

**Harvard Allston Task Force – Executive Session  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, January 16, 2008  
Honan-Allston Library  
7:30 p.m.**

**I. Attendance**

**Harvard Allston Task Force**

Paul Berkeley  
John Bruno  
Cathi Campbell  
Rita DiGesse  
Michael Hanlon  
Millie Hollum McLaughlin  
Ray Mellone, Chair  
Harry Mattison  
Brent Whelan

**Harvard University**

Monika Bankowski  
Mary-Helen Black  
Will Donham  
Chris Gordon  
Peggy Hayes  
Joshua Poupore  
Kathy Spiegelman  
Maile Takahashi

**City of Boston**

Gerald Autler, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Michael Glavin, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Linda Kowalcky, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Paul Holloway, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services

Harvard Allston Task Force Chair Ray Mellone began the meeting at 7:35 p.m. He said that from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. there was a meeting between the Task Force and the BRA. He said that following are the key issues that were discussed:

1. Brent Whalen – a first step is to establish needs assessment to be a part of the Cooperation Agreement
2. John Bruno – thought that there is a sense of cooperation and partnership; the use of Harvard's educational resources for the community; maintenance of Smith

- Field; concerned about the expansion of summer program free tuition limits, any Allston/Brighton resident should have a free tuition at Harvard Extension School and Summer programs; funding for miscellaneous youth programs such as little league, etc.
3. Rita DiGesse – Allston/Brighton scholarship program that is administered by the Allston/Brighton Civic Association; concerned that many applications are not from residents of Allston/Brighton (out of 9 applications, 4 were Allston/Brighton residents)
  4. Mille Hollum McLaughlin – academic requirements for scholarship programs, how many kids can measure up to the requirements, not enough long-term occupancy in Allston
  5. Harry Mattison – wanted to know what BRA’s vision is of the partnership
  6. Michael Hanlon – out of \$21.1 million, 42% benefits Harvard were public realm improvements
  7. Gerald Autler – public realm improvements, sidewalks
  8. John Bruno – shuttle bus issue to be resolved
  9. Representative Mike Moran, Representative Kevin Honan, City Councilor Marc Ciommo – (will send a letter to BRA on Friday) free tuition to all Allston/Brighton residents, not to rush the Cooperation Agreement, BRA & Harvard planners should be more involved together in planning the new campus, innovative ways to create housing (e.g. 30 units for Harvard students/faculty & 30 units for Allston/Brighton residents)
  10. Tom Lally – asked if anything can be done about the Cooperation Agreement or if it is too late

Chris Gordon said that he was disappointed with the current partnership. He said that Harvard sees the Cooperation Agreement as one of many. This is an agreement in association with the Science Complex and not the whole Master Plan. He said that there is plenty of time to discuss the benefits associated with the Master Plan. He said that Harvard is willing to show some flexibility and respond to some requests regarding the language in the Cooperation Agreement.

Kathy Spiegelman said that it would be a much more comfortable process if the sequence of events started with drafting a Master Plan; a Master Plan for Allston Development and a Master Plan for Community Benefits and then launched Harvard’s first project as a part of the Master Plan. She said that for a series of reasons that the community, BRA and Harvard had a chance to discuss over the past year, Harvard had a need to produce the Science Complex more quickly than they were able to answer questions about the Master Plan. She said that the Cooperation Agreement that is associated with the Science Project is unlike anything that Harvard has ever done in association with any of the projects that Harvard has done in the past. She said that the benefits offered in the past have never been a part of a benefits package and were never discussed widely, but rather were efforts by Harvard to support individual organizations and initiatives in the neighborhood.

She said that there are things that Harvard is interested in pursuing and working on with the community members and the Task Force. She said that some of the requests cannot

be delivered in association with the Science Complex and therefore should not be a part of this Cooperation Agreement. She said that it feels that the disappointment on both sides is the idea that it would be much preferable to be able to fit all the community benefits that are associated with the Master Plan right up front with the Science project. She said that she understands that Harvard has not been able to deliver that to the community in this Cooperation Agreement.

