



Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee Meeting
Monday, January 9, 2017
6:00 PM to 7:45 PM
Boston Public Library – Dudley Branch, 65 Warren Street, Roxbury

Attendees

RSMPOC Members: Frederick Fairfield, Bing Broderick, Valeda Britton, Norman Stembridge, Jorge Martinez, Tony Hernandez, Charlotte Nelson, Marzuq Muhammad, Frank Williams, Rep. Chynah Tyler (Ex-officio)

Not in Attendance: Susan Sullivan, Beverly Adams, True-See Allah, Dorothea Jones, Felicia Jacques, Michael Curry, Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz (Ex-Officio), Evandro C. Carvalho, Rep. Byron Rushing (Ex-Officio), Councilor Tito Jackson (Ex-Officio)

BPDA Staff: Lara Merida, Dana Whiteside, Courtney Sharpe, Lillian Mensah

Link to PowerPoint- <http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/b8ebd8e2-90d3-43e5-9dc1-3fa25ac02105>

Summary

On January 9th 2017 the Roxbury Strategic Masterplan Oversight Committee was called to order by Oversight Committee Member Jorge Martinez. The agenda was reviewed and RSMPOC roles and responsibilities were reiterated.

Courtney Sharpe was introduced as the new BPDA Senior Planner for the Roxbury Neighborhood.

Planning Update

Lara Merida presented an update on the PLAN: Dudley Square process.

- She reviewed what was heard a year ago at the January 4, 2016 RSMPOC meeting such as the desire to understand development project components, understand land-use potential, define community benefits and develop a strategy for implementation and how this relates to the PLAN: Dudley Square initiative.

- The process to date was summarized highlighting the four focus areas: capacity building, community benefits, scenario development and RFP guidelines.
- The emerging community themes heard from the community were presented in the categories of economic development/jobs, culture/social, housing, and public realm/neighborhood character. The importance of striking a healthy balance of community development was reiterated. For example figuring out a displacement plan allowing those in the neighborhood to stay, while responsibly growing the neighborhood.
- The next Plan: Dudley Square workshop will be held on January 23, 2017 at the Bruce C. Bolling Building – 6th floor community space from 5:30 – 8:00pm.

Questions and Comments

- In response to a RSMPOC member question about timeline, The BPDA answered while generally planning studies take 9-10 months in, it is important to remember planning is iterative. The process will move to the next phase when in a comfortable place. Currently the housing and economic development analysis are still be worked through. There are still additional topics to cover such as continuing urban design conversation. Once guidelines are adopted RSMPOC would continue their work by overseeing any future RFP processes and development.
- A RSMPOC member asked for synopsis on the jobs piece in which the BPDA responded that it is still ongoing. Part of the process is looking at the question of what uses might be appropriate and where there are opportunities for job creation. The BPDA is working with NextStreet consultants to identify market potential and what types of job creation might take place. A retail example would yield a different number than office administration.
- In a follow-up question related to the retail example an audience member asked if there are conversations about pay rate compared to rental rate. The BPDA responded that thinking about affordable retail space is part of the conversation as well as making sure numbers of rent and wages are comparable and working appropriately. The BPDA added that retail was just one example and will be asking whether or not retail is best in partner with the community.
- A RSMPOC member noted there has been community input around affordability. They inquired what the solutions are at this point and how the BPDA will analyze that. The BPDA responded that the BPDA, presented some of the housing analysis at the previous November workshop. This revealed that within the study area boundary of the total housing units 75% are publically subsidized affordable housing. In addition, Whittier Choice received \$30 Million from the HUD neighborhood choice grant which will include replacing all 200 units and adding market rate units. Part of the planning process involves looking at what is happening currently and what could come online in the future.

