

**Harvard Allston Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 14, 2007
Honan-Allston Library
6:30 p.m.**

I. Attendance

Harvard Allston Task Force

Paul Berkeley
Cathi Campbell
John Cusack
Rita DiGesse
Brian Gibbons
Bruce Houghton
Michael Hanlon
Ray Mellone
Harry Mattison
Millie Hollum McLaughlin
Brent Whelan

Harvard University

Monika Bankowski
Mary-Helen Black
Will Donham
Kevin McCluskey
Alison Reinhardt
Kathy Spiegelman
Dennis Swinford

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
Sheila Dillon, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Conny Doty, Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services
Michael Contompasis, Boston Public Schools

Ray Mellone started the meeting at 6:35pm. He began the meeting with his understanding of the process of implementing the benefits. He briefly explained the short-term and the long-term components of the benefits process. He mentioned the needs assessment survey and said that it is necessary to obtain overall goals. He said that the community master plan for benefits will not be finalized before the cooperation

agreement is signed. The cooperation agreement has to guarantee that the community benefits will continue and will set a way of developing a Master Plan for Community Benefits. The cooperation agreement is for the community benefits tied to the Harvard Allston Science Complex. Ray said that the educational benefits are number one priority and the long term plan for community benefits is linked to the Institutional Master Plan (IMP).

Bruce Houghton said that he is concerned about the “advisory committee for the educational portal”. The educational portal is a very important part of the community benefits and should not be based on a decision of a sub-committee.

Gerald Autler explained that there was a misunderstanding. At this time, a working group has been formed to guide the needs assessment only and it is not the advisory committee for the educational portal.

Bruce Houghton added that however the advisory committee is structured it should be a full discussion of the Task Force of how people are appointed.

Gerald Autler congratulated the newly elected City Councilor Mark Ciommo. He announced that John Cusack will be leading the Mitigation/Construction Management Sub-Committee.

John Cusack announced that there will be a sub-committee meeting on December 10th at 5:30 p.m. at the Honan-Allston Library, right before the scheduled Harvard Allston Task Force meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Gerald Autler said that at the next meeting he will bring the BRA’s responses to the resolution that the Task Force voted on back in September. He also explained that any benefits that the Task Force members are discussing at this point are associated with the First Science Complex. Any buildings that get approved as a part of the Institutional Master Plan will have a set of new benefits attached.

Gerald introduced Conny Doty, Director of Jobs and Community Services who came to talk about the jobs portion of the City’s linkage program. Conny started the presentation by explaining that the office of Jobs and Community Services is the agency that manages the trust but the money is held by the city’s treasury. The agency is in charge of awarding grants and monitoring programs. The Jobs Trust is a publicly held charitable trust. She provided a brief explanation of how the money is being distributed among different programs and what the requirements are. Conny suggested that more information can be obtained at the Jobs and Community Services web site.

Tim McHale (Audience) said there was an article in the Boston Globe regarding the bio-pharmaceutical industry. The article said that for one job created in the pharmaceutical industry there are 6 jobs created in related businesses. He asked if the City of Boston is doing anything to capture that type of information and use it.

Conny replied that there are programs that help people train for those types of positions. For example, there is a program that offers two semesters of college level algebra and basic science. These programs can serve as a basis for people getting into programs like City Lab that train people for lab jobs or any number of jobs that support that type of research. The City evaluates constantly what they can do for people so that they can get jobs in industries with the highest demand for employees. The department deals a lot with pharmaceutical companies and various hospitals and working with many community organizations to promote local jobs.

John Cusack asked if the collaboration is based in the neighborhoods that the institutions are based in.

Conny said that the agency funds programs in the higher education institutions and it is designed for people who may have been through the community based program and are ready to move to a higher level. She suggested looking at the Boston Opportunities Guide on the Jobs and Community Services web site to find a listing of every community organization that is funded by the Jobs and Community Services.

Paul Berkley asked how much control the institution has on how the money it is required to pay to the City is spent. Do they have the opportunity to say to the City to that the money be spent on programs in Allston?

Conny replied that the money needs to be paid to the City's Jobs Trust no matter what. At the time the developers make the first payment, they can notify the Trust that they are interested in submitting a proposal for a jobs creation program. Typically the developer what have a community partner when submitting its proposal. Rarely do you see an institution come back with its own proposal. Sometimes this happens with hotels or hospitals but not often.

Michael Hanlon asked Conny how many agencies are being currently funded by the Trust in the Allston/Brighton community. He suggested that if in fact the contribution is equal to zero, the meeting should move to another agenda item.

Conny replied that you have to apply in order to get the money and there aren't many programs in Allston that have applied for the funding. She thought that there are a few agencies that are being funded, among them the ESOL program at the Jackson Mann, at one time programs at Crittenton, and the Community Consortium at the New Balance building.