She said that Harvard is trying to listen to what was said and look at the benefits that are summarized in the matrix and look into things that Harvard hopes will grow and blossom as a part of the Master Plan. She hopes the community and Harvard will be working on those benefits in the near future. Kathy said that in terms of the things that Harvard can do directly as a part of the Cooperation Agreement one is the Educational Portal. She said that the Educational Portal is the beginning of programs that would be informed by the surveys that Harvard is planning on doing and informed by tracking and monitoring with members of the community. She explained that the language in the Cooperation Agreement does not seem to be clarified at this time. She said that she wanted to make it clear that the idea was, that there would be a community board working with Harvard on Educational Portal, to determine what the Educational Portal would mean now and before the Science Complex is open and what it would mean for the future. She said that Harvard definitely wants to signal that in the Cooperation Agreement and add the language that would clearly state that Harvard is looking for community participation in evaluating the Educational Portal.

Kathy said that although Harvard focuses very much on the land area and the site that the University wants to convert from parking lots and industrial buildings into the beginning of campus and the Science project, Harvard understands that from the neighborhood point of view more important are things that have impact in other properties. She said that making a commitment to improvements to the West of the Barry's Corner, Western Avenue planning, public realm improvements and developing agendas for those properties should clearly be articulated in the Cooperation Agreement. She said that there should be a discussion about transformational ideas for a partnership between Harvard and the community. Those ideas include the community center, the community school, university assisted school, a number of pretty major interventions that would be transformational for maintaining the stability and identity of this community. She said that Harvard is not able to address those issues in the timeframe of this Cooperation Agreement.

Kathy said that rather than just keep saying repetitively that it is something that Harvard would like to do as a part of the Master Plan, Harvard would like to propose a fund that may be established for smaller scale, incremental things in order to work toward transformational ideas that could actually be incorporated into the Master Plan. She said that what Harvard would like to propose is to create something that will be called an Allston Partnership Fund. She said that Harvard would seed it with \$500,000 with the intention of spending that money over a period of 5 years. She explained that while the transformational projects are being studied, Harvard will be working hand in hand with the community and the City on funding new programs in education, including public

health education, or public realm improvements that need to be done in a timeframe over the next 5 years.

Kathy said that those are the things that Harvard would like to propose to be changed in the existing language of the Cooperation Agreement. She said that Harvard would also like to suggest adding some specific language either by letter or an agreement about what would be the front loaded as a community benefit associated with this Master Plan process. She said that first it is the commitment to the transformative project and do the expanded study about the needs of the community and study of some options and alternatives of what that center of the community might look like and what Harvard's role, the community's role and the City's role may be in that. She said that also committing to the public realm improvements. She said in this Cooperation Agreement Harvard included some sidewalks and street trees along major corridors where Harvard owns property. She said that Harvard would like to look into some specific public realm improvements such as parks, streets, sidewalks in the residential neighborhood that could be a part of the IMP process. She said that those are the things that Harvard is willing to do in the timeframe of adding to the Cooperation Agreement and signaling in a more direct way the things that Harvard is hoping to be working together on as the Master Plan process is started. She said that the Cooperation Agreement is not an end, together we have to be committed on working on all of those issues and trying to measure ourselves on how many we can accomplish in 2008, 2009 and going forward.

Ray Mellone asked what the community participation in the Educational Portal would be.

Kathy said that with the Task Force's help there would be a community board selected that will be working with representatives from Harvard, who had offered to get involved in those programs, and together look at what the survey generates and what programs Harvard would be able to do and other ideas that nobody has thought about yet. She said that this way, as the program grows it isn't just ideas generated by Harvard but it would have the community's input as well.

Brent Whalen asked what tangible steps Harvard is prepared to do when deciding whether the community school, community assisted school, maybe a free standing community center, or maybe some combination of those ideas may become the best foundation of the community infrastructure.

