



Task Force Working Meeting #17
Thursday, December 10th, 2009
Location: Corcoran, Mullins, Jennison
Community Building
270 Mt. Vernon Street, Dorchester, MA

Task Force Attendees:

Fr. George Carrigg, St. Christopher's Church
Patrick Connolly, Boston Teachers Union
Dan Driscoll, Harbor Health Services
Annissa Essaibi-George, McCormack Civic Association
Matt Gordy, Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association (CSHCA)
John Lowe, McCormack Civic Association
Victoria Maguire, Graduate of UMass Boston
Paul Nutting, CSHCA
Mark Rooney, South Boston Neighborhood House
Phil Strazzula, Phillips Family Hospitality
Don Walsh, CSHCA/Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC), Chair

Ex-Officio Attendees:

Boston City Councilor Maureen Feeney
Mike Christopher, Office of Massachusetts State Representative Walsh
Jane Lindsay, JFK Presidential Library & Museum
Meagan Maloy, Office of Massachusetts State Senator Jack Hart
Patricia McCormack Commonwealth Museum & State Archives

City of Boston Attendees:

David Black, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Tad Read, BRA
Carole Schlessinger, Crosby, Schlessinger & Smallridge
Lauren Shurtleff, BRA
Skip Smallridge, Crosby, Schlessinger & Smallridge
Lauren Smyth, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services

Members of the Public:

Joe Baker, Resident of Savin Hill	Christopher Keane, Local 67 Carpenters Union
Murph Balcer, Resident of Sydney Street	Sean Keohan, Boston Globe
Ray Butler, Community Member	Nancy King, Community Member
John Cahill, Local 67 Carpenters Union	Alda Kitosis, Resident of Savin Hill
Michael Cardone, Community Member	Vivien Li, The Boston Harbor Association
Rosa Carson, WalkBoston	William C.B. Lynch, Resident of Savin Hill
Frank Chasen, Resident of Savin Hill	David Madson, Community Member
Mike Coughlan, Local 67 Carpenters Union	Oran McGonagle, Community Member
Michael Feeney, Community Member	Christine McMahan, Wharf Partners
Cora Flora, Resident of Adams Street	Jay McMahan
Richard Fullam, Corcoran Jennison Companies	Maureen McQuillen, CSHCA
Jim Grady, Synergy	Paul Oppedisano, Resident
David Greaney, Synergy	Modesto Osorio, Local 67 Carpenters Union
Valerie Harms, Resident of Harbor Point	Rosa Parson, WalkBoston
Tim Joyce, Resident of Crescent Avenue	Rod Penrose

Seth Riseman, Utile, Inc.
Eric Robinson, Resident
Steve Tewksbury, Local 67 Carpenters Union
Derek Tobin, Community Member
Ronald Tutunjian, Eagle Liquors

Michael Vaughan, Nauset Strategies
Celina Warot, Resident
Sue Wolfson, UMass Boston
Kate Zanetta, WalkBoston

Meeting Summary

On Thursday, December 10th, 2009, the seventeenth meeting of the Columbia Point Master Plan Task Force was called to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. in the Corcoran, Mullins, Jennison Community Building by Don Walsh, CSHCA/DBEDC and Chair of the Task Force.

Tad Read, BRA Senior Planner, introduced the project team and announced that the purpose of the meeting was to review the comments received by the BRA thus far on the Draft Master Plan and provide clarifying information concerning certain topics that were the subject of many of the public comments, including planning process; shadow analysis; traffic analysis and recommendations; streetscape and public realm; and rationale for heights proposed on the JFK/UMass Air Rights site. Tad then gave a brief PowerPoint Presentation on the Master Plan (which is available online at the BRA's Columbia Point Master Plan website:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/ColumbiaPoint>).