Harry Mattison asked at what time is the right time to come to the city with proposals.

Conny explained that linkage payments come in two parts (50% each). At the time of the first payment, the institution needs to notify the Trust that there will be a proposal made at a later date. The first payment is due when the developer is given their building permit. There is a "Job Creation Application" that needs to be completed and submitted. There should be an application on the web site that people can look at.

Cathi Campbell asked when and how frequently the Jobs and Community Services Office puts out RFPs and how long the contracts are usually for.

Conny answered that the developer must notify the trust of the future proposal at the time the building permit is issued and the first linkage payment is made. Conny answered that there is no deferral of money. She explained that typically contracts are awarded for two years so it goes out to bid every two years or so but it can be sooner. She said that probably in the next few months they will decide on when they are issuing the next occupational skills training RFP.

Audience Member asked if the mitigation money can be spent in the community.

Gerald Autler replied that the linkage payments are separate from all of the other mitigation benefits. The amount of the linkage funds is mandated by the zoning code. He also explained that BRA is open to work on both jobs and housing with the Task Force and Harvard to come up with good programs that can meet the criteria for getting the funds.

Conny added that the linkage payment is required no matter what.

Gerald introduced Sheila Dillon from the BRA who is responsible for the housing portion of the linkage program. She explained that the linkage program is a part of the Boston Zoning Code. In a development of a commercial building that is over 100,000 sq. ft. the developer has to pay the City of Boston \$7.87 for each square foot of the building in excess of 100,000 sq. ft. The developer has to meet that obligation within 7 years. She said there are two ways of meeting the obligation, the first one is that the developer can pay it to the Neighborhood Housing Trust, which is the agency that is appointed by the Mayor. The Neighborhood Housing Trust puts out a Request for Proposals (RFP) and the developers apply for the money to build affordable housing throughout the City. Affordable housing is defined as housing that is available to households making less than 80% of the area median income (An audience member estimated that the area median income is \$66,000 for a family of 4).

The other way that the developers can meet their housing obligation is by building affordable housing themselves by taking the money that they owe to the City and putting it into a project. They can team up with someone, e.g. a non-profit agency and develop the housing; or they can do a "housing creation proposal" that says that they are going to give the money to the non-profit agency and then they are going to build an affordable housing project.

She mentioned that to date about \$93 million has been spent through the linkage program both through housing creations and housing payments and about 8,500 units of housing have been built.

Michael Hanlon asked how much of the linkage money has been spent in the Allston/Brighton community.

Sheila replied that not much because the agency has not received many proposals from Allston/Brighton.

Harry Mattison said that as of 2004 about 3% of the money came back to the Allston/Brighton neighborhood.

Sheila said that the Neighborhood Housing Trust of the City of Boston likes when the money goes into neighborhoods that have not received a lot of affordable housing money. They want the affordable housing development to be spread around the City.

John Cusack asked if there is a differentiation between ownership or rental of the housing units.

Sheila replied that both can be funded using the linkage money.

Ray Mellone asked if in order for the institution to designate the use of the funds, does all the money for a project need to be fully covered by the institution or just some of the cost of a project.

Sheila said that there is an equation that the BRA uses and it's based on the project. In the case of the Harvard Allston Science Complex, it is estimated that \$3.8 million can be used either for housing creation or can be put into the housing trust fund. The developer needs to supply just the required linkage payment toward a project and the project can seek additional funds from other funding sources.

Millie Hollum-McLaughlin asked what the percentage of owner occupied vs. rental affordable units are in Boston over the last 10 years.

Sheila replied that there are approximately two rental units for one owner occupied unit (that includes elderly rental, special needs, etc.).

Bruce Houghton asked if proposals can be specific, such as a housing creations project for people with special needs such as Down Syndrome.

Sheila said that under the Fair Housing law there are certain limitations and restrictions. She explained that if the need is broad enough, they will allow it. She also added that in order to award the funds, the City needs a proposal. Sheila said the Neighborhood Housing Trust is open to working with an institution or a developer and trying to make the proposals work.

Harry Mattison wanted to know if there is a deadline for the housing proposal.

Sheila replied that a developer has up to two years after the issuance of the building permit. She added that by the time the housing payment is due the community has to have a solid affordable housing proposal.

Harry Mattison proposed a motion that all linkage payment money goes back to the community as part of the community benefits agreement. Brian Gibbons second the motion.

Gerald said that the Task Force should work with the BRA to find projects and propose projects that meet the criteria for receiving as much money from the fund as possible. He explained that the funds cannot be designated in advance.

Conny added that the people from the Allston/Brighton community should work on the proposals and not institutions from around the city.

Millie Hollum-McLaughlin wanted to clarify that the housing units that are proposed are open for anyone across the City not just for the neighborhood residents.