Kathy said that Harvard will not be able to do that as a part of this Cooperation Agreement because there are a lot of things that we don't yet know. She said that the decision was made to create the Allston Partnership Fund to start educational programming before creating a center. She said that what could be done over the next couple of months is to think together about the outline of the study. She said the outline of the study should be completed and hopefully be more specific in the Cooperation Agreement associated with the IMP and in terms of what that study should be.

Brent Whalen asked if there be a conclusion on the subject of the community school or if there will only be an outline of the study by the time the Cooperation Agreement associated with the IMP is signed.

Kathy answered that she didn't think that by fall we would know what that transformational project would be. She said that it will take a while, looking into, visiting and learning from other places in order to accomplish that task. She said that she was not suggesting that a long range Master Plan was going to carry benefits that are only about the study, but she said that she was suggesting that until the study is done nobody knows what it is going to be.

Chris Gordon said that the scope of the Master Plan should begin the scope of the outcome not just the study.

Ray Mellone asked if the study would be determined by the community group or by the needs assessment.

Kathy Spiegelman said that part of the scope of the study is to include the needs assessment before you take the next step.

Harry Mattison asked to explain the study in more detail.

Chris Gordon said that the study will be based on the results of the survey, work with the community and work with the City.

Harry Mattison asked if Harvard could use the intellectual resources such as Deans from the School of Education in order to determine the needs for the community school instead of using the survey and the study.

Chris Gordon said Harvard doesn't know what the needs assessment and study results are going to show.

Harry Mattison said that in order to make the Allston/Brighton neighborhood more attractive to faculty and staff, Harvard should try to focus on the community school, health education and the community center all at once.

Kathy Spiegelman said that the advice that Harvard had gotten from people internally and from colleagues from other institutions is that it may or may not be the most effective way that Harvard can be a partner in this community to stabilize and energize the population and the educational future. She said that the goals need to be set, Harvard needs to do a study of what the alternatives may be and then look at the resources that are necessary to do that.

Harry Mattison said that Harvard should use its intellectual resources instead of using an outside firm to do the study.

Chris Gordon said that there has to be a process in place in order to complete the study and come up with a conclusion.

Kathy Spiegelman said that a lot of children from the neighborhood do not attend the local schools and that information is very important in order to analyze what the community needs are. She said that Harvard hopes that once the Educational Portal is open the University will be more involved in meeting with people and working with the children which will help to determine what programs the neighborhood is looking for.

Harry Mattison said that it feels like it has been a very long, slow wait for things to happen. He said that the community's quality of life has not improved by making agreements and signaling things that will be happening in the future. He said that it does not look to him as partnership.

Chris Gordon said that there a lot of things included in the Cooperation Agreement and all of those things will be implemented.

Michael Hanlon asked when the survey will be conducted and when the next step will be taken after the survey is complete.

Kathy Spiegelman said that Harvard's commitment in the Cooperation Agreement is to do the educational survey and Harvard intends to do that late winter early spring. She said that the Educational Portal will open before Harvard gets the results of the survey. She said if in any case the educational survey will not give Harvard enough information on what the community is looking for, there will be an expanded survey to follow.

Brent Whalen asked if housing could be a part of the more extended series of studies in order to stabilize housing in the neighborhood.

Kathy Spiegelman said that although the survey is supposed to give Harvard more information as to whether or not they are placing their resources in the right places, the first survey will be focused on education. She said that this Cooperation Agreement clearly showcased and highlighted the idea that Harvard has to start connecting the educational resources with the community. She said that in the fall along with other commitments that will accompany the Master Plan, there will be a broader survey and housing could be one of the things that will be included in the survey at that time.

Gerald Autler said that housing is going to be a key piece of the work that is starting this winter. He said that the BRA has a part of the money already from Harvard that can be used to help fund the work and the City will not be shy of asking for additional funds if necessary. He also said that BRA has its own internal resources and Harvard can bring their own resources.

Kathy Spiegelman said that one of the housing issues related to this Cooperation Agreement was the request that Harvard looks between now and when the housing

linkage payment is due whether or not some of the funding can be applied to housing needs in this neighborhood.

