing.

Dan (OC) felt that a priority should still be made for supervised youth recreation.

Reggie (PRC) thanks the TC team for their time.

PRC Discussion

Reggie (PRC) asked for reactions from the group.

Donovan (PRC) felt that there was too much emphasis on Madison Park CDC as a community benefit. He remained skeptical how an average person would benefit.

Norman (PRC) felt that the revenue stream was not strong and they would need to raise significant funds upon designation.

Donovan (PRC) did not feel this proposal addressed community needs. How does the 400-car garage address RLTC parking needs? Making money is a priority.

Dan (OC) raised a Point of Information that making Northeastern money was not a RFP goal.

Bruce (PRC) stated that the group seemed to have an epiphany and have removed Northeastern from the proposal. Would there be Northeastern interest there now or in the future? Is this change of heart real?

Sandra (PRC) stated that this is a relevant discussion for all the proposals, especially if the market changes.

Pat Flaherty (PRC) stated that in Mission Hill, new developments have agreements to limit student housing.

Keith (PRC) stated that the TC proposal does not seem to meet the ground lease.

Norman (PRC) stated that it would be 10 years before they pay the full amount.

Bruce (PRC) asked about the “air rights” issue with the BRA. Sandra (PRC) replied that this is similar to owning a house on a land trust. You own everything but the land.

Dan (OC) stated that a lot of Boston land is owned and leased by the BRA. Roxbury should get 75-85% of these funds for the land. He gave the Fitz Inn example.

Dolly (PRC) questioned the benefit of the Reggie Lewis Center. It also costs \$200/year.

Keith (PRC) replied that 80% of the Reggie Lewis Center members are from Roxbury. It is a state facility and 98% of the workers reside in the community.

Donovan (PRC) stated that it is the MA Track facility. It costs \$65 every 6 months for a membership.

Dolly (PRC) felt that different events held there created a parking burden for the community.

Reggie (PRC) felt cultural activities should be highlighted more clearly. The cultural center should be more defined. Donovan (PRC) stated that it was commercial except for the 1st floor.

Julio Henriquez (RNC) stated that this is the second proposal that talks about the abutting schools but has not spoken with them. Madison Park TVHS has both health and construction programs. There are great opportunities here and that seems short sighted. It is unfortunate that the O’Bryant was concerned about parking. He also expressed concern about the garage being built before the WSHC. There are also numerous traffic issues.

Meeting Adjourned