

Harvard Allston Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 27, 2007
Honan Allston Library
6:30 p.m.

I. Attendance:

Harvard Allston Task Force

Paul Berkeley
John Bruno
Cathi Campbell
John Cusack
Rita DiGesse
Brian Gibbons
Mike Hanlon
Bruce Houghton
Harry Mattison
Ray Mellone, Chair

Harvard University

Harris Band
Will Donham
Alison Reinhardt
Maile Takahashi

City of Boston

Gerald Autler, Boston Redevelopment Authority

Harvard Allston Task Force chair Ray Mellone began the meeting at 6:35 p.m. He said the meeting was going to be a working session for the Task Force members and if there was time permitting at the end of the meeting he would open it up to comments from the public.

Gerald Autler, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) announced that Harvard University filed the Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR) for the proposed Harvard Allston Science Complex on Monday, June 25th. Gerald provided the following information on the DPIR:

- 75 Day Comment Period (June 26th - September 10th)
- Copies are available and can be requested:
 - Review it at the Honan-Allston Library
 - Visit: www.allston.harvard.edu
 - Call: 617-495-3525
 - Email: allston@harvard.edu
- The July 25, 2007 Task Force meeting will be focused on the DPIR
- Comment letters should be sent to the BRA

- Send to Gerald.Autler.bra@cityofboston.gov
- Boston Redevelopment Authority, One City Hall Square, 9th Floor, Boston, MA 02201
- Task Force meetings scheduled through the DPIR comment period
 - July 9, 2007- Harvard summer activities
 - July 25, 2007- DPIR topic working session
 - August 22, 2007- DPIR topic working session
 - September 10, 2007- Construction mitigation

Gerald said there are certain topic areas associated with the project that are outside the DPIR's requirements such as community benefits which are incorporated into the Cooperation Agreement between Harvard and the City. Harvard's construction mitigation plan is a legal agreement between Harvard and the Boston Transportation Department (BTD). Gerald said the transportation appendix for the DPIR is a very technical document and was not included in the hardcopy version of the DPIR but is available online and by request. Gerald asked the Task Force members to review the proposed topics for the upcoming meetings and let him know if there are any City staff they would like invited to future meetings.

Maile Takahashi, Harvard University, made several updates:

- Construction Mitigation Plan
 - Discussions with the Task Force and community are ongoing. Harvard has proposed to move half of the construction worker parking north of Western Avenue. Harvard will continue to develop the construction mitigation plan. Harvard's construction Website will go up in mid-July.
 - The Boston Transportation Department is reviewing the plan
- Interim-landscape improvement project
 - Task Force Subcommittee Members are Harry Mattison, Mary-Helen Black, Millie Hollum McLaughlin, and Bruce Houghton.
 - Phase I- June/July- Focus on Western Avenue (West of Barry's Corner). Activities are focused on painting and planting.
 - Next Phase - Focus on Everett Street and sidewalk improvements.
- Graffiti- Several of Harvard's buildings have been hit with graffiti. Please report this if you see it happening.
- Leasing activities- Harvard tenants from 90 Windom Street will be moving to new Harvard buildings at 210 North Harvard Street, 1380 Soldiers Field Road and 1300 Soldiers Field Road. Harvard has hired Jones Lange LaSalle to help find tenants for some of its office buildings.
- Community Benefits Update (from Kevin McCluskey, Harvard University)
 - The discussion about community benefits will continue and Harvard appreciates the Task Force members and community members hard work to

develop the community benefits matrix. This is the beginning of a long-term relationship going forward. There are certain elements of community benefits in the DPIR but most of the commitments will come in the cooperation agreement.