Cathy Campbell said that Kathy made a comment that the community should be happy with the benefits that are offered because this is more than Harvard has ever offered before in terms of the Business School and other things. She said that Harvard has never proposed a development that has an impact on residential community that this particular project will have. She said that she does not feel that it is a good balance. She said that she was frustrated and disappointed with the Cooperation Agreement and the language in the document. She said that she would like to see additional language as to what Harvard sees going forward to be included in the Cooperation Agreement and not as a separate document.

Kathy Spiegelman said that there a lot of things that need to be worked on that are not in the scope of the agreement for the Science project but are important to the community and Harvard would like to signal that those are the things that will be discussed and worked on in the future. She said that a separate document may not be the right device and may not satisfy the community. She said that many people in the community do not attend the Task Force meetings and the reason for the survey and the study is to reach out to those people to get a better idea of what the whole community is interested in.

Ray Mellone asked if the language of the letter would reach out to the people who don't attend the Task Force meetings.

Kathy Spiegelman said that it would be a commitment to do that.

Ray Mellone said that the Cooperation Agreement leaves a lot of questions unanswered so the letter would be a device to reach out to the community and people who don't attend the Task Force meetings.

Cathy Campbell said that she understood that there will be a letter aside of the Cooperation Agreement that would outline the community benefits that will be a part of the Master Plan.

Ray Mellone asked Cathy Campbell if the letter was referred to in the Cooperation Agreement if it would be satisfactory to her.

Gerald Autler said that clearly the Task Force would like to have a much stronger statement from Harvard about their intentions to build a partnership with the community and around specific issues. He said that they tried to incorporate the language into the Cooperation Agreement to acknowledge that there a series of issues that will continue to be discussed. He said that it is not about the words and where they should go but it is more about the actions.

Chris Gordon said that the letter was not intended to get around the Cooperation Agreement.

Kathy Spiegelman added that the additional community benefits are vague in comparison to things that Harvard is trying to deliver with the Science project.

Chris Gordon said that it feels that the community doesn't know exactly what they want. He said that the study will determine what exactly the community members are looking for and they need more time to discuss the details. Chris said that if the community is serious about the things they would like to pursue, Harvard is there to help and work with the community to accomplish what needs to be accomplished.

Harry Mattison said that the community is looking for some kind of commitment from Harvard that something will actually be done, not just a survey or a study. He said that the community wants a commitment to have things happen in more immediate future.

Audience Member commented that the community has to decide whether or not Harvard's dollar amount established for the mitigation is adequate.

Chris Gordon said that there are many more projects that Harvard wants to do in the future therefore there will be more time to discuss additional community benefits because each of the projects will have a separate Cooperation Agreement.

Harry Mattison said that the community wants the benefits now and a commitment that can be included in the legal document which is the Cooperation Agreement.

Chris Gordon said that this Cooperation Agreement has a lot to offer and many things that will be started immediately, among them the Educational Portal and the Library Park.

Gerald Autler said that he was trying to be as forthcoming as possible. He said that it bothered him that the Task Force is saying that there is nothing in this agreement that will benefit the neighborhood. He said that when the discussion began last summer, there was a lot of enthusiasm about the things that were discussed.

Harry Mattison said that the benefits for the 10,000 people living in Allston/Brighton neighborhood that are outlined in the Cooperation Agreement are very small. He said that the caps that are placed on a lot of things don't make any sense, the Educational Portal will benefit only 50-60 people from the neighborhood and it is not even close to affecting every day quality of life of people from the neighborhood.

Chris Gordon said that the Educational Portal will be open to every kid who shows up.

Harry Mattison asked what about the people who do not have any children, they will not get any benefits out of the portal.

