

ZONING COMMISSION, CITY OF BOSTON

MINUTES

Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Room 900, City Hall, Boston

Attendance

Commissioners

David Marr	
Building Trade Employers' Association	Present
Ricardo Austrich	
Boston Society of Architects	Present
Jaimie McNeil	
Greater Boston Massachusetts Labor Council AFL/CIO	Present
Aisha Miller	
Mayor's Selection	Present
Midori Morikawa	
Neighborhood Association	Present
Jill Hatton, Vice-Chairwoman	
Mayor's Selection	Present
Michael Nichols, Chairman	
Audubon Circle Neighborhood Association	Present
Michael DiMella	
Greater Boston Real Estate Board	Present
Nelson Arroyo	
Mayor's Selection	Present
Drew Leff	
Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce	Present
Vacancy	
Neighborhood Association	

Staff

Kathleen Onufer	
Deputy Director of Zoning	Present
Jeffrey M. Hampton	
Executive Secretary to the Commission	Present

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Commissioner Hatton is Acting Chair. Chairwoman Hatton called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM and stated that the Commission would be electing a new Chairman, Vice Chairman and Executive Secretary.

Commissioner Hatton made a motion to elect Commissioner Nichols as the Chairman of the Boston Zoning Commission. Commissioner Leff seconded the motion. Commissioner Hatton put the motion to a vote:

Yea: Morikawa, Leff, Marr, Miller, Austrich, Arroyo, Hatton, McNeil, DiMella

Nay:

Motion Carries 9-0.

Chairman Nichols made a motion to elect Commissioner Hatton as the Vice Chairman of the Boston Zoning Commission. Commissioner Leff seconded the motion. Chairman Nichols put the motion to a vote:

Yea: Morikawa, Leff, Marr, Miller, Austrich, Arroyo, Nichols, McNeil, DiMella

Nay:

Motion Carries 9-0.

Chairman Nichols made a motion to elect Jeff Hampton as the Executive Secretary of the Boston Zoning Commission. Commissioner Miller seconded the motion. Chairman Nichols put the motion to a vote:

Yea: Morikawa, Leff, Marr, Miller, Austrich, Arroyo, Nichols, McNeil, DiMella, Hatton

Nay:

Motion Carries 10-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

This meeting was recorded.

1. Chairman Nichols opened the hearing at 9:14 AM regarding Map Amendment Application No. 785 and the First Amendment to the 2022-2024 Berklee College of Music Institutional Master Plan. The interpreters introduced themselves.

The following offered testimony on the amendment:

Nick Carter, Planning Department
Jason McDonald, Planning Department
Kailin Passafaro, VP Community & Government Relations Berklee
Erin McCabe, Berklee

Nick Carter presented the proposal to the Commission. Existing ground floor will remain and Berklee will occupy the upper floors.

Jason McDonald spoke to the zoning compliance on behalf of the Planning Department (see presentation).

Kaitlin Passafaro gave some background on the mission and core responsibilities of the Berklee College of Music.

Erin McCabe spoke about the amendment to the IMP at 1249 Boylston Street in the Fenway.

Commissioner Hatton asked for the length of the lease.

Ms. McCabe stated 15 years with 1-year extensions after that.

Marc Joseph asked about internal renovations and the timing.

Ms. McCabe stated that there would be roughly 9 classrooms with 5 dance students with support spaces for academics.

The hearing closed at 9:31 AM, BZC entered Business Meeting.

Commissioner DiMella made a motion to adopt Map Amendment Application No. 785 and the First Amendment to the 2022-2024 Berklee College of Music Institutional Master Plan, as submitted.

Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.

Chairman Nichols put the motion to vote:

Yea: Nichols, Morikawa, Leff, Marr, Miller, Austrich, Arroyo, Hatton, DiMella, McNeil

Nay:

Motion Carries 10-0.

2. Chairman Nichols opened the hearing at 9:33 AM regarding the First Amendment to the Development Plan for Planned Development Area No. 93, 500 Huntington Avenue, Mission Hill.

