



Task Force Working Meeting #6
Thursday, May 29, 2008
Location: Boston College High School,
150 Morrissey Boulevard, Dorchester, MA

Task Force Attendees:

Fr. George Carrigg, St. Christopher's Church
Matt Gordy, Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association (CSHCA)
Sherina Hendrix, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC)
John Lowe, McCormack Civic Association
Victoria Maguire, Graduate of UMass Boston
Paul Nutting, CSHCA
Orlando Perilla, Harbor Point Community Task Force (HPCTF)
Mark Rooney, South Boston Neighborhood House
Joe Sammons, Geiger-Gibson Community Health Center
Esther Santos, HPCTF
Phil Strazzula, Phillips Family Hospitality
Don Walsh, CSHCA/DBEDC, Chair

Ex-Officio Attendees:

Massachusetts State Senator Jack Hart
Jane Lindsay, John F. Kennedy Library and Presidential Museum
Brian Maher, Boston College High School
Meagan Maloy, Office of Senator Jack Hart

City of Boston Attendees:

Casey Flynn, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services
Patrick Hoey, BTB
Tad Read, BRA
Carole Schlessinger, Crosby, Schlessinger & Smallridge
Lauren Shurtleff, BRA

Members of the Public:

Frank Baker, Resident of Dorchester
Joseph Corcoran, Corcoran Jennison Companies
Greg Dicoivitsky, Transit Realty Associates
Justin Green, Resident of Dorchester
Valerie Harms, Resident of Harbor Point
Mary Hogan, CSHCA/Blessed Mother Theresa of Calcutta Parish
Kathryn Maillott, CSHCA/Blessed Mother Theresa of Calcutta Parish
Julia O'Brien, Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation
Catherine O'Neill, Corcoran Jennison Companies
Michael Panagano, Resident of Dorchester
Seth Riseman, Utile, Inc.
Pete Stidman, Dorchester Reporter

Meeting Summary

On Thursday, May 29, 2008, the sixth meeting of the Columbia Point Master Plan Task Force was called to order at approximately 5:10 p.m. in the Loyola Function Room at Boston College High School by Don Walsh, CSHCA/DBEDC and Chair of the Task Force.

Tad Read, BRA Senior Planner, provided the Task Force with an overview of the first public meeting, held on Thursday, May 15th. The Task Force then engaged in a brief discussion

The following comments were raised by the Task Force regarding the first public meeting:

- Massachusetts State Senator Jack Hart stated that it seems that the public is aware of the major challenges facing Columbia Point. He added that the issue of dormitories at UMass Boston is a difficult issue, with some in the community supporting them and others against. Senator Hart noted that affordable housing is another issue that the community is divided on. He also stated that it is good to see that transit-oriented development (TOD) is being discussed for Columbia Point, especially considering the recent rise of the price of gas.
- Chair Walsh expressed his view that there were not many residents from the Columbia-Savin Hill area in attendance. Senator Hart responded that this was likely due to the fact that the community feels they are well represented by those on the Task Force.
- Paul Nutting, CSHCA, expressed his frustration that the Task Force is not able to delve further into the components of the UMass Boston Master Plan. Tad indicated that this is primarily due to the fact that the BRA does not have any land use control over UMass Boston, but added that UMass Boston has been attending the Task Force's meetings regularly and is interested in working with them.
- Senator Hart noted that the state legislature has asked UMass Boston about the public process for the dormitories, adding that UMass Boston still needs to come to the community and discuss the issue.
- Fr. George Carrigg, St. Christopher's Church, indicated that the Task Force was well-represented at the public meeting, but expressed his opinion that the comparatively low turnout from the Harbor Point community was due to the increasing number of students living there. In response to a question from Tad, Fr. Carrigg replied that more flyers should be distributed and more groups should be reached out to in anticipation of the second public meeting in June.
- Joe Sammons, Geiger-Gibson Community Health Center, added that the turnout for the Mt. Vernon Street charrette in 2005 was excellent, noting that that had been a grassroots effort.
- Phil Strazzula, Philips Family Hospitality, suggested that each of the neighborhood groups send an e-mail blast to their members notifying them of the next public meeting.
- Orlando Perilla, HPCTF, expressed his view that the first public meeting was well-attended, noting that some Harbor Point residents are concerned about being displaced in regards to the Master Plan. He added that he will work with the internal HPCTF to clarify this for them so that they understand that they will not be affected in this way.
- Mark Rooney, South Boston Neighborhood House, indicated that in general, people were not all that concerned about the potential development and associated density that could emerge on Columbia Point. He indicated that most see this as an exciting opportunity to improve some of the local and regional transportation problems, and create safer and more accommodating pedestrian walkways.

Next, the Task Force held an open discussion of their progress thus far.

Themes discussed by the Task Force included:

- The character of Columbia Point in the future, in terms of economic and racial diversity.
- Affordable housing and housing for the elderly and disabled.
- Traffic and how improvements could be engineered.
- Police and Fire Services – it is essential that there be enough support to meet future development.
- Rezoning vs. keeping the zoning as is and using this as leverage.
- Sustainability.
- Mixed-use development.
- Community uses and public amenities, including maintenance, as mitigation.
- Improving connections.
- Completion of the Harborwalk.
- Utilities and street lighting.

Public comments in response to the Task Force's discussion are summarized below:

- Julia O'Brien, DCR, gave a brief overview of how roads owned by DCR function, explaining that serve a dual purpose as roadways and parkways. Morrissey Boulevard's character has been degraded over time. A plan for improving Morrissey Boulevard was developed a decade ago and has been sitting on the shelf due to a lack of funding. This plan includes narrowing portions of the roadway, but not in all sections, as the boulevard stretches from the Neponset Circle to the Kosciuszko Circle. At some point, DCR could revisit this plan. The historic status of Day Boulevard and Kosciuszko Circle could also be reviewed.
- Mary Hogan, Blessed Mother Theresa of Calcutta Parish, asked if elderly housing exists in Harbor Point. Orlando Perilla responded that one of the buildings on the property with 90 units is considered an "adult" building, but is not specified as for the elderly.
- Pete Stidman, Dorchester Reporter, asked if the BRA can require all development subject to the Master Plan to meet LEED bronze or silver equivalents. Tad indicated that this is certainly an option.

Finally, the Task Force reviewed the meeting format for the next public meeting, to be held on Saturday, June 14th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The meeting will include a brief presentation, followed by breakout discussion groups focusing on a variety of topics.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, July 10, 2008, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Boston College High School – Loyola Function Room, 150 Morrissey Boulevard, Dorchester.**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:20 p.m.