- Harvard will offer sponsored spots in its athletic camps to Allston children residents who live within the North Allston Strategic Framework for planning area. Harvard will distribute more information about this soon.
 - The Harvard athletic department included an offer in its recent brochure for discounted season tickets for football games to Allston-Brighton residents for \$35, however; Harvard will provide an additional discount to North Allston residents and provide free tickets to Harvard football, basketball and hockey games with an exception of a few games such as the Harvard/Yale football game and the Harvard/Cornell Hockey game. Community members can call the Harvard community affairs office to reserve the tickets and then they can be picked up on game day at Will Call. Additionally Youth Organizations can contact Harvard to get tickets made available to them.
 - “Library Park”, the open space area directly behind the Honan-Allston Library, has yet to be designed but Harvard is looking forward to working with the community to design a space the community would like.
 - There is considerable time to discuss the community benefits plan and Harvard looks forward to continuing to work with the community.
- Sustainability Updates (from Will Donham, Harvard University)
 - Harvard is recycling and re-using some of the existing building materials that are being removed from the buildings that are going to be demolished on the site of the science complex. The company doing the work is the International Recycling Network and materials are going to the “Food for the Poor” organization to distribute in Jamaica and “Operation Blessing” to distribute materials to Tanzania and Liberia.
 - Anemometer- Harvard would like to install an anemometer, a device that collects wind data, in a location in its athletics fields. This was mentioned at a previous meeting. Harvard responded to some of the community’s questions:
 - No, the device will not be noisy.
 - The data collected from Allston will also be useful to other Cambridge and Boston wind data sets just as Harvard will also be looking at other data sets.
 - Gerald said Harvard needs zoning permission to do this. The device will be considered a temporary accessory use to Harvard’s existing master plan. He emphasized that it was a very different permitting process than a wind turbine, and that Harvard would not be able to install a turbine without an additional review.
 - Questions and comments included whether it would be lit on top, if WBZ would be alerted to its presence, if the FAA has been consulted, if there is a current to it, if it will be dangerous to children, animals or people in that vicinity of it, and will if it will have a security fence around it. Will

Donham said he would look into all these questions and concerns and get back to the Task Force.

- Task Force member Harry Mattison proposed a motion from the Task Force to formally request that Harvard make improvements to its land that borders Smith Field before Harvard is given permission to put up "an industrial type use" in the athletic fields and next to Smith Field. The Task Force agreed that this was a reasonable request to Harvard. Maile said interim landscaping work was already being planned for that area and would likely be completed in July. Maile said Harvard could provide an update on this at the next Task Force meeting on July 9th.
- Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR)- Will Donham gave an overview of the topics covered in the DPIR.
 - General Information
 - Project Description
 - Transportation
 - Environmental Protection
 - Urban Design
 - Sustainability
 - Historic Resources
 - Infrastructure
 - Responses to comments submitted during the public comment period for the Project Notification Form (PNF) for the Harvard Allston Science Complex (the first regulatory filing for the project).

Ray asked the Task Force members to discuss their initial thoughts on the DPIR. He said the burden of construction worker parking should be spread out and shared by Harvard. He said all the impacts shouldn't be concentrated on the Sears site. He doesn't like this "all or nothing" approach and thinks there are other proposals that can be discussed that allow the impacts to be shared. He said Harvard should look beyond ordinary formulas and come up with innovative techniques to allow the impacts to be shared. Harris Band responded that Harvard is still in an assessment phase and analyzing the impacts of all the different options and tradeoffs. He said proposing the Sears site location wasn't intended to place the burden on the neighborhood but rather because there are benefits of locating the construction worker parking in one location. Gerald said the BTDC is scrutinizing Harvard's construction management proposals.

Paul Berkeley suggested creating 100 parking spaces at the New England Depository Library for construction workers and give those spots to construction workers who carpool. Harris Band said Harvard is still open to compromising and discussing different solutions for construction worker parking. He noted that Harvard has already offered to move 300 spots from the Sears site location to locations north of Western Avenue. Harris said the tradeoffs for each scenario have to be assessed.

