



Task Force Working Meeting #18
Tuesday, July 14, 2010
Location: Boston College High School
150 Morrissey Boulevard, Dorchester, MA

Task Force Attendees:

Bill Cotter, Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association (CSHCA)
Fr. George Carrigg, St. Christopher's Church
John Lowe, McCormack Civic Association
Paul Nutting, CSHCA
Don Walsh, CSHCA/Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC), Chair

Ex-Officio Attendees:

Boston City Councilor Maureen Feeney
Jane Lindsay, JFK Presidential Library & Museum
Brian Maher, Boston College High School
Michael Manning, Office of Councilor Feeney
Patricia McCormack Commonwealth Museum & State Archives
Krista Zalatores, Office of Massachusetts State Representative Walsh

City of Boston Attendees:

David Black, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Jim Fitzgerald, BRA
Tad Read, BRA
Lauren Shurtleff, BRA
Lauren Smyth, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services

Members of the Public:

Mark Boyle, MBTA	Maureen McQuillen, CSHCA
Michael Cardone, Community Member	Doreen Miller, Resident
John Cicarelli, UMass Boston	Ellen O'Connor, UMass Boston
Greg Dicovitsky, Transit Reality Advisors	Aileen O'Rourke, McCormack Civic Association
Mark Fortune, L.U. 550	Darlene Penrose, Resident
Rick Gosselin, Dever & McCormack Schools	Seth Riseman, Utile, Inc.
David Greaney, Synergy	Millie Rooney, McCormack Civic Association
David Higgins	Bruce Shatswell, Resident
Gail Hobin, UMass Boston	Michael Vaughan, Nauset Strategies
Nancy King, Resident	Gloria Vieira, Annapolis Neighborhood Assoc.
Ellen McDonough, Comm. to Elect Nick Collins	

Meeting Summary

On Tuesday, July 14th, 2010, the eighteenth meeting of the Columbia Point Master Plan Task Force was called to order at approximately 6:15 p.m. in the Boston College High School Auditorium by Don Walsh, CSHCA/DBEDC and Chair of the Task Force.

Don started the meeting by noting that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to review the proposed changes to the Draft Master Plan made by the BRA over the course of the past year to reflect community, organizational, and stakeholder comments. Don expressed his hope that tonight's meeting would be the final meeting of the Task Force, after nearly three years.

Tad Read, BRA Senior Planner, introduced the project team and welcomed the Task Force and public. He explained that the planning process had been put on hold for the last several months following the purchase of the Bayside Exposition Center by UMass Boston. Tad noted that the City of Boston and the BRA do not have any land use control over UMass Boston. In light of this development, the Draft Master Plan will become the guiding plan for development on Columbia Point until UMass Boston's own master plan is complete. At that point, the BRA will update their Master Plan.

Tad then gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Draft Master Plan (available online at the BRA's Columbia Point Master Plan website: <http://www.tinyurl.com/ColumbiaPoint>), which addresses the changes made to the Draft Master Plan since the summer of 2009. These include changes to the alignment of the new street connecting Morrissey Boulevard to Mt. Vernon Street, the acquisition of the Bayside property by UMass Boston, reduced building heights in certain locations, and additional open space.

At the conclusion of Tad's presentation, he turned the meeting over to John Ciccarelli, Associate Vice Chancellor for Government Relations, Public Affairs, and Economic Development, UMass Boston, who thanked the BRA and the Task Force for their work on the Draft Master Plan. He explained that in the two months since UMass Boston had purchased the Bayside Exposition Center, their primary goals had been security and access, adding that Chancellor Keith Motley is committed to holding a vigorous public process as part of the long-term master plan. The University's first short-term actions will be to assess the existing buildings and the parking areas. Construction of the Integrated Sciences Complex and the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the Study of the Senate should begin soon over at the main part of the campus. The University understands the need to plan thoughtfully as they reconfigure their campus, and has begun preliminary discussions with the BRA, the Columbia Point Associates, and the community. John added that they look forward to an inclusive process to make sure that the Bayside site compliments the nearby community, and stated that the University is looking to use the recommendations set forth in the BRA's Draft Master Plan as an anchor to guide them as they move forward.

Questions and comments from the Task Force are summarized below:

- John Lowe, McCormack Civic Association, commented that the morning traffic around Edward Everett Square is very congested and asked that this area be included in the scope of a future traffic study, since it will impact traffic in and out of Columbia Point. Jim Fitzgerald, BRA Senior Planner, agreed that this should be added to the State's future study of Kosciuszko Circle. Jim noted that in the short-term there are improvements that can be made, and he agreed to follow-up with the Boston Transportation Department (BTD). He pointed out that part of the issue relates to parents dropping their children off curbside at the Pope John Paul II Catholic Academy. A meeting to discuss the school's traffic had been held with the Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR), who owns Columbia Road, but it seems that more coordination is still needed.
- Paul Nutting, CSHCA, stated that he is against the Wave Avenue one-way connection to the possible future development on the Boston Globe site, on the premise that the Savin Hill neighborhood would see an increase in traffic, as well as the fact that the existing streets in Savin Hill were not built to accommodate through-traffic. David Black, BRA

Consultant, assured Paul that BTB will not pursue this modification without a future traffic study.

- In response to Paul's position, Don Walsh countered that he is comfortable with the connection, as long as it is a one-way connection. Since a major goal of the Master Plan is connectivity, it makes sense to keep this component in the Plan and make a final decision on it at a later date, following a traffic study.
- Bill Cotter, CSHCA, pointed out that it will be a long time before the Globe property is sold so this issue will not be addressed anytime soon.
- In response to the dialogue about the Wave Avenue connection, Tad stated that language can be added to the Master Plan indicating that cut-through traffic would be prohibited at this location, if the connection were to be instituted following a traffic study.
- John Lowe asked if the "iconic point tower" at the JFK/UMass MBTA site had been lost, owing to the height reduction at that site. Don Walsh explained that this was necessary in order to give the future developer of this site enough square footage to be able to develop the site.
- Don Walsh stated that overall, the only way to guide appropriate development on Columbia Point is to understand that some height is necessary in strategic locations, particularly if the community wants to have an influence on what is developed there, and benefit from the addition of new retail, restaurants, etc.
- Father George Carrigg, St. Christopher's Church, stated that he supports the height reductions but is still concerned about the level of affordable housing and the need for more family-sized apartments in the Plan.

Following public discussion of the above topics, Tad agreed to make the final revisions to the Master Plan and distribute it to the Task Force, as well as place it on the project website and notify the wider community via the email distribution list. The Master Plan will then remain as it is for the time period, and allow any development in the area to move forward following its guidelines, until such time that the UMass Boston master planning is complete, at which point the BRA's Master Plan will be revised for a final time.

At the conclusion of the meeting Don Walsh thanked everyone attending the meeting for their involvement in the process, and encouraged them to stay involved with their civic associations.

The meeting was then adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.