Sheila answered that there are possibilities of funding a good project in the Allston/Brighton community but it has to be open to everyone who lives in the City. The Fair Housing law does not allow for setting aside units for neighborhood residents only. The housing units cannot be guaranteed for a specific neighborhood. Sheila said that she is very excited to hear that people would like to have affordable housing projects in the Allston/Brighton community and she is hoping that there is equal excitement once proposals are made.

Harry Mattison asked if Harvard supports that the housing money stays within the community. Kathy Spiegelman replied that Harvard does not have a specific project proposal at this time but that it would support the housing money staying within North Allston.

Mary-Helen Black gave an update on the progress that has been made on the formation of a committee to advise the development of the education survey/needs assessment. The results of the survey will help to define the educational benefits. Harvard and the BRA, in consultation with the Task Force chair Ray Mellone, came up with a group of people to serve on the committee. Harvard is looking into hiring a professional market research firm to design the questions and administer the survey, and the results of the survey will help to define the educational benefits. She talked about a proposed list of people that have agreed to be on the committee. She said that from the community, people who have agreed are: Ellen Flood-Murphy, Rita Vaidya, and a third resident who has not been confirmed yet. From the Task Force: Michael Hanlon and Brent Whelan. From the City: Linda Kowalcky from the BRA, a teacher or staff representative from the Gardner School, and a representative from the Boston Public Schools. From Harvard: Kevin McCluskey, Director of the Community Affairs as well as a representative from Harvard's Sciences and from Harvard's Graduate School of Education. It is going to be a working committee with a specific assignment to help provide guidance to the market

research firm in the crafting of the questions and to help to determine the best outreach to get the best representation of the community. She hopes that the committee starts meeting in December. The meeting schedule will be flexible to accommodate all the participants. The committee will work with the market research firm to determine the time table for the assessment, the process and check in at the appropriate intervals to make sure that things are moving along.

John Cusack asked if there is anybody specific from the Gardner School who will be on the committee.

Mary-Helen replied that she will work with the Principal of the Gardner School to determine that.

Audience Member asked if the survey will be for all the residents of Allston and Brighton or if it is going to be specific for just North Allston and North Brighton.

Mary-Helen responded that the initial thinking is to survey North Allston and North Brighton. The committee will work with a reputable market research firm and that company will help them determine how many households and what type of households need to be surveyed in order to get the information that they need. North Allston and North Brighton are the communities that will be the most impacted by the project.

Audience Member argued that the survey should go to all Allston and Brighton residents.

Gerald replied that the committee will make that decision.

Mary-Helen also added that the decision should be made by the committee and the market research firm.

Ray said that the Task Force originally thought that the community directly impacted by the project should be taken under consideration first and then the community benefits should be expanded to the rest of the Allston and Brighton residents.

Audience Member responded that eventually the project will affect the whole Allston and Brighton community.

John Cusack argued that the community benefits should start with the neighborhoods directly affected by the project and eventually expanded to the rest of the Allston/Brighton community.

Harry Mattison explained that if Harvard creates a tutoring center all kids should be allowed to use it, not only North Allston and North Brighton residents.

Gerald introduced Michael Contompasis, former Superintendent of Boston Public Schools, and currently the Director of Inter Governmental Relations for the City of Boston.

Kevin McCluskey explained that what Harvard has done in some geographical areas in the past, can be an example of how the programs can be expanded in the future. Harvard cannot over-promise on what can be done.

Michael Contompasis said that he would like to talk about the educational portal and what it can provide. He said that the portal should be open to every person who resides in Allston/Brighton. Harvard should be pushed to come up with programs and effective ways of providing services to young people. Tutoring is not the only way to do it. Harvard should provide career and college counseling, as well enrichment in mathematics and science. The facility itself and the folks that will be moving into the science center can provide that type of expertise. It is important to include the arts into the discussion. The needs assessment is important and based on the information gathered, the community should push Harvard to deliver what the needs assessment survey determines. He said that the educational portal should be owned by Harvard. The benefits should not end at the educational portal, there are a number of other benefits that can be pursued, such as summer activities, opportunities to attend programs at the University, etc. He proposed that the Gardner School should have access to the educational portal particularly during the day because Gardner School has problems with space for its programs. He talked about the future of the Gardner School and there will be time to determine proposals for the school based on the future demographics of Allston/Brighton community. He said that he has been pushing Kevin McCluskey for Harvard to provide some physical relief to the Gardner. Harvard should be held accountable for assisting in the development of the educational portal and he thinks that this could eventually lead to the creation of the University Assisted Community School. Those positions should be taken as a part of a long-term strategy. He explained what the Department of Education (DOE) would like to do in the future and what kind of issues are discussed at the DOE.