Questions and comments from the Task Force are summarized below:

- In response to a comment from John Lowe, McCormack Civic Association, regarding vehicular and streetscape connections beyond the Study Area, Tad indicated that he will follow-up. David Black, BRA Consultant, added that in an expanded traffic study of Kosciuszko Circle, the Interstate 93 access ramps, and Columbia Road, it would be appropriate to include the Columbia Road and Dorchester Avenue intersection; this will likely be required as part of the follow-up transportation study recommended in the Master Plan. John later added that the connection to the neighborhoods east of Columbia Point will be very important.
- Paul Nutting, CSHCA, raised the issue of the desirability of the connection from the Boston Globe site to Savin Hill via Wave Avenue. Don Walsh acknowledged that this would have to be incorporated into another follow-up traffic study, and also noted that there appears to be a division amongst the Task Force between those who support the reopening of Wave Avenue as a one-way vehicular connection versus reopening it as purely a bicycle and pedestrian connection.
- Jane Lindsay, JFK Presidential Library & Museum, asked for a clarification from the MBTA on whether the Red Line can handle increased ridership at the JFK/UMass Station, as well as whether water transportation is a realistic possibility on Columbia Point. Tad replied that he will follow-up on both of these items.
- In a related question, Jane Lindsay asked about the follow-up transportation study recommended by the Master Plan that would address traffic issues at Kosciuszko Circle. Tad replied that State Senator Hart, State Representatives Walsh and Wallace, and City Councilor Feeney are all working together to move the study forward as soon as possible.
- City Councilor Maureen Feeney reiterated that the Master Plan represents an overview of what should be built on Columbia Point – and stressed that there will be many more opportunities for the public to comment on each development project, as they come to fruition. On behalf of the other elected officials, she stated that they are all committed to seeing this process through each step of the way.

Public Comment:

- In response to a series of questions from Rosa Parson, WalkBoston, Tad indicated that one of the Master Plan's primary goals is to improve connections to, from, and across the peninsula. David Black added that while the Master Plan has proposed several ideas for reducing traffic on and around the peninsula, because many of the roads are under State jurisdiction, the project team was unable to address all of these issues – hence the need for the follow-up transportation study.
- In response to a question, Don Walsh pointed out that improvements to the Sydney Street entrance to the T station would necessarily be dependent on redevelopment of the MBTA site itself – and that realistically, the Master Plan is a concerted effort to guide what happens on Columbia Point. Property owners have the ability to develop their sites as-of-right, but with a Master Plan in place, the community will have had more of a say about what eventually gets built. This may mean sacrificing some height for quality, depending on the prevailing economic conditions.
- In response to a question, Tad reiterated that the Master Plan sets the stage for development on Columbia Point, rather than make development move forward. It is up to the initiative of private property owners on how much of the projected development in the Master Plan is realized.
- A member of the public commented that the Master Plan should mention that the future users of a (potentially) redeveloped Boston Globe site will likely use the Savin Hill MBTA station.
- Joe Baker, Resident of Savin Hill, stated that he does not have an issue with development per se on Columbia Point, but is particularly concerned about height and density adjacent to Interstate 93. On the Synergy site, he indicated that he would prefer to see taller buildings along Morrissey Boulevard, rather than immediately adjacent to I-93. He also stated that he would like Synergy to take ownership of the Sydney Street entrance to the T station. Joe also asked that any residences built within the Synergy site be forbidden from the Resident Parking program, to discourage those residents from parking in the existing neighborhood.
- Alda Kitosis, Resident of Savin Hill, asked if it the MBTA could opt to not sell the air rights to the JFK/UMass site, owing to its controversial nature. Don Walsh replied that the MBTA is looking for revenue. Paul Nutting added that many residents in the adjacent community would like to see the Sydney Street entrance improved, and this will only happen if the MBTA selects a developer for the site.
- Vivien Li, The Boston Harbor Association, stated that watersheet activation is an important goal for Columbia Point, and that places where boating and fishing could work should be identified. She added that she realizes that there are several short-term goals that can be realized on Columbia Point in the next one to five years, and these would go a long way towards setting the framework for growth in the future.
- David Greaney, Synergy, thanked the Task Force for its work on the Master Plan thus far. He stated that while he does not have a project for his property yet, he will go through the full public process required of all developers. David clarified that his team is looking at building approximately 675 dwelling units on the site, and he agreed with the restriction on Resident Parking permits for residences built there. In terms of the Sydney Street entrance to the JFK/UMass Station, David agreed that the entrance needs improvement, but expressed his opinion that Synergy should not be the sole developer tasked with improving the entrance. He also explained that in order to defray the cost of public benefits desired as part of the project – including neighborhood service retail,

street and sidewalk construction, and elderly housing – a variation of heights, ranging from 4 to 18 stories, is required.

At the end of the meeting, Tad announced that the next meeting of the Task Force will likely take place in late February. Once a date and location have been selected, the BRA will send out an email notice to the entire Master Plan distribution list.

The meeting was then adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.