

**Harvard Allston Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 23, 2008
Honan-Allston Library
6:30 p.m.**

I. Attendance

Harvard Allston Task Force

Paul Berkeley
John Bruno
John Cusack
Rita DiGesse
Bruce Houghton
Harry Mattison
Ray Mellone
Brent Whelan

Harvard University

Mary-Helen Black
Will Donham
Kevin McCluskey
Joshua Poupore
Dan Rabinovitz
Alison Reinhardt
Kathy Spiegelman
Dennis Swinford
Maile Takahashi

City of Boston

Gerald Autler, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Michael Glavin, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Linda Kowalcky, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Kairos Shen, Chief Planner, City of Boston
Carlos Montanez, Senior Planner, BRA (Allston/Brighton Community
Planner)

Harvard Allston Task Force Chair Ray Mellone began the meeting at 6:35pm. Mellone turned the meeting over to Maile Takahashi of Harvard University to give an update on behalf of Harvard.

The updated included:

- Neighborhood Survey/ Needs Assessment

- Survey Needs Assessment Committee (SNAC) has been meeting since January
- Survey Firm – Copernicus
 - Marketing Consulting Firm with the technical capacity to develop and deliver a survey on a broad range of topics with rigorous methodology
 - Will meet with SNAC in early May
 - Task Force Meeting in May
- April -June: Develop survey
 - Meeting with SNAC, other groups
- June-Sept: Distribute survey, community forum
- Oct/Nov: Report on Survey/Needs Assessment
- Harvard Allston Education Portal
 - Construction is on-going at 175 N. Harvard St.
 - Opening in June 2008 - open house
 - Education Portal Advisory Board will be formed this summer
 - Programming beginning this summer
 - Athletic Camp information should be in mailboxes next week
 - Summer School information will be mailed in the next two weeks
 - Tutoring for science and expository writing (for highschoolers) this summer
 - Mailing in May will announce website, tutoring availability, opening date, and other programming
 - Working with Harvard community to identify programs for the Education Portal
- Workforce Development
 - Computer Literacy and Administrative Classes in Fall '08
 - Mailing will go out to all of N. Allston/N. Brighton
 - Work with A-B Career Resource Center for class sign-ups
 - Working with Jobs and Community Services and Turner Construction
 - Developing a computer lab – opening in Fall '08
 - Currently in the Ed Portal
 - 5 pre-apprenticeships per year for construction related jobs
 - Working with Jobs and Community Services and Turner Construction
 - Working on a Fall '08 start (as soon as this is set up, a notice will be sent to all of N. Allston/N. Brighton and posted in the A-B Career Resource Center)
- Public Realm
 - Library Park
 - Hired consultant ICON/Copley Wolff
 - Community wide kick-off meeting at end of May
 - Meeting will be set up with the immediate abutters
 - Small group subcommittee will meet through the summer
 - Alternative concepts by early Fall '08
- Barry's Corner Interim Improvements

- May meeting - present a landscape plan for 175 N. Harvard St. in front of the Education Portal
- Working with a leasing agent for the CITGO property. Actively showing the site to interested retailers. Targeting restaurants.
- o Partnership Fund
 - Partnership Fund Advisory Board early summer.
 - Through the summer the Advisory Board will review the mission, application, selection criteria, size of the grants, etc.
 - 1st \$100,000 check goes to the BRA in September 2008.
 - Advisory Board will determine award deadlines.
- o Community Benefits Updates and Reporting
 - September 2008- 1st Community Benefit Update
 - March 2009 - 1st Community Benefit Annual Report
 - Other communication
 - At a minimum mailings every two months to all of North Allston/North Brighton
 - Using the Task Force email list for other notifications (i.e. new tenants)
 - Website will be updated with Ed Portal information
 - Enhanced construction mitigation website
 - Information on new programs/speakers will be mailed, posted at the library, AB TAB ads when appropriate
- o Other Announcements
 - Boston Shines
 - Corporate Clean Up is this Friday 8:30 - 12:00 at Brighton Mills parking lot
 - Focusing on North Allston/North Brighton, projects include:
 - The weedy lot on Everett St., planting flowers in tree wells along Western Ave, cleaning and painting at Smith Field and Hooker Sorrento Park, picking up garbage along Lincoln Street
 - BBQ lunch afterwards
 - Businesses participating with Harvard: Shaw's, Commonwealth Worldwide, Goldstein Furniture.
 - Community day is on Saturday @ the Jackson Mann and the Brighton Main Streets office at 8:30 am
 - Harvard University Art Museums
 - May 7th, 6:30 – 8:00 - *Here's Looking at You!: Portraits from the Harvard University Honan-Allston Branch Library*, Judy Murray, HUAM
 - June 26th - *Washington Allston: the Man Behind the Name* Brighton-Allston Historical Society and Heritage Museum, Bill Marchione, president of the B-A Historical Society, and Judy Murray, HUAM
 - MEPA Community Advisory Committee Meeting
 - Tentatively scheduled for May 21st an email will be going out to the Task Force members this week from MEPA.