The following offered testimony on the amendment:

Steven Harvey, Sr. Project Manager, Planning Department
Ilana Haimes, Zoning Compliance - Planning Department
Mark Thompson, President – Wentworth Institute of Technology
Clayton Turnbull, CORE Development
Donald Johnson, Fallon Company
Ana Calderon, At-Large Councilor Santana's Office
Tom Yardley, Longwood Collective (formerly MASCO)

Steve Harvey presented the amendment to the Commission and stated the Article 80 process and BPDA Board approval in September and a brief overview of the proposed amendment.

Ilana Haimes spoke about the existing zoning of the site, design guidelines along Huntington Avenue, transportation and pedestrian access and prior approvals by the BPDA Board and Zoning Commission.

Mark Thompson spoke on behalf of Wentworth. Wentworth is leasing this space to help with future development on campus, future endowment of Wentworth and to continue and expand partnerships with the City of Boston.

Clayton Turnbull spoke to the public review of the project and thanked Wentworth, the community and abutters to help make it better. This project will not only be productive but will also invite people to be drawn to Huntington Avenue.

Donald Johnson went through the two-building proposal with the Commission (see presentation).

Commissioner Leff asked what the footprint of each building was. What were the challenges for the team.

Mr. Johnson said approximately 20 and 24K SF. It was a fine balance between floor plate and design

Ana Calderon read a support letter from At-Large Santana into the record.

Tom Yardley spoke in support.

The hearing closed at 9:58 AM, BZC entered the Business Meeting.

Commissioner Hatton made a motion to adopt the First Amendment to the Development Plan for Planned Development Area No. 93, 500 Huntington Avenue, Mission Hill, as submitted.

Commissioner DiMella seconded the motion.

Chairman Nichols put the motion to vote:

Yea: Nichols, Morikawa, Leff, Marr, Miller, Austrich, Arroyo, Hatton, DiMella, McNeil

Nay:

Motion Carries 10-0.

3. Chairman Nichols opened the hearing regarding the Boston University Charles River Campus 2024-2026 Institutional Master Plan.

The following offered testimony on the amendment:

Tyler Ross Sr. Project Manager – Development Review
Ted Schwartzberg, Zoning Compliance – Planning Department
Gregg Snyder, Director of Campus Operations
Pam Beale, Chair of BU Task Force
Dan Cuddy, BU Task Force member
Chris Strang, BU Task Force

Tyler Ross presented the 2-year IMP. This would allow the new BU President to get adjusted prior and have significant input on the submission of their 10-year IMP while addressing immediate university needs. There are three proposed projects: 1) Warren Towers renovation; 2) the new erection of the Pardee School of Global Studies; and 3) renovation of Mugar Memorial Library.

Ted Schwartzberg spoke to the zoning compliance of the IMP and the surrounding Plans helping to shape the proposed IMP.

Gregg Snyder went into the details of the three proposed projects and the direct result from these (see presentation).

Commissioner Hatton asked if the Pardee will also use geothermal?

Mr. Snyder doesn't seem to believe the building will be able to support.

Commissioner DiMella asked about the plan for the students while Warren Towers renovation occurs.

Mr. Snyder stated this would be a tower-by-tower closure – not all at once and that the students would be relocated accordingly.

Pam Beale spoke in favor of the proposed IMP.

Dan Cuddy spoke in favor of the proposed IMP and their relationship with Allston-Brighton.

Chris Strang spoke in favor. Also, a Kenmore Square resident.

The hearing closed at 10:17 AM, BZC entered the Business Meeting.

Commissioner Hatton made a motion to adopt the Boston University Charles River Campus 2024-2026 Institutional Master Plan, as submitted.

Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.

Chairman Nichols put the motion to vote:

Yea: Nichols, Morikawa, Leff, Marr, Miller, Austrich, Arroyo, Hatton, DiMella, McNeil

Nay:

Motion Carries 10-0.

Chairman Nichols adjourned the meeting at 10:21 AM

Executive Secretary