

**Harvard Allston Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 6th, 2009
Honan-Allston Library
6:30 p.m.**

I. Attendance

Harvard Allston Task Force

Paul Berkeley
John Bruno
John Cusack
Rita DiGesse
Michael Hanlon
Millie Hollum-McLaughlin
Bruce Houghton
Harry Mattison
Ray Mellone
Brent Whelan

Harvard University

Monika Bankowski
Joe Beggan
Mary-Helen Black
Will Donham
Chris Gordon
Peggy Hayes
Kevin McCluskey
Joshua Poupore
Dan Rabinovitz
David Raszmann
Alison Reinhardt
Kathy Spiegelman
Dennis Swinford
Maile Takahashi

City of Boston

Gerald Autler, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Michael Glavin, Boston Redevelopment Authority

The meeting began at 6:37 p.m.

Community Benefits Update - Presentation

<http://www.allston.harvard.edu/community/impmeetings.htm>

Q&A:

- Rita Vaydia commented that 12K has not been spent on Gardner Pilot Academy (GPA)
 - 22% GPA kids use the Harvard Allston Education Portal
 - GPA would like to use of the Ed Portal more in the future for their programming;
- Audience member asked how many people get jobs through the Resource Center
 - Kevin McCluskey said that 78 people from Allston/Brighton are working within the University
 - Kathy Snedeker and the staff at the Resource Center work hard to make things happen
 - Not all people are tracked through the Resource Center
 - Workforce Development classes take place at the Ed Portal
- Audience member asked if Harvard could tap into its resources and help people from the community find jobs;
 - Kevin McCluskey said that John Kendzior is helping the community on behalf of Harvard;
- Brent Whelan thanked Harvard for the successes and accomplishments over the past year; he was nervous to realize that many plans/benefits are tied directly to the completion of the Science Complex; the benefits package was the first step of what are the longer term dimensions of the partnership between Harvard and the community; he said that current programs would work great if they were followed by a long-term partnership; he would feel better if Harvard committed to community building regardless of the Master Plan;
- Kevin McCluskey said that Harvard, BRA and the community have to work together and continue this commitment in a different time that is happening now;
- Brent Whelan would like to hear in the next few months a commitment to building projects;
- Ray Mellone said that Kairos Shen from the BRA would like to engage Harvard in the Community Wide Planning process in order to have a precise and tangible projects; there will be memorandums and agreements that the projects will come through;
- Maile Takahashi said that at the last meeting Harvard said that in June they will present a more concrete plan as to what to do with the buildings;
- Ed Katamori complimented the Education Portal; he said that Meaghan Fay is doing a terrific job; children attending the mentoring session are happy and the parents are happy to have that resource available to them;

- Tom Lally asked if Harvard is communicating with the State on the transportation issue; he would like to see a commuter rail stop in Allston; he asked whether or not Harvard could support the community in that matter;
 - Kevin McCluskey said that Harvard has been in conversation with the State regarding transportation issues; he said that it is the State's project and State has to decide along with the City how to approach this problem;
- Cathi Campbell said that her uncle went to the Resource Center; she said that you are not limited to jobs available at Harvard, it is a community wide resource; she said that the Resource Center helps place people in jobs, offers resume workshops, interviewing workshops, etc.; she said that it is a resource not only for adults but also for High School kids;
- Harry Mattison asked the BRA how is Harvard's compliance with the Cooperation Agreement being tracked;
 - Gerald Autler said that every commitment is tracked down to a dollar amount, due date, etc.; specific commitments can be tracked in detail;
- Harry Mattison asked if the quantitative tracking could be added to the annual report; how much was spent, what it was spent on; how much is left; he said that this was supposed to be a very public planning process;
- Bruce Houghton suggested that the BRA brings a copy of the spreadsheet and share it with the Task Force;
 - Gerald Autler said that he will bring a printout of the Community Benefits report tracking spreadsheet to the next meeting.

Library Park Update - Presentation

http://www.allston.harvard.edu/community/Library_Park.html

Comments from the audience:

- "If you build it, they will come"
- What would be the hours of the park?
- Who will police the park?
 - Harvard is working with Boston Police Department and Harvard Police on that issue;
- Who will own the park and who will maintain it?
 - Harvard has a commitment to maintain the park for 10 years; Harvard continues to work with the City on the exact ownership of the park; it will be a public park;
- Does the architect have a particular style?
 - Architect is extremely sensitive to the needs of a specific place;
- Suggested more "timeless" look to the park, not too modern;
- Have you talked to the library about having the entrance to the park in the back?
 - Harvard is working with the staff at the Honan-Allston Library
- Nice tasteful lighting; tasteful park and not too intrusive;
- Suggestion that private institutions maintain parks better and it would be beneficial for the community for Harvard to maintain the park regardless of ownership;

- Extend the lease of the land to 999 year lease instead of 10 years;
 - Intention of the park is to be there forever;
 - There will be a deed restriction for that property;
- Question about whether or not the Education Portal and the Library Park should be taken off the 10 year agreement;
 - Kevin McCluskey said that it has been a partnership with the City to improve other parks in the area; Harvard works with the City and Boston Police Department to maintain the safety of the park;
 - Education Portal is more a connection of what is Harvard's mission; the partnership between Harvard and the community will continue because Harvard is not going away; Harvard undergraduates who work with children at the Ed Portal are gaining a great experience as well;
- Future community benefits are going to be revisited when the Master Plan is filed; will the community have the ability to re-visit the long term IMP within the next 18 months or so and to negotiate longer term benefits (the current agreement is associated with the Science Complex)?
 - Kevin McCluskey said that Harvard hasn't shown all the things we've been able to do together over the past many years; many things happen outside of any agreements;
- It is clear that Harvard wants to maintain the ownership of the Library Park;
 - It is still being worked on; liability insurance will affect the ownership; after Harvard's attorneys review the issue, Harvard will report back to the Task Force;
 - Gerald Autler said that the Library may want to expand at some point in the future, that's why the ownership needs to be determined;
- Question about whether or not triple decker homes will be build?
 - Master Plan will determine that;
- What would it take to open gates in the meantime?
 - There are still issues that need to be resolved, e.g. safety;

Harvard provided property update.

Q&A:

- John Bruno asked which properties are occupied are which ones are not occupied; partially or fully occupied; are the lease agreements concurrent to the addresses?
 - Kathy Spiegelman said that 85% of the space is rented;
- Tom Lally asked if Harvard is paying property taxes on the properties; how much in taxes is Harvard paying for those buildings and how does that compare to the taxes paid by homeowners?
 - Gerald Autler said that the information about taxes is available at the Assessors Office; Harvard pays the same taxes as any other owner it its non-institutional properties;
- Harry Mattison asked what kind of tenants Harvard is planning to find for vacant properties; suggested that Harvard and the community should look at options as to

who should be occupying those properties for a longer time and not settle for mediocre tenants;

- Kathy Spiegelman said that Harvard would be happy to look at the tenancy issues; she said that we have to think about the current economy and which buildings should be leased faster;
- Tim McHale said that there are great ideas for vacant buildings in the CWP process;

Meeting adjourned at 8:35p.m.