Linda Kowalcky, Boston Redevelopment Authority, gave an overview of how the community benefits decision making process would work over the next year.

- It's early enough in the process to have time to look at all the topics and get information that's needed
- Because of the scope and timeframe of Harvard's expansion plans, the approach to developing a community benefits master plan is a new and unique situation for the City of Boston, Harvard and the neighborhood.
- Linda understands the community's desire to start the community benefits planning now. There's going to need to be a balance to starting the process while also compiling information that is needed to help the decision making.
- 3 different processes will feed into the decision making for a master plan for community benefits: Harvard Allston Task Force process; Harvard's planning; and BRA planning. All three processes will produce reports that can be reviewed and evaluated. By Fall 2008 the reports should be completed, information should be organized and Harvard, the community, and the City will be in a position to think about specific projects.
- Linda proposed using the next Task Force meeting to: (1) get organized on community benefits and (2) identify goals. Linda said that identifying the goals of the community is a beneficial exercise because at some point benefits are going to need to be prioritized.
- Linda emphasized that the community benefits planning process will not just take place in one meeting. Linda proposed making the community benefits discussion a major topic at 1 meeting a month.

Brent Whelan asked how comparable the magnitude of the community benefits master plan would be to the magnitude of Harvard's development. He asked for the BRA to guide the community to think on an appropriate scale. Linda said that no one has a specific number at this time of how much the master plan for community benefits will be. Linda said that one approach is to front-load some of the benefits ahead of some of Harvard's developments to try and meet the priorities and goals of the community early without necessarily having to wait for the full development.

Kairos Shen, Boston Redevelopment Authority, discussed the draft scope for Harvard's Institutional Master Plan (IMP). The scope is a formal document the BRA writes that lists topics and areas the City and the community are asking Harvard to work on in the next phase of its planning. It also includes all the comments from the community and city agencies that were submitted to the BRA in response to Harvard's IMP.

The draft scope (attached) asks Harvard to address three major topics:

- Connectivity, Context and Transportation
- Land Use, Activity, and Place Making
- Physical Form

John Bruno said that he was pleased to see that the scope touched on things throughout the whole neighborhood, not just on Harvard's campus. John said that height and density are going to be very sensitive issues and will need to be thought about very carefully.

Brent Whelan said that the bicycle population should not be overlooked and said that the approach to graduate school housing should be carefully discussed.

Gerald Autler, Boston Redevelopment Authority, said that he is developing a matrix that incorporates all the major themes brought up by the community during the review of Harvard's IMP and he will circulate it once it is finished.

Brent Whelan asked the Task Force if they continue their discussion on writing a letter to Harvard president Drew Faust to ask her to meet with the community. Ray said that as the chair of the Task Force he would like the opportunity to draft the letter to President Faust on behalf of the Task Force. He said he would like to write the letter to address the spirit of partnership between Harvard and the community and try to maintain a positive and proactive approach. He said he didn't think it was a good idea to send a negative letter harping on all the issues. He would like to propose an open-ended invitation to her to invite her to come whenever she is free to meet with the Task Force and hear her ideas on how she sees the relationship between Harvard and the community developing further. There was general agreement among the Task Force members to take that approach.

Ray adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:35 p.m.