- In response to an audience question about artist studios or live/work space the BPDA responded that public art and cultural uses have been raised as a goal to date. While artist live/work specifically has not been heard that doesn't mean it can't still be added, will be raised at next meeting.
- An audience member asked if the Cruz Building on Warren Street is part of the study, to which the BPDA clarified that while outside the study area boundary its impact will be considered. It is already approved but would be part of the housing analysis. A RSMPOC member noted that it was reviewed by the neighborhood and direct abutters.
- An audience member mentioned the community benefits definition has broadened over the year and asked if there is going to be a process to come up with linkage funds. The BPDA responded that the desire is to create a more predictable process. Would like to gather a list of what we hope to see and what the trade-offs are. Linkage is one type of benefit which is governed by the State through a home rule petition. The BPDA is working with sister agency DND (Department of Neighborhood Development) and Economic Development on how to synchronize efforts to best utilize collective resources to bring projects to fruition.
- In response to an audience question about how preexisting policies will fit into future RFPs for example the good job policies, the BPDA responded that it depends on the policy but could be guidelines so the developer understands what the values are.
- A RSMPOC member pointed out that it is going to cost as much to build an office in Roxbury as it will downtown. The BPDA notes that while construction costs are the same, land values are not. Part of process is determining the subsidies necessary to achieve the development that the community desires. The BPDA will be working with the Mayor's cabinet and the State to establish what is needed.

Development Project Update

Dana Whiteside, Deputy Director of Community Economic Development, then presented the status of the following development projects:

Bartlett Place – <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/bartlett-place>

- The first phase of homeownership is approved and will begin. New programmatic use will be discussed at PRC. BPDA will work with elected officials, Oversight Committee members, and community to reconstitute PRC.

P-3 Tremont Crossing Project – [http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/tremont-crossing-\(p-3\)](http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/tremont-crossing-(p-3))

- Development team is still in regulatory review process – Article 80. PDA draft was submitted on December 20, 2016. Comment period ends on February 4th. Comments can be emailed to Dana at Dana.Whiteside@boston.gov. January 25, 2017 is proposed date of next PRC.

Parcel 10 - Madison Tropical –

<http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/madison-tropical-parcel-10>

- Construction is underway for 2101 Washington Street. 2085 Washington St. Phase 3 under preconstruction and marketing underway, will work with PRC as appropriate.

P 9 – Melnea Hotel and Residences

<http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/projects/development-projects/melnea-hotel-and-residences>

- Finance closing is complete. Swiftly completing residential portion financials. The hotel will begin construction in spring 2017.

Questions and Comments

- A RSMPOC member asked for clarity on a letter disturbed by Boston Jobs Coalition. (Letter included at end.) There is no current request to discuss this but are taking the opportunity to hear from both sides. Proponent stated that the letter is the outcome of a meeting with the Job Coalition, where many parties were involved. He tried to set the minimum wage at \$18 and be transparent as buying jobs from contractors but he would not agree to put in loan agreement. He can put in to pay a prevailing wage. Additionally, stated in response to a RSMPOC member follow up question, that they have not determined what percentage will be union as subs have not been bought, but believes over 30% will be non-union.
- In response to a RSMPOC member question if \$18 is a minimum or ceiling, the development team member responded that the market will dictate how much people are paid. For example journeymen are paid more. He will continue to be transparent and plans to buy entire job in 5-6 months. A RSMPOC member stated that when trades are bought it should be presented to the committee.
- An audience member asked within the development conversation if there has been talk of an affordable supermarket. Foodies is not enough and Whole Foods is not accessible. Dana responded that for parcels under discussion a number of statements have been made but to this point the values have been more around job creation. This does not mean it is precluded from mix.

- Nichelle Sadler from Councilor Tito Jackson's office stated she wants to go on record that they have been in conversation with this process for multiple years and will keep pushing. Prevailing wage was committed to so she hopes they can continue negotiating in order to achieve dream of this project in everyone's favor.
- An audience member asked about resident walkability and pedestrian safety related to construction cycle. The BPDA stated that BTDA looks at walkability and vehicle passage. The developer submits a plan as they move construction equipment.
- In response to an audience members question about sequencing of parcels for RFPs Dana answered that part of the PLAN: Dudley process will be figuring out sequencing based on community input, the market, and encumbrance of parcel.
- The BPDA answered in responses to a question about PRC that the BPDA have started to put together letters.
- Nichelle, asked if a comprehensive traffic study has been conducted and stated the whole district needs to be looked at, especially in tying to Grove Hall and Egleston Square. The BPDA answered there have been multiple studies. Studies are done based on potential full buildout.

Meeting Adjourned approximately 7:45pm