Ray Mellone said that it doesn't mean that the Educational Portal is not worthwhile. He said that it is impossible to solve every single idea. He said that the process was not

perfect to begin with, now they have to look at what's reasonable and what's fair. He said that they need to look at how much time was spent discussing those issues and what was accomplished. He said that the community should look at the good things that resulted from those meetings. He said that although the process was not perfect, it should not be considered a failure. Ray said that the letter could possibly include such things as the graduation at the Spangler Center so kids can get an idea how exciting college education might be. He said that the real question is if the community trusts Harvard enough to put their faith into the cooperation agreement and achieve the results or does the community need to test that trust every single time. He said that there cannot be a process where there is no trust. He said that the trust issue is a problem. He believes that problems should be looked and corrected if possible. He asked the Task Force to develop consent one way or another whether or not a letter of intent would be a valid document to incorporate into the Cooperation Agreement.

Ray Mellone asked the Task Force members whether or not they agree to move forward with the Cooperation Agreement.

Pau Berkeley said that he would like to see the Educational Portal work incorporated.

Millie Hollum-McLaughlin said that she would like to build on success and be able to accomplish something together. She agreed to move forward.

Cathy Campbell said that she would like to see the letter in order to see what the language is.

Brent Whalen said that he would like to see and read the letter as well.

Rita DiGessee said that they should stick with the Educational Portal.

Harry Mattison said that he would like to see what they are committing to and what Harvard's vision of the neighborhood is in the next 5 years. Also what the City wants this neighborhood to be like, what will be preserved, what Harvard's goal is for the neighborhood.

Kathy Spiegelman said that she hopes that this would be a part of the partnership.

Cathy Campbell said that the Task Force would like to see what the front end benefits are that will be a part of the Master Plan.

Gerald Autler said that there has to be a clearer language incorporated into the Cooperation Agreement. He said that there is an understanding of a desire for a long term partnership and commitments to big ideas. He said that he thought that the Educational Portal was an exciting idea that he was under the impression that the Task Force was excited about that idea as well. He said that it is unfair to say that there is nothing in this Cooperation Agreement for the community.

Harry Mattison said that although we have some pieces of the puzzle and some pieces may be wonderful, the whole puzzle is not there.

Tim McHale suggested to include a specific timetable for all the public benefits in the Cooperation Agreement. He said that there should be a list of all the things that need to be studied and specify where the study money intersects with the Master Plan. He asked whether or not the BRA will slow down the Charlesview P&F until the Master Plan is completed. He said that in terms of the public realm improvements, he asked if there could be an allowance created for design and construction of those public benefits. He said that a lot of the things in the package are specific to children. He suggested the body, mind and soul concept for the community benefits. He suggested a breakdown of benefits and funds associated with those benefits.

Gerald Autler there will be more details in the final Cooperation Agreement as to how the money will be allocated.

Tim McHale said that the community center is very important to the community and should be a part of the agreement.

Audience Member asked what the status of the access to the shuttle service.

Chris Gordon said that there a lot of issues that need to be worked through before access is given to the public to use the shuttle service. He explained certain issues in more detail.

Liz Browne, Smith Health Center, Audience Member said that she would like to advocate for pilot funding for community trust. She asked whether or not a portion of that funding or additional funding could be added to the Partnership Fund to test out a concept of having a community fund. She said that if there are any contingencies in the Cooperation Agreement and for any funding that is left over to become a part of the Partnership Fund. She said that if Harvard doesn't meet the timetable she asked if there is there anything in the Cooperation Agreement that protects the community. She also said that she advocated for the language in the Cooperation Agreement to include partnership and a commitment to expand the needs assessment and survey to other areas including healthcare, etc. She also asked whether or not BRA can slow down the project or stop building the Science project in order to hold Harvard accountable for meeting the specifics of the Cooperation Agreement.

Gerald Autler said that the document that the Task Force had seen was not the Cooperation Agreement that still has to be reviewed by the attorneys. He said that once the Cooperation Agreement becomes a legal contract, it can be enforced in the Court of Law if necessary. He said that it is the Compliance Officer's job to check the commitments before there signing off on any building permits.

Ray Mellone adjourned the meeting at 9:15pm.