Brent Whalen said that it is his understanding that the educational portal will be located in the existing building as a short-term resolution. The Article 80 process is to prepare a long-term educational program for the community. He asked if the Department of Education is interested in helping his community to develop a long-term Community School model so it can be implemented when appropriate.

Michael Contompasis agreed with Brent that it is a feasible model. He thought that Harvard is not ready to develop the community school at this point and they may not even choose to do that at all. In this situation the educational portal is very important and is a good first step.

Brent Whalen thinks that Harvard can get ready for the possibility of developing a community school. He asked if they choose to pursue that idea, if the community can expect some technical support from the Boston School Department.

Michael Contompasis answered that the School Department is open to any number of creative ideas. The School Department has a number of different initiatives of how to bring the kids back to the school districts. There are limited opportunities in the City to

build new schools. The School Department has no capacity for development of new schools. They are open to opportunities that specifically benefit a specific community.

Ray Mellone said that there has to be the needs assessment for the building program. Before any building programs can be pursued, there has to be a way to establish a homeownership and neighborhood stability. The educational portal is going to be one way of drawing people into the Allston/Brighton area. Educational benefits have to be number one priority in order to attract people to move into the community.

Michael Contompasis replied that from what he understands the community is focusing on different types of programs. It has to be decided how those programs are being kept in the neighborhood. The School Department cannot build out beyond what is established as a priority demographically. He said that they would love to see families with young children coming into those areas. Anything that the School Department can do to create that kind of atmosphere would be beneficial to the community. This is once in a lifetime opportunity here to really build something that develops the collaboration with the University.

Audience Member said that he would like to strongly urge that the educational needs assessment survey be broad. They felt that it is true that the area of impact should receive a priority in community benefits but at this early stage of doing the community needs assessment it should take under consideration the entire Allston/Brighton community. All communities should be sampled at the same time. There will be things that will make more sense for North Allston/North Brighton but at the same time services and opportunities should be based on an assessment of the whole community.

Brent Whalen suggested that some programs work better if there are more people involved. For example, the enrichment programs may be more successful if they are designed for the whole community.

John Cusack said that the point is to attract families with kids to the community. This is the only way to give the community the opportunity to continue to exist. This community is in danger of having people move out and transforming into a rental community.

Bruce Houghton said that if you limit your vision of needs assessment you may limit conceptual programs in the future. The needs assessment does not define the communities being served. The needs should be defined as broadly as possible and based on that information, decide on what programs will serve what communities. The services should be then prioritized and implemented as defined by the needs assessment.

Ray Mellone mentioned that the services have to be centrally located because they have to be accessible to the community members.

Bruce Houghton replied that the services for children should potentially be centrally located but adult programs could be delivered anywhere. The needs assessment survey

should not be limited to the location; it should capture the needs no matter where they will be located.

Audience Member said that the kids who live within the Allston/Brighton community go to different schools across the City and their extra curricular activities are all over the place as well. So while people may live in North Allston, they branch out to many different areas within the City of Boston.

Audience Member said that the Task Force should focus on the arts among other programs.

Harry Mattison said that the Task Force has to define what exactly they are looking for in the educational benefits for the community.

Audience Member suggested that the Task Force should start listening to the community. The community should work together and unite and not divide.

Michael Glavin said that the benefits proposed by Harvard are very generous and impressive. The \$21 million is tied directly to the Harvard Allston Science Complex. Those are the contractual obligations that Harvard will have to meet in the relationship with the City and the BRA for this first project. He said that there is a lot more work to be done. In 2008 Harvard will be presenting an updated Institutional Master Plan. In anticipation of 2008, this Task Force will work to define a comprehensive master plan of the community benefits. He said that the BRA will come back to discussion with the Task Force on how to re-energize the strategy plan that was put together before. He said that there are two major things that need to be done, the Master Plan of the Community Benefits and revisiting the North Allston Strategic Framework for Planning (NASFP).

Gerald said that Harvard proposed a great package of benefits to accompany the Allston Science Complex. He apologized that there is not always time for community comment at the end of the meetings but agendas need to be followed, we need to close the process that we've started, and they often try to work input from the community into the meeting. He said that the community can always communicate their thoughts and ideas to the Task Force.

Kevin McCluskey said that during his 20-years of working with this neighborhood, the University has tried to be a constructive and generous partner. He asked that the tone and discussions between Harvard, the BRA, and the community continue to be respectful and positive.

Gerald Autler announced that the next meeting is on November 26. There will be a discussion on benefits, an update on the BRA's responses to the Task Force resolution, and Commissioner Tinlin from the Boston Transportation Department will attend to introduce a new staff member who will be closely interacting with the neighborhood on construction mitigation. Gerald said that on December 10th, he would like to share with

the Task Force the draft of the community benefits language for the cooperation agreement for the Allston Science Complex.

Ray adjourned the meeting at 8:45p.m.