Cathi Campbell said Harvard can use more enforcement to control its contractors and the access roads construction workers use. She suggested Harvard use its police force to

provide enforcement. Harvard should fine individual workers who don't comply and also provide incentives for compliance.

John Bruno said Harvard needs to use the best resources available to address any interference with the quality of life of residents such as issues dirt, noise, light, and landscaping. Harris Band agreed and said Harvard has proposed a significant timber fence 1,000 feet long for the buffer area along the Sears site. Harris said Harvard was going to install a few test panels of different heights so the neighbors could discuss which heights they prefer. The entire fence will be constructed prior to the demolition of the Sears slab. Harris also noted that in addition to the fencing there will be a significant landscaped buffer.

Paul Berkeley asked if the construction access road would be a private road and policed. Harris said it will be a very controlled environment by Harvard police.

Mike Hanlon said Harvard should appeal to the City to allow it to demolish the Channel 2 building to use that site for construction worker parking. Harris Band said Harvard hasn't decided what that building will be used for but said the related traffic impacts would need to be studied if the Task Force wanted Harvard to seriously consider that site. Paul Berkeley said it was a community question because having parking all down Western Avenue might not be desirable.

Bruce Houghton said he was less concerned about the issue of construction worker parking and more concerned about the issue of truck traffic. Truck traffic is going to have a greater impact on noise and vibrations than parked cars. Harris Band acknowledged the comment and agreed with it. He said Harvard is still looking at alternative routes for the truck traffic. He said Harvard is proposing moving the access to the haul road about 200 feet away from the neighborhood. Gerald said the BTM is looking at options along the existing roadways as well as the use of Storrow Drive. Storrow Drive poses many issues in terms of the impact of truck traffic on already overburdened intersections but that the option was being studied and that it might be feasible during at least certain phases of the construction, if not all.

John Cusack said that the issues of traffic shouldn't wait to be discussed until September 10th, the last day of the public comment period. He said that he is eager to hear BTM's feedback and their response to Harvard's proposals and outstanding questions from the community. He said so many issues are contingent upon the City's perspective. Gerald said representatives from BTM, including Vineet Gupta and Bill Conroy, frequently attend the Task Force meetings and he can ask them if they are available for a future meeting sooner than September 10th.

Bruce Houghton said the Task Force has to have a plan on how to review the document and have specific agenda items for the meetings. He suggested the Task Force break down the document into different subject areas and decide who from the City and Harvard should be asked to come and present and provide additional information. Bruce said there are process questions and that all along there has been no structure for

negotiating with Harvard and rather it has just been the Task Force talking and Harvard listening.

Gerald said the Task Force needs to sit down and get a sense of what is in the document. He said the DPIR is a culmination of issues already discussed at great length throughout many meetings over the last year.

The Task Force members discussed the best way and different approaches for reviewing the document- developing an outline for the review, dividing it into sections, reading the entire document, developing sub-committees, and asking for an extension of the comment period. The majority of Task Force members said 75 days to review the document over the summer was not going to be enough time and the Task Force members should be given as much time as they need. Harry Mattison initiated a formal request from the Task Force to Harvard to extend the comment period indefinitely. Harris Band advised that Harvard was unlikely to agree to a request with an indefinite timeframe. Task Force members debated how the formal request should be worded and what deadline should be requested. The formal motion was made by Ray Mellone as a request to Harvard that "In order for the Task Force to complete the work needed for the DPIR, the comment period date be extended as deemed necessary by the Task Force"

Audience member Paul Alford thanked the Task Force members for the work they were putting forth and for a good discussion. He asked if Harvard owned the Citgo property yet. He said the neighborhood doesn't want to see the lot empty and said they would like to see a park there.

An audience member asked when Harvard was going to file the environmental review with the State and if it would request a waiver. Will Donham said Harvard would likely file the Environmental Notification Form (ENF) with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office in July. He said that because MEPA is reviewing the entire proposed master plan, Harvard will likely file a request for a phase one waiver for the science complex.

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